Data Submitted (UTC 11): 12/20/2023 5:00:00 AM First name: Brian Last name: Smith Organization: Title: Comments: Reasons to protect old growth forests:

Biodiversity: Mature and old-growth forests provide critical habitat for a wide range of species, including threatened and endangered animals.

Carbon storage: These forests store vast amounts of carbon, helping to mitigate the effects of climate change.

Water quality: Mature and old-growth forests play a key role in filtering and protecting water supplies.

Recreation: These forests offer unique opportunities for outdoor recreation, such as hiking, camping, and birdwatching.