

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/19/2024 12:54:09 PM

First name: Michael

Last name: Kantor

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Many thanks for this opportunity to comment on Old Growth and executive order 14702.

Old Growth forests are important to me at a very personal level. Much of my recreational time is spent in old forests where I live in the northern Rocky Mountains. In these forests, I enjoy nature photography, birding, and hunting. It is not a stretch to say that old forests are by far the most important ecosystem to me in our region.

Unfortunately, Old Growth has dwindled over the years to very low levels. This endangers many old growth dependent species as well as the habitat it self. National Forest Plans are failing to adequately protect old growth and to plan for regenerating old growth in the future.

In my region, at best only about 8 percent or less of National Forest lands are allocated to old growth. And the new forest plans just coming on line are abandoning dedicated Management Areas in favor of a floating or rotational approach. These policies, will endanger species of wildlife dependent on old growth for crucial parts of their life cycle. Around here, some of the species threatened long term by these policies include the Fisher, Pacific Marten, American Marten, Lynx, Pileated Woodpecker, Lewis's Woodpecker, and Northern Goshawk.

For these reasons, Forest Plans are at odds with the President's Executive Order 14072 to conserve old forests. In the big picture, of course, old forests also function as crucial carbon sinks to mitigate climate change.

I encourage National Policies to vigorously protect and enhance Old growth forest habitats in perpetuity.

Sincerely,

Mike Kantor