June 15th, 2022

Dear Chair Pingree,

We respectfully request that you include language that recognizes the importance of conserving our country’s mature and old-growth forests on federal lands for their climate, biodiversity, community, and other values in the FY2023 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations report language.

In the Earth Day Executive Order 14072, Strengthening the Nation's Forests, Communities, and Local Economies, the Biden Administration established mature and old-growth forest conservation as a cornerstone of U.S. climate policy. Urgent action on this Executive Order is needed to conserve the older trees and stands we have left on federal forest lands to address the threats these forests face today, including the pressing threat of logging.

The United States is facing twin societal and ecological crises from the impacts of climate change and biodiversity loss and must prioritize solutions that match the scale of the threat. Conservation and recovery of mature and old-growth trees and forests on federal lands represents a cost-effective, near-term natural climate solution that can help us address these twin threats by simultaneously sequestering and storing carbon pollution and safeguarding imperiled species.

Older forest protections are complementary to federal agencies' efforts to achieve numerous other management objectives, including climate resilience, access to clean drinking water for communities, wildfire resilience, and world-class fishing and hunting and other outdoor recreation opportunities. Further, conservation of mature and old-growth forests will also help position the United States as an international leader in forest conservation and natural climate solutions, offering a model for other nations to follow.

In implementing this Executive Order, the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management must act quickly, consulting scientific knowledge to define, inventory, and identify all existing threats to these forests, including logging, and rapidly develop and implement durable policy solutions to address those threats and protect and conserve these old trees and forests. A scientifically robust approach and an active effort to solicit public engagement are necessary for successful outcomes. We look to you and your committee to ensure a transparent, timely process.

Sincerely,
350 Eugene
350 PDX
350 Seattle
Alaska Wilderness League
Alpine Lakes Protection Society (ALPS)
Beyond Toxics
Bozeman Broadband, Great Old Broads for Wilderness
Businesses for Conservation and Climate Action, American Sustainable Business Network
California Environmental Voters
CalWild
Cascade-Volcanoes Chapter, Great Old Broads for Wilderness
Cascadia Climate Action Now
Cascadia Wildlands
Center for Biological Diversity
Center for Responsible Forestry
Central Oregon Bitterbrush Broads, Great Old Broads for Wilderness
Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center
Climate Reality, Baltimore Area Chapter
Conservation Northwest
Deer Creek Valley Natural Resources Conservation Association
Defenders of Wildlife
DPO Environmental Caucus
Earth Law Center
Earthjustice
Endangered Species Coalition
Environment America
Environmental Protection Information Center (EPIC)
Extinction Rebellion PDX
Foothill Conservancy
Forest Keeper
Forest Web
Friends of Big Ivy
Friends of Plumas Wilderness
Gallatin Wildlife Association
Great Old Broads for Wilderness
I Heart Pisgah
Inland Ocean Coalition
Klamath Forest Alliance
KS Wild
League of Conservation Voters
Lincoln County Water Systems Alliance (LCWSA)
Los Padres ForestWatch
NAACP Maryland State Conference
National Parks Conservation Association
Northeastern Minnesotans for Wilderness
Old-Growth Forest Network
Oregon Wild
Patagonia
Save Massachusetts Forests
Sierra Club
Sierra Forest Legacy
Soda Mountain Wilderness Council
Southeast Alaska Conservation Council
Southern Environmental Law Center
Standing Trees
SunrisePDX
The Fire Restoration Group
The Wilderness Society
Umpqua Natural Leadership Science Hub
Umpqua Watersheds
Vermonters for a Clean Environment
Western Environmental Law Center
Wild Heritage
WildEarth Guardians
Wildlands Network
Willamette Valley Broadband, Great Old Broads for Wilderness
Winter Wildlands Alliance
Women's Earth and Climate Action Network (WECAN)