

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/26/2024 4:58:09 PM

First name: Evan

Last name: Winer

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello,

Forest ecosystems are incredibly important to wildlife habitat and human health and wellbeing. Diversity of old-growth and young forests are both important to me as a hunter and angler. As you move forward with your nationwide amendment to create consistent management direction for old-growth forests and other forest types, please consider the following:

\* Promote forest diversity and recognize that forests are dynamic. 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.

\* There is broad agreement that 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.

\* The Forest Service must conduct more 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.

\* The old growth inventory and analysis of threats completed by the USFS found that mortality from wildfires is currently the leading threat to mature and old growth forests, followed by 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.