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Mature and Old-Growth Forests - Definition, Identification, and Initial Inventory on Lands Managed by the Forest Service/Bureau of Land Management: U.S. Forest Service Report

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The United States Forest Service (“Service”) issued an April 2023 report titled:

Mature and Old-Growth Forests: Definition, Identification, and Initial Inventory on Lands Managed by the Forest Service/Bureau of Land Management (“Report”)

The *Report* contains:

- Initial estimates of old-growth and mature forests across all Service and Bureau of Land Management (“BLM”) lands
- The first national inventory of old-growth and mature forests focused specifically on Service and BLM lands
- A demonstration that both old-growth and mature forests are generally widely distributed geographically across land use allocations

The *Report* was prepared in fulfillment of the Biden Administration Executive Order 1407, Section 2(b). This Executive Order is titled:

Strengthening the Nation’s Forest, Communities, and Local Economies

The Executive Order is stated to have required the inventory of mature and old-growth forests along with setting reforestation targets on federally managed lands. It also required that reforestation opportunities be analyzed on state, Tribal, and private lands.

The *Report* estimates an initial inventory of more than 32 million acres of old-growth and around 80 million acres of mature forests across 200 types of forests. Old-growth forests are stated to represent 18 percent and mature forests an additional 45 percent of all forested land managed by the Service and BLM.

The national-scale inventory is stated to have been conducted by applying the old-growth and mature working definitions to Forest Inventory and Analysis field plot data.

Key subheadings in the *Report* include:

- Narrative Frameworks and Working Definitions
- Old-growth and Mature Forest Initial Inventory Estimates
- Background
- Old-Growth and Mature Forest Definition Chronology
- Old-Growth and Mature Forests Executive Actions and Legislation
- Tribal, Stakeholder, and Public Perspective Considerations
- Definition Development
- Old-Growth Forest Definition Development
- Mature Forest Definition Development
- FIGSS Method for Mature Forest Definitions
- Estimation
- Discussion
- Context and Relation to Other Estimates
- Appropriateness of Data
- Assumptions and Limitations
- Stages of Stand Development
- Limitations for Old-Growth and Mature Inventory
- Refinements and Opportunities for Future Research
- Next Steps

The Appendices include specific discussions of all 10 United States regions.

A copy of the *Report* can be downloaded [here](#).