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Comments: Thank you for the public comment opportunity. I am a citizen living in Los Angeles, where we are currently experiencing an increasing number of fires due to the climate emergency. The urgency of this situation cannot be overstated. Children miss school, the smoke causes scary health problems (like future dementia risk), and insurance rates skyrocket. So much needs to be done about this man-made calamity - one that is causing an epidemic of mental health issues - and one of the simplest and most elegant solutions is to plant more trees and leave what remains of our old-growth trees in the ground. Given the outstanding role mature and old-growth trees and forests play in curbing the climate and extinction crises, the Forest Service must NOW, not later, establish meaningful safeguards for their conservation.

For the sake of our children and the future, please end the commercial exploitation of the country's oldest forests and trees. I urge the U.S. Forest Service to significantly strengthen its final record of decision on the national old-growth amendment to (1) ensure meaningful protections for the United States' remaining old-growth forests and (2) lay a foundation that will increase the abundance and distribution of old-growth trees for future generations.

Yet the agency's proposed policy includes numerous loopholes that allow for continued - or even increased - logging of old-growth trees. Logging old-growth trees to save them from potential threats is a false solution. These climate champions are worth more standing.

To successfully protect old-growth forests and trees, the final national old-growth amendment must support a modified alternative 3 that does the following:

- Eliminate exceptions and end \*all\* logging of old-growth trees in national forests.
- Remove the economic incentive for logging old-growth by prohibiting the sale, exchange, and milling of old-growth trees. This should prevent all but truly rare removals of such trees.
- Set the stage for durable protections for mature trees and stands, which is paramount to expanding the abundance of future old growth. To recover old growth lost to past mismanagement, mature forests and trees must be protected from commercial logging.

Failure to protect old-growth forests in the face of the climate emergency undermines the objectives of this amendment, contravenes the direction of President Biden's Executive Order 14072, and ignores more than half a

million public comments the U.S. Forest Service received following the advance notice of proposed rulemaking it published in April 2023.

Chief Moore, we're counting on you to listen to the public! The public wants our government to act decisively on climate. The public is waiting for our elected officials and those overseeing our natural world and the ecological services they provide to act on our behalf. The public is crying out with half a million comments on the side of life, our planet and our future.