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Comments: This unique position letter is written to thank you for the bright idea of considering revisions of regulations to protect our national forests. There are numerous benefits of doing so regularly.

Old growth and mature forests provide a greater magnitude and range of ecosystem services than younger forests and other habitats. Wood from younger trees works as well as old growth timber as a building material. Thus, only these younger trees should be logged wherever timber harvest is permitted on public and private lands. Logging should be prohibited in all of our national forests.

Severe wildfires are occurring with increasing frequency as climate change intensifies. Thinning increases risk of such fires because it dessicates trees and understory vegetation while increasing forest temperatures.

Harvest of woody biomass from national forests should be prohibited for bioenergy use. Combustion of pellets for generation of electricity emits 100% to 150% of the CO<sub>2</sub> that is emitted from coal combustion. Woody biomass combustion also emits a wide array of toxic air contaminants which harm wildlife and people. The US and the planet have ample natural energy resources for geothermal, solar, and wind energy. There is no need to continue using dirty fossil fuels, which are more expensive. The cost of clean energy has been decreasing dramatically. Extraction of fossil fuels and storage of carbon dioxide should be prohibited in national forests. Trees provide sequestration and long-term storage more economically and with greater safety than mechanical devices like smokestack CCS.

At least 40% of US forests have been eradicated by logging since the immigration of colonists. National forests should be expanded to restore our forest resources. This is justified by our growing population and the acceleration of climate change. Thinning would interfere with this restoration.

Apply and enforce the Roadless Rule in the Tongass and all other national forests.

The above will help to protect our forests and to ensure sustainable careers for forestry staff. Without the above protections, careers in forestry would diminish.