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First name: Jennifer
Last name: Keller
Organization:
Title:
Comments: Our remaining mature and old-growth trees and forests are precious and essential to our lives, and must be preserved. They help protect our climate, filter drinking water, shelter wildlife, and provide many other crucial benefits.

I am extremely concerned because this draft proposal allows old-growth trees to be sent to the mill and allows agency staff to manage old-growth out of existence in pursuit of "proactive stewardship" goals. The draft also contains ambiguous language that could be used to justify continued commercial logging of old growth in the Tongass.

For those reasons, I urge you to strengthen the proposal to:

1. End the cutting of old-growth trees in all national forests and forest types and end the cutting of any trees in old-growth stands in moist forest types.

2. End any commercial exchange of old-growth trees. Even in the rare circumstances where an old-growth tree is cut (e.g. public safety), that tree should not be sent to the mill.

3. Protect mature forests and trees - future old growth - from the threat of commercial logging in order to recover old growth that has been lost to past mismanagement. Protection of mature forests can be accomplished in a manner that is consistent with addressing the threat of fire.

I urge you to ensure that we are doing everything we can to protect our oldest trees and forests. Failure to do so undermines the objectives of this amendment, contravenes the direction of Executive Order 14072, and ignores 500,000+ public comments the agency received on last summer's advance notice of proposed rulemaking.

I work with young people who are learning to live more sustainable lives and to advocate to our local governments to take steps to protect the climate. For the sake of all of us, but especially all the young people who truly need the benefits that forests provide, please strengthen the amendment to protect mature and old-growth forests. Thank you.