To: The Honorable John Kerry, United States Special Presidential Envoy for Climate  
The Honorable Gina McCarthy, White House National Climate Advisor  
Cc: The Honorable Tom Vilsack, United States Secretary of Agriculture  
The Honorable Deb Haaland, United States Secretary of the Interior  
Re: Conserve Older Forests in the United States to Fight Climate Change  
Date: October 28th, 2021

The Honorable John Kerry and Gina McCarthy,

Conserving our last remaining older (mature and old-growth) forests and trees on federal public lands in the United States is one of our country’s most straightforward, impactful and most cost-effective climate solutions in addition to rapidly reducing greenhouse gas emissions across all sectors of the economy. Taking administrative action to halt the logging of older forests on the United States’ federal lands will represent a broad win for this Administration by mitigating and adapting to the current and future impacts of climate change, conserving habitat to counter the biodiversity crisis, and securing a wide range of co-benefits. Unfortunately, thus far the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management have not produced credible proposals for combating climate change nationwide, or for conserving carbon-rich older forests and trees on the lands they manage. The administration should correct that error by stopping the logging of older forests and trees on public lands in the United States.

Conserving all remaining mature and old-growth forests and trees on public lands is directly in line with several stated objectives of the Biden administration, including the Executive Order on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad and efforts to protect 30 percent of lands and waters by 2030. The Biden Administration also specifically highlighted forest protections in its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) strategy. It is critical that the US follows through on its climate commitments in the NDC and demonstrates meaningful action to other countries around the world through meaningful and concrete actions to conserve older forests and trees.

Older forests are important from a climate change mitigation perspective for at least two reasons. First, they store vast amounts of carbon accumulated over decades to centuries. Cutting those forests down emits the majority of that carbon back to the atmosphere. Second, older forests are sequestering vast amounts of carbon from the atmosphere—a critical tool as emissions reductions alone are an insufficient strategy for countering the worsening climate crisis.

The benefits of protecting older forests do not stop there. They are essential biodiversity reservoirs—the profound complexity of older forests sets the stage for the abundance of life found in these areas. And with a rapidly changing climate producing more droughts and greater storm events, older forests are well springs for clean water and flood control.
This summer, the Biden administration announced that it would halt large-scale old-growth logging in the Tongass National Forest. While a critical protective step, additional action is urgently needed to both expand older forest and tree protections across the United States and to ensure that the protections are enduring for the benefit of this and future generations. Instead of protecting older forests and trees, the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management have advanced controversial and problematic recommendations to intensively log public forests in the hopes of storing carbon in short-lived wood products. But comprehensive carbon accounting and numerous recent scientific publications do not support this narrative — it is clear that storing and sequestering carbon on the landscape is a far more effective strategy.

Unlike many other developed nations, the United States still has significant amounts of carbon-rich older forests and trees that can be drafted into the fight to address the climate and biodiversity crises. As the United States enters the international climate conference in Glasgow this November, it is vital that the Administration demonstrate leadership and restore US credibility through significant, effective climate actions. It is not enough to simply pressure developing countries on older forest and rainforest protections — the US must take meaningful action to conserve and restore carbon-rich forests and trees across all our forest types here at home. We strongly urge President Biden to take administrative action to halt the logging of older forests and trees on public lands in the United States, and to ensure federal agencies work to recover these carbon rich landscapes for their climate, biodiversity, and watershed benefits to our nation.

Sincerely,

Patricia Hine
President
350 Eugene

Susan Purser
Coordinator
350 Massachusetts Berkshire Node

David Perk
Leadership Team
350 Seattle

Brenna Bell
Forest Climate Manager
350PDX
Dave Toler  
Founder  
Advocates for Forest Carbon

Lisa Arkin  
Executive Director  
Beyond Toxics

Becky Knight  
President  
Alaska Rainforest Defenders

Alexey Zimenko  
Director General  
Biodiversity Conservation Center

Leah Donahey  
Legislative Director  
Alaska Wilderness League

Paula Hood  
Co-Director  
Blue Mountains Biodiversity Project

Marcia Stout  
Co-leader  
Aldo's Silver City Broadband of Great Old Broads for Wilderness

