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Comments: I am pleased to see the Forest Service taking action on the preservation of old-growth forests and encourage you to refine your proposals to even better guarantee that we'll have these forests for future generations.

The existing old-growth forests have so far endured in large part without (and sometimes despite) active management. It is essential that this hands-off, passive management option be included and that simply letting the forests continue to exist without management intervention be supported. For any management plan to succeed, it's also essential to preserve entire local systems, not just portions of them. Piecemeal management that doesn't respect the forest elements' interdependence (only some of which we so far understand) is unlikely to work and may well actually cause unanticipated damage.

Since old-growth forests are by definition old, they won't endure forever. Potential successors must be identified, protected, and nurtured so that the system as a whole will endure. Regional differences must be factored into this process so that plans, action, and withholding of action will be appropriate to different situations.

Again, thank you for engaging in this essential work. We have an opportunity to make a huge difference in the future health, richness, and true productivity of the places we inhabit.