



# FEDERAL FOREST

## RESOURCE COALITION

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**FFRC Statement on Mature & Old Growth Forests:** *April 20, 2023:* FFRC Executive Director Bill Imbergamo issued the following statement on the Forest Service’s inventory of “Mature and Old Growth Forests.”

“We’re pleased to see the Forest Service wrap up this inventory exercise. The Forest Service’s most recent science shows that fire, insects, and other factors are leading to large scale losses in mature forests, not timber harvest. Reforestation needs similarly are being driven by large fires.”

“We’re completely unsurprised that this limited inventory – which only looked at one-fifth of the Nation’s forests – found over 39 Million Acres of Mature & Old Growth National Forest is already in land uses that prohibit timber harvest. That’s more than 61,000 Square Miles, an area larger than the states of Hawaii, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Connecticut, Delaware, and Rhode Island combined. There are over 91 million acres of Mature and Old Growth on the National Forests, an area of over 143,000 square miles, larger than the state of Montana.”

“The Forest Service evaluated their own science and data sets and determined that no single definition of old growth or mature forests was feasible. Instead, we’ve got lots of data that doesn’t help the Forest Service do what needs to be done: manage unreserved forestlands to reduce fire danger, create wildlife habitat, and provide jobs in economically distressed rural areas.”

“Between the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, National Wildlife Refuges, and millions of acres of State parks, America has no shortage of public forestland, most of which is lightly

managed, if it's managed at all. Today's inventory shows we're not running out of mature trees."

"On many National Forests, particularly those east of the Mississippi River, we have millions of acres of older forest that are not producing quality wildlife habitat, sequestering carbon, or providing support for local forest-based economies. We need to focus on the broad array of forest types and ages, not fixate on an a single type of forest."

"FFRC will carefully review the Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on 'climate resilience' and file comments. We hope the Forest Service can get back to implementing the billions of dollars Congress provided to protect our forests from fires, bugs, and disease using proven management techniques, like forest thinning and the creation of fuel breaks."

For more information, contact Bill Imbergamo, Executive Director, at 703-629-6877 or [bill@fedforest.org](mailto:bill@fedforest.org)

*About the FFRC: FFRC is a national coalition of wood products companies, local governments, conservation groups united by concern for the National Forests. FFRC supports improving the management of the federal lands to support healthy forests and vibrant rural communities.*



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