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Comments: Please implement rigorous requirements to protect mature and old-growth forests. The forests that we have now are but a pale ghost of what they used to be before industrial logging. Because of the crisis we face with climate change and loss of wildlife, our remaining forests need protection. Both mature and old-growth trees and forests are a critical part of addressing the climate and biodiversity crises. Also, older and larger trees tend to be the most fire-resistant. With the increased threat of wildfire caused by climate change, we need to leave our mature and old-growth forests intact.

In the past, federal agencies prioritized logging and logging-generated cashflow over saving forest ecosystems. This practice must stop. We need to prioritize and incentivize the value of mature and old growth forests over the incentives for timber production. Performance metrics must be shifted accordingly. Carbon storage and biodiversity conservation need to be prioritized. Forest "management" or "thinning" needs to be done carefully. Where management impacts mature and old growth trees, it should be done only when unavoidable for conserving natural values, and supported by the best available science, informed by public comment. Thank you.