

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/17/2024 4:00:00 AM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I support the decision to make a national old-growth amendment, and I support the stated objectives of the amendment, to preserve and steward old growth forests.

Wherever you have a choice, please lead towards maximum protection of mature trees, stands, and forests and away from commercial harvest. Mature trees are the cornerstone of our future old growth! Some commercial harvest may bring a variety of benefits, but the financial incentives are too likely to eclipse other concerns. When writing guidelines, please stipulate that trees are not to be harvested unless outside experts with no timber harvesting conflict of interest agree that cutting is the best option for the health of the stand. We must avoid cutting any NFS trees based on lobbying from commercial timber interests.

Please provide strong protections for mature and maturing forest stands. Thinning may be appropriate in past clearcuts that still have the characteristics of tree farms, but please use other management techniques in areas with more maturity and diversity. I support the use of both firefighting and prescribed fire, as well as weed removal and introduction of appropriate trees and understory plants.

Our maturing forests are our future. It's a tragedy that nearly all our old growth forests have been destroyed over the past centuries. We must conserve the remaining bits of old growth and offer maximum protection to the maturing forests that are slowly become our next generation of old growth. We all know the reasons: climate, water, air, plants and animals all need healthy old growth.