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Comments: Dear US National Forest Service (NFS):

In your update of the nation's forest plans I would like you to consider the following:

*I understand that only 5% of the US timber production comes from lands managed by the NFS. That begs the question; why is there any logging on NFS managed lands. If it is really only 5%, just stop all logging.

*I have read that your DEIS has no language that specifically protects old-growth trees. Unfortunately, leaving the decision of whether to log old-growth trees up to even well-educated and well-intentioned NFS personnel will result in variety of policies across the country and will likely result in the logging of a significant number of old-growth trees. PLEASE USE LANGUAGE THAT PROTECTS OLD-GROWTH TREES FROM ALL LOGGING.

*The final record of decision should adopt a modified Alternative 3:

oEnd the cutting of old-growth trees in all national forests and all forest types and end the cutting of any trees in old-growth stands in infrequent fire forest types.

oEnd any commercial exchange of old-growth trees. Even in the rare circumstances where an old-growth tree is cut (e.g. public safety), that tree should not be sent to the mill. (Alternative 3 includes a "no commercial exchange" provision.)

oRemove the exception that allows for "de minimis" logging of old-growth trees.

oEliminate the agency discretion to manage old growth out of existence in pursuit of "proactive stewardship" goals.

*Mature trees are our future old-growth trees. President Biden's Executive Order 14072 called for the protection of Mature AND Old-Growth trees. Unfortunately, his final guidance fell short. PLEASE CORRECT THE PRESIDENT'S FAILURE BY INCLUDING THE PROTECTION OF MATURE TREES IN THE NEW FOREST PLANS.

*MATURE AND OLD-GROWTH tree absorb and store carbon, boost resilience to fire, regulate temperatures, filter drinking water, and shelter wildlife. WHY ARE WE LOGGING THEM???

*Most people have heard the Amazon labeled the "lungs of the earth." While the Tongass National Forest is not as large as the Amazon, it is the largest temperate forest in North America and it holds a third of the Earth's old growth temperate rainforests making it as important as the Amazon in terms of carbon sequestration and storage. AND YOU MANAGE IT. PLEASE PROTECT IT.

*National Forests should be held in public trust for the enormous benefits they provide to the climate, to wildlife, and to communities who depend on them. PLEASE LISTEN TO THE PEOPLE RATHER THAN PRIVATE PROFIT INTERESTS.