Pam Conley  
Leader  
Boise Chapter of Great Old Broads for Wilderness

David Moryc  
Senior Director  
American Rivers

Chris Morrill  
Executive Director  
California Wilderness Coalition

Luke Ruediger  
Executive Director  
Applegate Neighborhood Network

Molly Whitney  
Executive Director  
Cascade Forest Conservancy

Heather Cantino  
Steering Committee Chair  
Athens County's Future Action Network

Rebecca White  
Wildlands Director  
Cascadia Wildlands
Bonnie McKinlay  Theona Vyvial  
   Core Team Member  President  
CedarAction  Desert Rivers Audubon Society  

Randi Spivak  Vicki Weeks  
Public Lands Program Director  Georgia State Coordinator  
Center for Biological Diversity  Dogwood Alliance  

Mary Fleischmann  Michael Browning  
   CO-leader  Chair  
Central Oregon Bitter Brush Broads  Eagle Summit Wilderness Alliance  

Catherine Murray  Mary Gutierrez  
   Director  Director  
Cherokee Forest Voices  Earth Action, Inc.  

Tammy Domike  Blaine Miller-McFeeley  
   Community Organizer  Senior Legislative Representative  
Citizens for a Clean Harbor  Earthjustice  

Dave Werntz  Bruce Gordon  
Science and Conservation Director  President  
Conservation Northwest  EcoFlight  

Lauren McCain  Tara Thornton  
   Senior Federal Lands Policy Analyst  Deputy  
Defenders of Wildlife  Endangered Species Coalition  

Blaine Miller-McFeeley  
Senior Legislative Representative  
Earthjustice  

Bruce Gordon  
President  
EcoFlight  

Tara Thornton  
Deputy  
Endangered Species Coalition  

3
Ellen Montgomery
Public Lands Campaign Director
Environment America

Patrick Kelly-Fischer
Board Secretary
Environmental Action

Catherine Thomasson
Chair
Environmental Caucus of the DPO

Ann Mesnikoff
Federal Legislative Director
Environmental Law & Policy Center

Thomas Wheeler
Executive Director
Environmental Protection Information Center

Diane Meisenhelter
Member
Extinction Rebellion PDX

Timothy Ingalsbee, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Firefighters United for Safety, Ethics, and Ecology (FUSEE)

Will Harlan
Executive Director
Forest Keeper

Cristina Hubbard
Executive Director
Forest Web

Robert T. Leverett
President
Friends of Mohawk Trail State Forest

Michele Dieterich
Steering Committee
Friends of the Bitterroot

Jeff Juel
Montana Policy Director
Friends of the Clearwater

Alicia Hamann
Executive Director
Friends of the Eel River
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position/Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinton Nagel</td>
<td>President Gallatin Wildlife Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Scalia III, Psy.D.</td>
<td>President Gallatin Yellowstone Wilderness Alliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.D. McCrary</td>
<td>Executive Director Georgia ForestWatch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Stephen C. Frantz</td>
<td>Research Pathobiologist/Principal Global Environmental Options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felice Pace</td>
<td>Coordinator Grazing Reform Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelley Silbert</td>
<td>Executive Director Great Old Broads for Wilderness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy Working</td>
<td>Great Old Broads for Wilderness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darlene Chirman</td>
<td>Leadership team member Great Old Broads for Wilderness, Cascade Volcano Chapter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy Moas, Ph.D.</td>
<td>Senior Climate Campaigner Greenpeace USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellen Moyer, Ph.D.</td>
<td>Principal Greenvironment, LLC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrice Mutchnick</td>
<td>Director Heart of the Gila</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matt Reed</td>
<td>Public Lands Director High Country Conservation Advocates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sue Craig</td>
<td>Facilitator InterfaithEarthkeepers Eugene/Springfield</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Douglas Harr  
President  
Iowa Audubon

Chris Sacca  
Founder and Chairman  
Lowercarbon Capital

MarieClaire Egbert  
Campaign & Communications Director  
John Muir Project of Earth Island Institute

Fred Snow  
President  
Maine Association of Conservation Commissions

Ashley Lipscomb  
Director  
Kentucky Heartwood

Eliza Donoghue  
Director of Advocacy  
Maine Audubon

Kimberly Baker  
Executive Director  
Klamath Forest Alliance

Heather Spalding  
Deputy Director  
Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association

Joseph Vaile  
Climate Director  
Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center

Jill Linzee  
Co-Chair, Climate Change Issue Group  
Maine Unitarian Universalist State Advocacy Network

