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Comments: The Forest Service's proposal aims to amend all land management plans across the national forest system to promote ecologically driven management, address threats to old-growth forests, and expand their distribution and abundance. Additionally, it seeks to incorporate Indigenous Knowledge and Tribal Leadership, facilitate adaptive strategies, and monitor old-growth forest trends and distribution patterns.

However, three crucial changes need to be made to the proposal to ensure the achievement of these goals:

The policy must include a direction that prevents degradation of existing old-growth forests and trees, ensuring that management actions are beneficial and "protect and enhance" old-growth conditions.

It is essential to acknowledge that many existing old-growth forests, like those in the Pacific Northwest and eastern U.S., do not require active management. Passive stewardship, intentionally choosing restraint, is as important as active management.

Clear standards and guidelines must be established to ensure the stewardship of sufficient older mature forests to restore old-growth distribution and abundance.

Thank you