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Comments: Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to provide comments.

The USFS Land Management Plan Direction for Old-Growth Forest Conditions Across the National Forest System #65356 must comply with President Biden's directives. Section 2(c)(iii) of Executive Order 14072 directs USDA and DOI to "develop policies, with robust opportunity for public comment, to institutionalize climate-smart management and conservation strategies that address threats to mature and old-growth forests on Federal lands." The plan currently open for comment contains a flaw which must be corrected. "Mature growth" must be included in the language of the plan, and it is not currently. Mature forests will eventually become old growth and must be explicitly included in the plan along with old growth.

At the time of the announcement of President Biden's directive, there were many approved logging projects on federal lands that would include the harvesting or thinning of trees in mature and old growth stands. The President's directive needs to apply to all mature and old growth forests, even those where projects of any size had previously been approved. No old growth or mature forests should be thinned or harvested. We implore the USFS to put a moratorium on previously approved projects harvesting in MOG forests. Trees older than 80 years or larger than 20-inch dbh should be protected. We appreciate that the USFS acknowledges the negative impact of climate change on our forests, but the direct and negative impact of harvesting must also be recognized and eliminated.

MOG forests are an excellent and economical part of the solution to climate change. Keeping mature and old growth standing provides insurance that our water will be kept clean and wildlife habitat intact. Further, MOG provide invaluable recreation resources for our citizens.

Wildfire is a natural part of forest ecology. In many parts of the northwest, MOG forests can be more moist and less susceptible to fire. Robust thinning should not occur in these forests.

The USFS must create clear, enforceable standards that protect MOG forests, thus protecting our water, insuring carbon sequestration and restoring wildlife habitat.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Alexine

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Northwest Montana Great Old Broads for Wilderness