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Organization:

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Comments: Greetings,

Thank you for your time. I am a practicing register forester and have been for a decade. I have been blessed to have practiced forestry as far West as CA and now as far East as GA & FL. Old growth has its place and in designated areas of USFS lands like wilderness areas makes sense due to there being no access besides hiking trails. Now with this said it is imperative that we start to actively manage this timberland as an asset b/c it is just that. These assets are owned by the citizens of the US. These forests filter air, water, provide critical habitat for critters in all shapes & sizes, while also allowing us as citizens to hunt, hike, bike, & more. These forests need to have active forest management to keep them healthy, regenerate, & be sustainable to the changing uses and utilizations we see on the horizon. This is only accomplished by harvesting, burning, and reforestation. There is less than 0.01% of the USFS that is 0-5 years old. This is unacceptable as this means that there is ZERO plans in place for the future forest. As our forests mature it is imperative to make sure there is adequate young forest ready to fill the shoes of the maturing forest that will inevitably die, burn, or be destroyed by natural causes. Like stated earlier there should and could be areas (ie. steep terrain, wilderness areas, etc) that are a much better fit for this proposal for "Old growth" but the idea of having large swaths of old growth on any USFS lands is a liability and a complete hazard. Forest Pest, Wildfires, & natural selection weeds out a lot of these mis-managed areas and we don't need more areas to look like our Western US lands. Please consider being extremely selective on these "old growth" areas and let the lands that have good access, timber markets, & proximity to a growing interface be managed and not turned into a carbon sink. Thanks again for your time and have a great day!

James L. Brooks V

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