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Comments: This Forest Service's proposal is a much needed effort at land management across the national forest system. It will 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.

I urge you to evaluate the need for three changes that will be necessary for the proposal to achieve of the above goals:

The policy must include clear directives to protect and enhance existing old-growth forests and trees, ensuring that management actions are beneficial to long-term health.

Many existing old-growth forests, like those in the Pacific Northwest (my homeland) and eastern U.S., do not require active management. Appropriate restraint is as valuable as active management.

Consistent guidelines/standards are needed for the stewardship of sufficient older mature forests in order to restore old-growth distribution and abundance.