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First name: Sharon

Last name: Ward-Fore

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I read the plan and feel it has many considerations before moving forward.

The initial threat analysis found:

- mature and old growth forests have high exposure to a variety of threats and climate and disturbance projections show this exposure will likely increase. -wildfire,exacerbated by climate change and fire exclusion, is the leading threat to mature and old-growth forests, followed by insects and disease.

-tree cutting is a relatively minor threat despite having been a major disturbance historically.

Two thirds of mature forests and about half of old-growth forests are vulnerable to these threats.

Climate change has increased the level of these threats and is likely altering where, and what types of mature and old-growth forests can persist. Over the next five decades, the growth of younger and mature forests is projected to result in an increase of mature and old-growth forests despite increasing disturbances.

However, this report demonstrates gains lessen with each passing decade and the expanding wildland-urban interface complicates mitigation of threats. This century, wildfires have been increasing in frequency and extent, accounting for most of the losses of mature and old-growth forests on NFS and BLM lands.

Climate change projections predict greater than 90% of inventoried mature and old-growth forests will be at very high exposure to wildfire-caused mortality by the end of the century.

Increased frequency of drought and more damaging wind or ice storms due to climate change may increase the vulnerability of forests to threats from native and non-native forest insects and disease. Even when mature and old growth forests remain after infestations, the changes to these forests may have substantial negative social,cultural, and economic impacts.

Despite the threats highlighted in this analysis, theRPA assessment predicted an increasing trend in the amount of mature and old-growth forests on NFS and BLM lands until at least mid-century (2070), as the large amount of younger and mature forest age into older forests. This trend begins to decrease by mid-century under some shared socioeconomic and climate change scenarios.

Projections of increasing mature and old-growth forests are tempered by the reality that American forests are entering uncharted territory with climate change. As our understanding of the implications of climate change evolves, so will understanding the places and methods to best steward and conserve our older forests.

In the meantime, existing younger and mature forests provide for future mature and old growth. A sound management approach is needed help ensure that older forest species composition and structure fits its environment. A deep understanding of ecological, social, and cultural dynamics must play a critical role in this plan. Most importantly, the environment of the predicted future, and not that of the past, should guide policy considerations related to mature and old-growth management.

We have the data needed to make a plan for the future. Let's do our best!

