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Comments: I'm submitting comments on the Forest Service's Land Management Plan Direction for Mature and Old-Growth Forest. I appreciate that this urgent effort is being taken on. Preservation of mature and old-growth forests is one of the most essential tasks of our time.

Catastrophic climate disruption is the most important consideration in any Forest Service decisions being made now and in the future. Forests are the most efficient means of carbon sequestration. We know, and Forest Service studies affirm, that changing forest conditions, warmer temperatures, drought, and insect infestations and resulting forest mortality will bring impacts that humans have very little control over. The only recourse is for the Forest Service to create plans and management practices whose goals are to keep all existing forests healthy and in their natural condition. These conditions have evolved over eons, without so called "management" by humans.

The best management is to leave old growth forests alone. Again, they have evolved over eons under a wide range of climate conditions, and Forest Service intervention will do more harm than good. As is pointed out in research by Suzanne Simard, forests have intricate mycorrhizal fungi networks that work together to preserve forest health. "Management" impacts such as clearing vegetation and the compression of soil from human intervention negatively impact these mycorrhizal networks and negatively impact forest systems. It results in drier conditions and disturbs mycorrhizal networks, weakening forest systems' resilience. Any roads existing in old growth forests need to be removed to protect them from human impacts

Forest Service studies show the wide spread forest mortality that will occur as a result of climate disruption. Therefore, young and mature forests must be allowed to develop, and conditions must be established to promote further development of mature forests into old growth. Any management needs to carefully consider impacts to soil and surrounding vegetation. This needs to happen throughout National Forest managed land. National Forest lands in Alaska must be included in the proposed management plans for mature and old growth forests. These forests are the largest temperate forests in the world. They need to be maintained for their highest value of carbon sequestration and tempering climate warming.

The abundant wildfire mitigation funds that are available to the Forest Service through the Infrastructure Reduction Act and other sources are a threat to mature and old growth forest. They encourage ill-advised human intervention into areas that would be healthier if allowed to develop on their own.

The proposals that come out of these amendments for mature and old growth forest must be a part of the plans for all Forest Service units. They need to be more than just a recommended management approach. The Forest Service needs to ensure that mature and old growth is maintained across the landscape of each National Forest Service unit over time.