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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Secretary of Agriculture Vilsack,

I would like to comment on the Notice of Intent of the Forest Service's proposal to amend the 128 National Forest land management plans to better protect old-growth forests.

The United States of America is one of, if not the most abundantly blessed countries in the world when it comes to natural resources and beauty. We have all types of forests across the continent-wide span of our nation. Old-growth forests are a unique environmental heritage that should be protected and expanded. In 2021 I traveled with my wife to see the Giant Spruce in the Cape Perpetua Scenic Area of Siuslaw National Forest in Oregon. After a short walk, we stood in front of a Sitka Spruce that has been growing for over 500 years. When it started growing, Columbus hadn't yet set sail for India. This tree will likely still be growing long after you and I are gone. To come into contact with something so old, so persistent, was very meaningful. It remains one of my favorite moments from our trip.

I know commercial logging is important. I work as a consultant for public housing authorities - we need wood to build houses. But preserving and protecting old-growth forests is also important. These forests should be passed on to our children and their children, just as our parents and grandparents passed them onto us. We need to be intentional about preserving and celebrating the beauty of these ecosystems, because we will lose them if we are not.

As a member of the Old-Growth Forest Network, I want to reiterate our comments on the proposed policy - specifically, the need for the policy to eliminate commercial logging in old-growth stands, highly limit exceptions to non-commercial cutting, and expand our recruitment of future old-growth forests by protecting more mature forests now from logging.

Thank you,

Jonathan Concidine