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First name: Tristan

Last name: Sophia

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Ms. Linda Walker,

I'm writing to provide scoping comments on the Forest Service's notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement to analyze the development and implementation of a nationwide forest plan amendment to conserve old growth forests.

Forest Service, Land Management Plan Direction for Old-Growth Forest Conditions Across the National Forest System, Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement, 88 Fed. Reg. 88,042 (Dec. 20, 2023).(EIS)

Thank you for taking this historic step toward conserving old growth on national forests across America.

I strongly support a consistent federal policy that protects all old-growth forests and trees and significantly increases their abundance and distribution across the nation.

The proposed amendment must set clear benchmarks for the occurrence, arrangement, and connectivity of mature and old-growth forest conditions across the landscape for ecological integrity.

In evaluating options, the EIS must consider alternatives that significantly strengthen old-growth forest protections by limiting the stated exceptions to protections.

The national forest plan amendment must also incorporate strong monitoring and accountability measures, both for tracking the abundance and distribution of mature and old-growth forests, and for ensuring their value as a natural carbon solution is optimized over time.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this historic old growth conservation proposal