

To: The Honorable Tracy Stone-Manning, Bureau of Land Management Director
The Honorable Randy Moore, U.S. Forest Service Chief
The Honorable John Podesta, Senior Advisor to the President
The Honorable Brenda Mallory, Council on Environmental Quality Chair
The Honorable Ali Zaidi, White House National Climate Advisor

Re: Next Steps on Mature and Old-Growth Rulemaking

Date: November 8th, 2023

Dear Tracy Stone-Manning, Randy Moore, John Podesta, Brenda Mallory, and Ali Zaidi,

Thank you for your leadership in ensuring durable protections for mature and old-growth forests on federal lands as a critical natural climate solution in the United States. We are writing to respectfully request that the administration make concrete progress to advance a rulemaking to protect these forests from threats, including logging. As part of this, agency leadership must provide interim direction so that current and planned logging projects do not constrain the development of a mature and old growth forest climate rule.

The Department of Agriculture and Department of the Interior must continue to pursue a rulemaking that will protect mature and old-growth forests and trees, building on USFS's Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and BLM's proposed public lands rule. In parallel, the Departments must ensure that current and proposed logging projects do not undermine the ability of mature and old-growth forests to act as natural climate solutions under a future rule.

Protecting mature and old-growth trees and forests is a critical climate resilience and mitigation strategy. These trees and forests store the most carbon on the landscape and are often the most resilient to the impacts of climate change, such as worsening wildfire. Further, they protect essential drinking watersheds, mitigate the impacts of flooding, provide critical habitat for threatened and endangered species, and offer numerous cultural and recreational values. Protecting these trees from commercial logging complements agencies' objectives to enhance the climate resilience of our federal forests.

Substantial progress on developing a durable rule, together with interim protections, would represent a clear commitment and progress on this important climate issue. As funding hits the ground from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and Inflation Reduction Act to protect communities from the threat of fire, we must ensure mature and old-growth trees are not cut as an unnecessary side effect of certain management activities.

Sincerely,

350 Eugene
350 Mass
350 PDX
350 Salem Oregon
350 Seattle
Alaska Wilderness League
Applegate Siskiyou Alliance
Bark
Black Hills Sierra Group, South Dakota
Blue Mountains Biodiversity Project
Californians for Western Wilderness
CalWild
Cascadia Climate Action Now
Cascadia Wildlands
Center for Biological Diversity
Center for Responsible Forestry
Central Oregon LandWatch
Chattooga Conservancy
Citizens Climate Lobby, Bend OR Chapter
City Repair
Climate Communications Coalition
Climate Reality Project Portland Oregon
Climate Writers
Coast Range Association
Conservation Northwest
Cottonwood Environmental Law Center
Creation Justice Ministries
Deer Creek Valley Natural Resources Conservation Association
Earth Ethics, Inc.
Earth Law Center
Earth Neighborhood Productions
Earthjustice
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon
Endangered Species Coalition
Environment America
Environmental Law & Policy Center
Environmental Protection Information Center (EPIC)
Extinction Rebellion Portland
Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs
Firefighters United for Safety, Ethics, and Ecology (FUSEE)

Forest Keeper
Forest Web
Forests Forever
Friends of Big Ivy
Friends of Douglas-fir National Monument
Friends of the Clearwater
Friends of the Kalmiopsis
Friends of Trees
Gallatin Wildlife Association
Gallatin Yellowstone Wilderness Alliance
Gila Resources Information Project
Great Old Broads for Wilderness, Cascade-Vocanoes Chapter
Great Old Broads for Wilderness, Northwest Montana
Great Old Broads for Wilderness, Polly Dyer Seattle Broads
Great Old Broads for Wilderness, Rogue Valley BroadBand
Great Old Broads for Wilderness, Willamette Valley Broadband
Green Snohomish
GreenLatinos
I Heart Pisgah
Idaho Conservation League
Interfaith EarthKeepers
Keep Sespe Wild (Calif)
Kentucky Heartwood
Kettle Range Conservation Group
Klamath Forest Alliance
KS Wild
League of Conservation Voters
Legacy Forest Defense Coalition
Los Padres ForestWatch
Massachusetts Forest Watch
MCAT
Mountain Valley Climate Action
Natural Resources Law
New Jersey Forest Watch
New Mexico Wild
Norbeck Society
Northeastern Minnesotans for Wilderness
NRDC
Ohio Environmental Council
Old-Growth Forest Network

Oregon Interfaith Power and Light
Oregon Wild
Patagonia
Peoples Voice on Climate
Portland Audubon's Ten Mile Creek Sanctuary
Prairie Hills Audubon Society
Rachel Carson Council
RESTORE: The North Woods
Sequoia ForestKeeper
Sierra Club
Soda Mountain Wilderness Council
South Umpqua Rural Community Partnership
Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance
Speak For Trees Too, West Virginia
Standing Trees
The City Repair Project
The Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Oregon
The Forest Advocate
The Ocean Project
Tree Action Group, Thurston Climate Action Team
Twin Harbors Waterkeeper
Umpqua Natural Leadership Science Hub
Umpqua Watersheds
Western Environmental Law Center
Western Watersheds Project
Whatcom Million Trees Project
Wild Orca
WildEarth Guardians
Williams Community Forest Project
Women's Earth and Climate Action Network (WECAN)
Yaak Valley Forest Council