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Comments: Old growth forests are elemental to the health of humans, the environment and innumerable species and the most stringent restrictions must be placed on protecting them. From capturing carbon to cleaning the air to providing recreation, I urge the Forest Service to protect this area.

However, there are three crucial changes that need to be made to the proposal to ensure the achievement of these goals:

The policy must include direction that prevents degradation of existing old-growth forests and trees, ensuring that management actions are beneficial and "protect and enhance" old-growth conditions.

It is essential to acknowledge that many existing old-growth forests, like those in the Pacific Northwest and eastern U.S., do not require active management. Passive stewardship, intentionally choosing restraint, is as important as active management.

Clear standards and guidelines must be established to ensure the stewardship of sufficient older mature forests to restore old-growth distribution and abundance.

The time is now. Protect our forests!