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Organization:

Title:

Comments: "Cause there is no more new frontier

We have got to make it here"

- Eagles, The Last Resort

The American West was once characterized by far stretching prairies, roaming Bison, and "Purple Mountain Majesties" that captivated the imaginations of early homesteaders. Since then, almost all of America's prairies have been destroyed and various other old growth ecosystems decimated.

I am not a climate activist, quite the contrary. I do not "save the turtles", I am pro-oil, and if I had \$50 million to buy a private jet I would. However, the need to protect old growth forests from logging activities and create a new management plan was important enough to become my first public government comment.

I would argue that places like the Tongass should be protected as National Parks or entirely as wilderness areas, but in the modern age, progress entails remaining realistic. With so little of America's original natural wonders remaining, protecting old growth forests is a vital step to ensure these forest's last as I grow older, and for many more lifetimes. 1) The outdoors has been a proven way to have a positive impact on mental health, and these unique old growth ecosystems only further enrich natures' appeal 2) It is a massive carbon sequestering system, greater than any a human can invent 3) Protecting old growth forests can help eco-tourism. 4) Old growth fires and fires in general are an important part of ecosystems, with some tree seeds only being released by fire 5) Maybe the smallest reason but a personal one for outdoor lovers, the worst feeling on a secluded hike (other than realizing you are lost) is walking to a ridge or overlook and seeing strong impacts of human development such as logging or farming. Where I live, I am not fortunate enough to walk more than 2 miles without stumbling upon houses, cleared fields, or a road. This helps to enhance my appreciation for old growth natural areas. I hope that the federal government decides to put the desires of millions of Americans over those of a boisterous minority, an industry on the decline that makes up a miniscule fraction of US economic production. Thank you.