

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/9/2024 9:14:32 PM

First name: Susan

Last name: Goldstein

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello Forest Service Officials:

The Biden Administration announced a proposed nationwide forest plan amendment to advance protections for the last remaining old growth trees in all 128 U.S. National Forests. While this is a step in the right direction the proposed plan falls short and doesn't protect old growth forests in a meaningful way.

Old growth forests are increasingly threatened by logging as well as the effects of human caused climate change- wildfires, drought, insects, and disease. We need to protect not only our existing stocks of old growth forests, but also our nation's mature forests. These slightly younger forests are still developing the characteristics that will create the complex ecosystem found in an old growth forest.

The Biden proposal as written would not ban logging in old growth forests; it would merely limit cutting of old growth trees within those forests. It would also allow thinning under the guise of wildfire mitigation, counter to research that suggests that old growth forests are more resilient to fire if left alone.

I write to ask you to close the loopholes mentioned above. Too much old growth forests have already been lost to logging, and new policies must protect from commercial logging all old growth trees and forests, as well as the mature component of our National Forest system.

Sincerely,

Susan Goldstein