Michael Gaskill  
Chair  
Lincoln County Democratic Executive Committee

Julianne Gale  
Co-Founder  
Mason County Climate Justice

Bryant Baker  
Conservation Director  
Los Padres ForestWatch
Chris Matera  
Founder  
Massachusetts Forest Watch  

Rand Schenck  
Member  
Metro Climate Action Team  

Tracy Farwell  
Chair, Climate Action Team  
Multnomah County Dems Community Action  

Garett Rose  
Staff Attorney  
Natural Resources Defense Council  

Thomas Jervis  
President  
New Mexico Audubon Council  

Oscar Simpson  
State Chair  
New Mexico Sportsmen  

Mark Allison  
Executive Director  
New Mexico Wild  

Sue Sullivan  
teacher/parent  
NHS Environmental Club  

Kay Hawklee  
President  
Northern Arizona Audubon Society  

Joan Maloof  
Executive Director  
Old-Growth Forest Network  

John Bridge  
Board of Trustees President  
Olympic Park Advocates  

Julia DeGraw  
Coalition Director  
Oregon League of Conservation Voters  

Steve Pedery  
Conservation Director  
Oregon Wild  

Lindsey Berk  
Co-founder  
Origins of Food
Mary Booth
Director
Partnership for Policy Integrity

Kathy Johnson
Forest Practices Chair
Pilchuck Audubon Society

Sharon Arnold
Conservation Chair
Prescott Audubon Society

David Alba
State Chapter Leader
Progressive Democrats of America, Oregon Chapter

Robert K. Musil, Ph.D., M.P.H.
President & CEO
Rachel Carson Council

Oscar Simpson
Public Lands Chair
Rio Grande Indivisible, NM

Alison Gallensky
Principal Conservation Geographer
Rocky Mountain Wild

Jimbo Buickerood
Lands and Forest Protection Program Manager
San Juan Citizens Alliance

Christine Canaly
Director
San Luis Valley Ecosystem Council

Kirin Kennedy
Deputy Legislative Director
Sierra Club

Andrea Feniger
Chapter Director
Sierra Club Alaska

Susan Britting
Executive Director
Sierra Forest Legacy

Dave Willis
Chair
Soda Mountain Wilderness Council
Stanley Petrowski  
President/Director  
South Umpqua Rural Community Partnership

Chiara D'Angelo  
Tongass Forest Program Manager  
Southeast Alaska Conservation Council

Alan Journet  
Co-facilitator  
Southern Oregon Climate Action Now

Zack Porter  
Director  
Standing Trees

Mark Nelson  
Founding member  
Standing Trees Vermont

Matt Stevenson  
Forest Team Lead  
Sunrise PDX

Don Ogden  
Producer/Co-host  
The Enviro Show

Jason Kahn  
Vice President  
The Rewilding Institute

Sam Hitt  
President  
The Santa Fe Forest Coalition

Liza Crosse  
Representative/Facilitator  
The Siskiyou Crest Coalition

Josh Hicks  
Senior Campaign Manager  
The Wilderness Society

Cindy Haws  
President  
Umpqua Natural Leadership Science Hub

Angela Jensen  
Conservation/ Legal Director  
Umpqua Watersheds

Dr Susan Leopold  
Executive director  
United Plant Savers
Donna Stevens
Executive Director
Upper Gila Watershed Alliance

Mark Miller
Executive Director
Virginia Wilderness Committee

Laurel Facey
Secretary
Wendell State Forest Alliance

Susan Jane Brown
Wildlands Program Director & Staff Attorney
Western Environmental Law Center

Mary Williams
President
White Mountain Audubon Society

Thomas Hollender
President
White Mountain Conservation League

Maggie Johnston
Executive Director
Wild Alabama

Marla Fox
Staff Attorney
WildEarth Guardians

Dominick DellaSala, Ph. D
Chief Scientist
Wild Heritage, a project of Earth Island Institute

Sam Hitt
Founder
Wild Watershed

Chandra LeGue
Leadership Team member
Willamette Valley Broadband, Great Old Broads for Wilderness

Cheryl Bruner
Secretary
Williams Community Forest Project

Osprey Orielle Lake
Executive Director
Women's Earth and Climate Action Network (WECAN)
Rick Bass
Board Chair
Yaak Valley Forest Council

Nancy Meister
President
Yuma Audubon Society