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Comments: Thank you for letting us submit comments on the June 2024 Draft Environmental Impact Statement regarding Amendments to Land Management Plans to Address Old-Growth Forests.

This initiative is important because the federal government manages approximately 32 million acres of old-growth and 80 million acres of mature forests.

The old growth forests are critical to human health because they provide us with clean water, clean air by absorbing carbon pollution, a place to recreate and connect with the land, and they supply habitat for wildlife.

The Old Growth Forest Amendments DEIS is good in many ways but it has some flaws.

It is flawed because it is limited to the management of old-growth forests, and does not include mature forests. It fails to preserve and guarantee old-growth forests for generations to come.

Because older trees are more fire resistant it is so important to protect them and to do so would benefit the U.S. Forestry Service's ability to prevent forest fires.

Another flaw is that the Old-Growth Forest Amendments DEIS does not ban the logging or timbering of old-growth forests. The U.S. Forest Service provides a multitude of loopholes through which old-growth forests can be harvested. This is a very funny way to protect these forests - to take them down. Who thought of that idea?

The Old-Growth Forest Amendments DEIS must be amended to prohibit logging or harvesting activities in old-growth forests except where it is absolutely necessary for the protection of the forests or human health and safety.

Unless the Old-Growth Forest Amendments DEIS is amended to include the protection of mature forests and strengthened to prohibit the harvesting of these forests except in the most necessary instances, the U.S. Forest Service will both fail the Biden administration's charge and the American people by eroding existing old-growth forests and not protecting the next generations' old-growth forests.

Thank you,

Angelica Rehkugler