



Dear Chief Moore,

Thank you for committing to protect existing old-growth forests and trees across the United States. We, of the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life, write to you as concerned citizens, family members, and people of faith concerned with the conservation and wise stewardship of all of Creation – including our national forests.

Old growth stands are now painfully few and far between; they offer incalculable value beyond board-feet-per-acre; and they are truly an irreplaceable resource. Our values, in tandem with our reading of the economic and social contexts for your impending decision, all point toward far stronger protections than anything seen to date.

As you well know, prioritizing old growth trees and forests will have an outsized impact on confronting the climate crisis via carbon sequestration; it will do much toward addressing today's alarming loss of biodiversity; it will help ensure that those that come after us can breathe a little easier (literally!). For these reasons we specifically ask that the amendment include:

- Ending the felling and logging of *all* old growth trees and forests;
- Eliminating the commercial exchange of old growth trees;
- Inclusion of *all* old growth trees and forests – without restrictive definitions that will limit protections;
- Prioritizing the protection of *mature* forests, which are en route to becoming old growth themselves, especially in bioregions where old growth can scarcely be found; and
- Incorporating strong monitoring and accountability measures, for robust implementation.

Old growth trees and forests have incalculable intrinsic value. Where our predecessors saw lumber and opportunity, we see priceless remnants of Divine handiwork, and spaces in the most urgent need of protection. It is vital that you establish the strongest possible safeguards for these anchors of key ecosystems, and protectors of our global climate.

With previous acknowledgement of ecological harm done by inappropriate logging projects, and documented benefits for preserving the health and safety of mature trees, the solutions you implement must match the magnitude of the threats that we and future generations face.

Please prioritize climate justice, public health, and care for Creation in protecting our magnificent old growth trees – and in engaging Tribal Nations, the public, and our communities while doing so. Our descendants, our neighbors, our conscience and our faith demand no less. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Israel Harris, Advocacy Director; Rabbi Fred Scherlinder Dobb, Rabbinic Consultant; and Rabbi Daniel Swartz, Executive Director – Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life