

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 2/2/2024 6:56:25 AM

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Comments: Old growth trees and forests are important components of National Forest ecosystems, and we appreciate the USFS effort to create a consistent approach to protecting and managing old growth trees across our national forest system. Young, early seral forests are also important to the hunt-fish community, and we encourage the USFS to ensure that the value of early seral forests is recognized in the plan amendment process. Fortunately, as proposed, the forthcoming Forest Service changes are thoughtful and would enhance the agency's ability to maintain old growth stands through active stewardship-allowing for restoration to maintain forest resilience and to reduce the threat of uncharacteristic wildfire. The changes would also provide space for young growth restoration projects in areas of our national forests where old growth is not present.

As you move forward with the nationwide amendment to create consistent management direction for old growth forests and other forest types, please consider these important comments to advance healthy forests on our public lands.