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Comments: Protection of Old Growth (OG) and mature forests should be mandatory and unequivocal. No logging of OG forests or individual trees that qualify under OG criteria should occur. The Amendment should preserve OG and mature forests without exception[hellip]no loopholes that allow commercial logging and management activities that degrade their character or qualifications for OG inclusion. Standard 1 should be reinstated in the final version of NOGA.

OG and mature forests are critical for carbon storage and sequestration. They are also the most fire and disease resistant.

The DEIS ignores the importance of, and the impacts of logging to, mycorrhizal fungi in the OG ecosystem. Ground disturbance in OG and mature forests negatively impact their vital functions.

We have a small percent of OG forests left in our country. They are not only critical to our climate future but also provide incredible biodiversity and human enjoyment. It is not just the old big trees but the complex understory and structure that are impacted when logging or intrusion occurs. We have more than enough secondary forest to meet commercial demands for wood products. Logging OG and mature forests should end. Maximize protections in the Amendment, and without ANY loopholes! Sincerely, Van P. Keele