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July 21, 2022

Roger Worthington
Worthy Garden Club
495 NE Bellevue Drive
Bend, OR 97701

Dear Roger,

Thank you for your emails and letters about protecting mature trees and old-growth forests.

As a member of the House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis, I understand the importance of natural solutions, including the protection of mature and old-growth forests. The harmful effects of climate change are becoming more dire, with observable effects already occurring in every corner of the country and the globe and impacts disproportionately borne by the most vulnerable communities.

Following communications from the Oregon delegation, in April of this year, President Biden issued an Executive Order to protect old-growth and mature forests. The order directs the Secretary of the Interior to define, identify, and complete an inventory of old-growth and mature forests on federal lands. Following the inventory, the Departments of Interior and Agriculture will analyze the threats to mature and old-growth forests and propose policies to promote conservation of mature and old-growth forests. My office looks forward to Secretary Haaland's report and is working with the Department of Interior to promote climate-smart forest management.

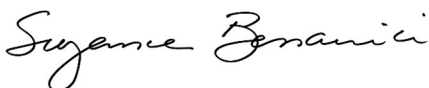
Mature forests are a natural and invaluable climate adaptation tool because of their ability to absorb and store carbon. Many current logging practices can have long-term detrimental impacts on hydrology and watershed health, underscoring the need to conserve remaining mature and old growth in essential watersheds. I oppose the logging of mature and old-growth federal forests, which would undermine efforts to mitigate the effects of and adapt to climate change and appears to be inconsistent with the intent of President Biden's Executive Order.

Earlier this year, I urged the USDA to expand its efforts to optimize the climate value of mature and old-growth forests throughout the country and within the USDA's and Department of Interior's climate response and strategies.

We are aware that the Crag Law Center filed a lawsuit last month on behalf of conservation groups to restore the Forest Service rule protecting trees larger than 21" in diameter. We have been in communication with the House Natural Resource Committee to share your concerns about this rule, which falls within their jurisdiction, and we will continue to monitor this issue.

I hope the Garden Club forest symposium you are hosting is informative and productive.

Best,



Suzanne Bonamici