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Comments: Thank you for at least expressing the intention to protect and preserve our PRECIOUS old growth forests within our National Forest System, and the intention to protect and enable ("recruit") mature forests to grow into old growth forests. This is incredibly important to me-- and for all of "we the people". We need the stabilizing energy of very old trees on the earth in these turbulent times.

But how can we make certain this lofty intention comes to fruition?

*I support the more restrictive Alternative 3 if it includes: "Proactive stewardship in old- growth forests shall not result in commercial timber harvest."

* The definition of "proactive stewardship" must be broadened to include "passive stewardship" and "restraint"-- especially in moist temperate forests where fire and fuel reduction are not urgent issues. I realize that FSS experts may have difficulty deferring to Nature's proven expertise--therefore there must be language supporting "hands off" stewardship.

*FSS Preferred Alternative 2 currently allows for commercial timber sales as a result of vegetation management in old-growth forests. Within Alternative 2, the Forest Service MUST clarify that only younger trees within old-growth stands may be thinned and harvested. No harvest of old-growth trees should be permitted! These are often the most fire resilient and provide the most carbon storage for climate mitigation. And they are National Treasures and are irreplaceable within our lifetimes.

*This restriction limiting what loggers can cut when doing "vegetation management" must be closely supervised so that protected old growth trees are not surreptitiously harvested out of greed, or graft.

*Reinstate Standard 1 from the Notice of Intent (NOI) establishing that management activities "must not degrade or impair" old-growth forests. I am appalled that new language in the DEIS states that there is no requirement that areas of old-growth forests continue to meet the definition of old-growth when managed for the purpose of proactive stewardship. FSS MUST reinstate Standard 1 and clearly state that management activities within old-growth forests must not cause the forest to lose old-growth status.

*The final Old-Growth Amendment MUST include guidelines for designating and stewarding mature stands that are best suited to become old-growth. These should include a proper representation of all forest types within each management area, with connectivity and redundancy to account for future disturbance.

* Overly broad exceptions must be rooted out. Phrases such as not having to comply with restrictions if old growth tree removal is for "incidental activity"; or that old growth conservation is "subordinate to other activities".

I can imagine there is a concern to leave some "wiggle room" so that FSS's "hands are not tied" in the face of unforeseeable future climate phenomena-- but remember: that wiggle room can also be used to wiggle out of doing what this amendment is attempting to prescribe.

Trees are at our mercy. They just stand there, patiently, facing the ages. And all the varieties of human impact.

And remember that diversity is paramount. No more herbicides aimed at eradicating certain members of the

forest community. Research has shown that they all support each other, ESPECIALLY THE MOTHER TREES, who are precisely the ones typically targeted for extraction as they bring the most profits. The ones this amendment is intended to protect.

Let's really do this right and make certain mother trees are there to help the young ones grow up, in perpetuity.

Thank you