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Comments: Old growth and mature forests provide so many benefits: from carbon storage to protecting biodiversity, from filtering and purifying watersheds to keeping salmon and trout streams cool. Like a cathedral an old growth forest is a place to commune with God and show gratitude for His Creation. All humans need access to such a place.

Sadly the Forest Service's National Old Growth Amendment falls far short of its mandate to protect and expand older forests for a future increasingly beset by climate change and warming. As written the Amendment would still allow for numerous exceptions of commercial logging of old growth forests. One glaring example: in Northwest Montana's Yaak valley on the Kootenai National Forest an ancient inland rainforest in the Black Ram project. There the Forest Service plans to log 95,000 acres of 600-800 year old trees in very critical grizzly habitat. A much better plan that would be in keeping with the goal of the Amendment would be to leave all the old growth and mature forests intact and designate this entire area a "Climate Refuge". Another example is Alaska's Tongass National Forest where a draft EIS references the possibility of sales of old growth up to 5 million board feet PER YEAR!

I support and request an immediate end nationwide to commercial old growth harvest on federal lands. Mature forests - our future old growth - must also be protected to recover the old growth that has been lost to past mismanagement.

Thank you for your sincere consideration of my comments.