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Comments: Recognize the dynamic nature of forests. Promote forest diversity. Young, middle-aged, and old forests across landscapes provide habitat for multiple species and their life cycle needs. To do so, we must view forests as dynamic collections of important seral states. Forests are healthiest when varying forest ages are interspersed across landscapes, from young forests to old growth.

Because of human-caused disruptions to natural processes, active forest management is necessary to reduce risks posed by wildfire, optimize carbon outcomes, improve wildlife habitat, safely restore fire to fire-adapted forests, and restore impaired ecosystems. The challenge is how to manage these landscapes at the scope and scale that will address the increasing need.

USFS must expand vegetation management on larger geographic scales to restore forest health and promote resilience, which includes an ecologically appropriate abundance and distribution of mature and old growth forests where those traits are lacking.

Loss due to wildfire is the greatest risk to mature and old growth forests, per the old growth inventory and analysis of threats completed by the USFS. Next is insects and disease. I support management efforts that focus on science-based restoration and wildfire treatments to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire in mature and old growth as well as other forest types.