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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to ask you to strengthen protections for mature and old-growth trees and forests in the National Old-Growth Amendment (NOGA). These trees protect our climate by absorbing and storing carbon, boost resilience to fire, help regulate temperatures, filter drinking water, and shelter wildlife. Logging these areas deprives us of the beauty and benefits of some of our country's largest, oldest trees, and the recreational opportunities offered by old-growth forests. It also increases the risk of erosion and flash flooding.

Your current draft proposal includes many opportunities to send these trees to the mill and allows agency staff to manage old-growth out of existence in pursuit of "proactive stewardship" goals. It contains ambiguous language that could be used to justify continued commercial logging of old growth and mature stands in national forests, including here in Wisconsin and in Alaska's Tongass.

I support a policy for our national forests that will:

1. End the logging of old-growth trees and in old-growth stands where fire is infrequent.
2. End the commercial exchange of old-growth trees. No old-growth trees should be sent to mills.
3. Establish protections for mature forests and trees to increase the amount of old growth for the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.