Response to Reviewer #1

We are grateful to the reviewer for the thoughtful comments on the manuscript. Our point-to-point responses to each comment are as follows (reviewer's comments are in black font and our responses are in blue font).

General Comments

This work studied nocturnal oxidation of alpha-pinene synergistically by O_3 , NO_3 , and OH. The manuscript reports that in the synergistic $O_3 + NO_3$ regime, CHO-HOM production is substantially suppressed compared to O_3 -only regime, due to rapid termination reactions between RO_2 formed from alpha-pinene + NO_3 and those formed from ozonolysis and OH oxidation, which is 10-100 times faster. This effect also leads to a reduction in ultralow and extremely low-volatility organic compounds. The work is solid and well written. However, there are a few issues and unclear details that need to be addressed before published at ACP.

Specific Comments

1. Line 23 in Abstract. Stating that termination reactions are "10-100 times more efficient" is vague. In the kinetic model later, does it assume that the difference is only about $RO_2 + RO_2$ reaction rate constant, but not about dimer yields from these reactions?

Response: Thanks for the reviewer's comment. In the kinetic model, the difference is only about the cross-reaction rate constant of $RO_2 + RO_2$ and not the dimer formation yields.

We have modified the description as "Measurement-model comparisons further reveal that the cross-reaction rate constants of NO₃-derived RO₂ with O₃-derived RO₂ are on average 10 - 100 times larger than those of NO₃-derived RO₂ with OH-derived RO₂."

2. Line 117. A reaction time of 25 seconds is long enough to form particles in precursors' concentrations are high. Was particle measurement performed for this?

Response: We used a scanning mobility particle sizer (SMPS, TSI) employing both long and nano differential mobility analyzers (model 3081 and 3085), with a measurable size range of 4.61 - 156.8 nm and 14.6 - 661.2 nm, respectively, to monitor particle formation in the flow tube. Even under conditions with the highest initial α -pinene concentration (500 ppb), only a tiny amount of particles was formed, with mass concentrations of $(6.4 \pm 1.6) \times 10^{-3}$ and $(1.0 \pm 0.3) \times 10^{-2} \,\mu g \, \text{m}^{-3}$ and number concentrations of 574 ± 138 and $256 \pm 68 \, \text{cm}^{-3}$ in the O₃-only regime (Exp 5) and O₃ + NO₃ regime (Exp 11), respectively. These results suggest that the formation of SOA particles in the HOM formation experiments is negligible and would have no significant influence on the fate of RO₂ and closed-shell products.

We have added the results of the particle size measurements to Section 2.1 of the revised manuscript.

"A scanning mobility particle sizer (SMPS, TSI), consisting of an electrostatic classifier (model 3082), a condensation particle counter (model 3756), and a long or nano differential mobility analyzer (model 3081 and 3085) with a measurable size range of 4.61 - 156.8 nm and 14.6 - 661.2 nm respectively, was employed to monitor the formation of particles in the flow tube. During the HOM formation experiments, even under conditions with the highest initial α -pinene concentration (500 ppb), only a tiny amount of particles was formed, with mass concentrations of (6.4 ± 1.6) × 10⁻³ and (1.0 ± 0.3) × 10⁻² µg m⁻³ and number concentrations of 574 ± 138 and 256 ± 68 cm⁻³ in the O₃-only regime (Exp 5) and O₃ + NO₃ regime (Exp 11), respectively. These results suggest that the formation of SOA particles in the HOM formation experiments is negligible and would have no significant influence on the fate of RO₂ and closed-shell products."

3. Section 2.1. A few important details should be provided in this section: (1) under the mixed O_3/NO_3 condition, how much of alpha-pinene was oxidized by either oxidant? (2) Was NO_2 also present when alpha-pinene was oxidized? (3) What was the typically reacted alpha-pinene concentrations? (4) A model-based estimation of RO_2 bimolecular lifetime under these conditions should be provided. And (5) Did the authors assume that in NO_3 -CIMS, all HOM species have the same sensitivity?

Response: Thanks for the reviewer's comments.

