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First name: Stephanie
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Organization:
Title:
Comments: U.S. Forest Service,

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed amendments to national forest management plans to protect and enhance old-growth forests in alignment with President Biden's Executive Order 14072. This historic proposal is a significant step forward in addressing climate change, improving wildfire resilience, and preserving old-growth forests' invaluable ecological, cultural, and biodiversity values.

However, I urge you to strengthen the proposal with the following critical improvements:

Prevent Degradation of Existing Old-Growth Forests: The proposal must include clear directives to protect and enhance current old-growth conditions. Management actions should be strictly beneficial, with a focus on preventing any degradation of these critical ecosystems.

Recognize the Value of Passive Stewardship: Many old-growth forests, particularly in regions like the Pacific Northwest and the eastern U.S., do not require active management to thrive. The policy should recognize the importance of passive stewardship-allowing nature to take its course-and incorporate it as a key strategy in preserving old-growth forests.

Establish Clear Standards for Stewardship: To restore and expand old-growth forests, the proposal should establish clear, enforceable standards and guidelines. This will ensure that sufficient mature forests are conserved and managed to achieve the broader goal of increasing old-growth distribution and abundance.

By incorporating these changes, the U.S. Forest Service can ensure that this proposal not only protects existing old-growth forests but also promotes their expansion and resilience in the face of climate change. I urge you to adopt these improvements to make this policy as effective as possible in safeguarding our nation's forests for future generations.

Thank you for your consideration and for your efforts to protect our invaluable old-growth forests.

Sincerely,
Stephanie