

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  
Kitsap Environmental 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)