To: The Honorable Gina McCarthy, White House National Climate Advisor
The Honorable John Kerry, United States Special Presidential Envoy for Climate

Cc: The Honorable Tom Vilsack, United States Secretary of Agriculture
The Honorable Deb Haaland, United States Secretary of the Interior
The Honorable Robert Bonnie, USDA Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy and Senior Advisor for Climate
The Honorable Ali Zaidi, White House Deputy National Climate Advisor

Re: The Path to Glasgow Must Start in the Forest

Date: April 13th, 2021

Dear Gina McCarthy and John Kerry,

It is critically important that the United States, under President Biden, resume its role as an international leader in addressing the climate and biodiversity crises. This November, the U.S. delegation will once again enter the world stage at the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Glasgow, Scotland. Other countries will look to us to demonstrate leadership after four years of environmental and climate setbacks. Protecting forest carbon sinks is essential to the Paris Agreement and will be a priority for leaders from around the world — providing the largest, most cost effective, natural climate solution available. There will rightly be a focus on halting deforestation in the Amazon rainforest and other tropical regions. But closer to home, it will be equally essential to demonstrate U.S. climate ambition and global leadership by henceforth protecting our own remaining mature and old-growth forests on federal lands, especially the carbon-rich, temperate rainforests of the Pacific Northwest and the Tongass National Forest, starting with an immediate moratorium until a permanent rule can be adopted.

These ecosystems store even more carbon per acre than tropical rainforests.\(^1\) Protecting our temperate forests in the Western U.S. from logging would store the equivalent of 8 years of

---


regional fossil fuel emissions,\textsuperscript{2} and the Tongass National Forest alone contains 8 percent of the nation’s total forest carbon stores.\textsuperscript{3}

The landscape of the Pacific Northwest and Alaska is defined by forests — they are a deeply ingrained piece of our culture, economy, health, and wellbeing. For indigenous communities, temperate rainforests also support a cultural heritage stretching back thousands of years. But if mature and old growth forests continue to be logged, these communities may suffer as salmon, shellfish, and other culturally significant species decline as a result of changes in streamflow and water temperature.\textsuperscript{4}

These and other largely intact older forests are also a key solution for confronting the planet’s related extinction crisis\textsuperscript{5} by buffering species from more extreme climate impacts and securing myriad co-benefits, such as clean water. Establishing permanent protections for these essential carbon reservoirs and climate sanctuaries is directly in line with the Biden administration’s goal to protect 30 percent of lands and waters by 2030.

To maximize our country’s impact in Glasgow, prioritizing the mitigation contribution of public forests must be a central component of our own climate strategy. Establishing permanent protections for temperate rainforests in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska, along with mature federal forests and trees nationwide, will be one of the most cost-effective and essential near-term climate solutions the United States can employ.

Sincerely,

Patricia Hine
President
350 Eugene

Debby Garman
Team Lead
350.org Washington County

Patricia Hine
President
350 Eugene

Leslie Grush
Volunteer organizer
350PDX

Dave Toler
Founder

Advocates for Forest Carbon


Rebecca Knight  
President  
Alaska Rainforest Defenders

Andy Moderow  
State Director  
Alaska Wilderness League

Natalie Dawson  
Executive Director  
Audubon Alaska

Brenna Bell  
Staff Attorney  
Bark

Grace Brahler  
Oregon Climate Action Plan & Policy Manager  
Beyond Toxics

Mary Fleischmann  
Co-leader  
Bitterbrush Broads Chapter of Great Old Broads for Wilderness

Pam Conley  
Leadership Team Member  
Boise Chapter of Great Old Broads for Wilderness

Chris Morrill  
Executive Director  
California Wilderness Coalition

Molly Whitney  
Executive Director  
Cascade Forest Conservancy

Dylan Plummer  
Grassroots Organizer  
Cascadia Wildlands

Bonnie McKinlay  
Member  
CedarAction

Randi Spivak  
Public Lands Program Director  
Center for Biological Diversity

Stephen Kropp  
Director  
Center for Responsible Forestry

Donald Goldberg  
Executive Director  
Climate Law & Policy Project

Dave Werntz  
Science and Conservation Director  
Conservation Northwest

Serena Barton  
President  
Deer Creek Valley Natural Resources Conservation Association

Bart Johnsen-Harris  
Senior Government Relations Representative  
Defenders of Wildlife

Blaine Miller-McFeeley  
Senior Legislative Representative  
Earthjustice

Ellen Montgomery  
Public Lands Campaign Director  
Environment America

Thomas Wheeler  
Executive Director  
Environmental Protection Information Center (EPIC)
Ann Mesnikoff  
Federal Legislative Director  
Environmental Law & Policy Center

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

Cristina M. Hubbard  
Executive Director  
Forest Web

Alicia Hamann  
Executive Director  
Friends of the Eel River

Darlene Chirman  
Leadership Team  
Cascade Volcano Chapter of Great Old Broads for Wilderness

Veronica Warnock  
Conservation Director  
Greater Hells Canyon Council

Chad Hanson  
Director and Principal Ecologist  
John Muir Project of Earth Island Institute

Kimberly Baker  
Executive Director  
Klamath Forest Alliance

Joseph Vaile  
Climate Director  
Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center

Alex Taurel  
Conservation Program Director  
League of Conservation Voters

Jeff Kuyper  
Executive Director  
Los Padres ForestWatch

Mark Wenzler  
Senior Vice President of Conservation Programs  
National Parks Conservation Association

Niel Lawrence  
Alaska Director and Senior Attorney  
Natural Resources Defence Council

Rene Voss  
Director  
Natural Resources Law

Oscar Simpson  
State Chair  
New Mexico Sportsmen

Larry Glass  
Executive Director  
Northcoast Environmental Center

Matt Norton  
Policy & Science Director  
Northeastern Minnesotans for Wilderness

Julia DeGraw  
Coalition Director  
Oregon League of Conservation Voters

Steve Pedery  
Conservation Director  
Oregon Wild

Oscar Simson  
Public Lands Chair  
Rio Grande Indivisible, NM

Larry Glass  
Executive Director  
Safe Alternatives for our Forest Environment
Kirin Kennedy  
Deputy Legislative Director  
Sierra Club  

Dave Willis  
Chair  
Soda Mountain Wilderness Council  

Stanley Petrowski  
President/Director  
South Umpqua Rural Community Partnership  

Meredith Trainor  
Executive Director  
Southeast Alaska Conservation Council  

Alan Journet Ph.D.  
Co-facilitator  
Southern Oregon Climate Action Now  

Matt Stevenson  
Forest Team Co-Captain  
Sunrise Movement PDX  

Raphaella Waterbury  
Communications Lead  
Sunrise Redding  

Cindy Haws  
President  
Umpqua Natural Leadership Science Hub  

Angela Jensen  
Conservation & Legal Director  
Umpqua Watersheds  

Courtney Kaltenbach  
Co-Director  
University of Oregon Climate Justice League  

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

Marla Fox  
Staff Attorney & Wild Places Interim Program Director  
WildEarth Guardians  

Josh Hicks  
Senior Campaign Manager  
The Wilderness Society  

Cyndi Anderson  
Leader  
Willamette Valley Broadband Chapter of the Great Old Broads for Wilderness  

Osprey-Orielle Lake  
Executive Director  
Women's Earth and Climate Action Network (WECAN)