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Comments: My community is grateful for the Biden Administration's proposal to re-set how old-growth will be managed in our national forests. But the scope of your plans must focus on preserving mature and old-growth ecosystems, not just trees. Somehow this more comprehensive view of how humans can harmoniously interact with the natural world has been left off the table until now.

Please consider that older forests are analogous to cities with life that thrives at every level. Century-old trees are like buildings constructed of carbon, water and minerals. Systems connect levels from tree canopy to trunks decomposing on the forest floor, feeding roots and nutrient transport services underground. Amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals and microorganisms occupy every level.

When those systems are cut off, the damage incurred makes the forests vulnerable and invites insects, invasives, disease and fire.

But the preferred Forest Service policy to "thin" old-growth forest to prevent forest fire has been the wrong solution in search of a problem. I am confident you are aware that studies show thinning makes forests more fire-prone, and those fires burn hotter and spread faster. (<https://news.griffith.edu.au/2021/02/10/logging-and-thinning-of-forests-can-increase-fire-risk/>).

Creating more airspace in any structure does not slow fire. It can feed it. Thinning severs a forest's interlocked links, destroys life at every level, welcomes wind, invites brittle, fire-prone weeds to annex, insects to invade, disease to enter.

I'm sure you also know that logging contributes more carbon to the atmosphere than fires, yet is never mentioned as a cause in material distributed by the Department of Agriculture and the Forests Service. Yet you are accountable. And you have the power to halt the destruction. Catastrophic climate change tears apart your families and communities with storms, floods, droughts and fires as it does ours.

Please stop logging in our national forests. Let our public lands serve the public. We need to keep old-growth biospheres intact in order to accomplish our goal: to allow old-growth forests to function effectively as our best natural solution, a carbon reservoir to slow climate change.