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Comments: I am writing in regard to the Land Management Plan Direction for Old-Growth Forest Conditions Across the National Forest System #65356:

As a concerned Oregonian who spends a fair amount of my free time backpacking in National Forests and trying to help avert climate change, I recommend that the draft rules be expanded with a prohibition against cutting of mature and old-growth areas in national forests and against the commercial exchange of old-growth trees. The proven benefit of these trees as carbon sinks (some of the very best in the world) and as promoters of biodiversity and soil health, and the shrinking percentage of these trees remaining in the forests, make them a high priority for protecting.

I also recommend adopting a broader approach to protecting ecosystems containing old-growth and mature forest, not just individual trees, requiring passive management of these landscape scale areas to promote old-growth forest characteristics.

Thank you for your work on these rules -

Rich Peppers