(1) We have added the concentration of α -pinene oxidized by each oxidant in Table S1 in the Supplement.

(2) NO_2 was present in the experiments, and we have added a description of its concentration in Section 2.1.

"The initial NO₂ concentration in the flow tube was ~4.5 ppb."

(3) The total reacted α -pinene under different experimental conditions is also provided in Table S1.

(4) We have added the model-predicted RO_2 bimolecular lifetimes under different experimental conditions in Section 2.3.

"With these default kinetic parameters, the RO₂ bimolecular lifetimes were predicted to be 10.9 - 25.9 s in the O₃-only regime and 8.4 - 11.8 s in the O₃ + NO₃ regime in the HOM formation experiments."

(5) In this study, we assume that the $C_xH_yO_z$ -HOMs derived from ozonolysis and OH oxidation of α pinene exhibit the same sensitivity in nitrate-CIMS. However, the highly oxygenated organic nitrates may have a significantly lower sensitivity compared to the $C_xH_yO_z$ -HOM counterparts, given that the substitution of -OOH or -OH groups by $-ONO_2$ group in the molecule would reduce the number of Hbond donors, which is a key factor determining the sensitivity of nitrate-CIMS (Shen et al., 2022; Hyttinen et al., 2015). Recently, Li et al. (2024) used CI-Orbitrap with ammonium or nitrate reagent ions to detect oxygenated organic molecules in the synergistic $O_3 + NO_3$ regime and found that both the ion intensity of ONs and their signal contribution to the total dimers were much lower when using nitrate as reagent ions.

We have added the above paragraph to Section 2.1 of the revised manuscript.

4. Line 185-189. Besides these two reasons, it is also possible that the presence of NO_2 scavenged all acyl RO₂, which may be key to forming dimers. Earlier in the text, the authors stated that $RO_2 + NO_2$ reactions are considered. How about acylRO₂ + NO₂ specifically to remove acylRO₂s out of the system? ^{CI}RO₂ contain more aldehydes and thus its product RO₂s are more likely acylRO₂ than the ^{OH}RO₂. This could make sense if NO₂ has a major impact on the termination reactions for the ^{CI}RO₂ pathways.

Response: We appreciate the reviewer's point. The model simulations show that the concentrations of acyl RO₂ decrease by 60 - 79 % due to the consumption by NO₂. However, our previous study found that in the absence of NO, acyl RO₂ accounts for a significant fraction (32 - 94%) of C₇ - C₉ RO₂ but a very small fraction (0.4%) of C₁₀ RO₂ (Zang et al., 2023). As the α -pinene HOMs are dominated by C₁₀ species, the consumption of acyl RO₂ by NO₂ only leads to reductions of 4 - 5 % and 7 - 12 % in total

 $C_xH_yO_z$ -HOM monomers and dimers, respectively. Therefore, the significant reduction in $C_xH_yO_z$ -HOMs in the synergistic oxidation regime is primarily due to the cross reactions of ^{CI}RO₂ and ^{OH}RO₂ with ^{NO3}RO₂. In addition, because of the very small contribution of acyl RO₂ to total C_{10} RO₂, their consumption by NO₂ leads to less than 2% reduction in the C_{10} ^{CI}RO₂ signals, and the larger decrease in ^{CI}RO₂ and related HOMs as compared to the OH-derived ones is mainly due to the more efficient cross reactions of ^{NO3}RO₂ with ^{CI}RO₂ than with ^{OH}RO₂.

We have added a discussion of the effect of NO_2 in Section 3.1.

"Meanwhile, the depletion of acyl RO₂ by NO₂ only leads to a small reduction (4 - 5% and 7 - 12%, respectively) in total C_xH_yO_z-HOM monomers and dimers in the synergistic regime compared to the O₃-only regime."

We have also added a discussion of the effect of NO₂ on the relative changes in ^{CI}RO₂ in Section 3.2.

"Because of the very small contribution of acyl RO₂ to the total C_{10} RO₂ (0.4%) (Zang et al., 2023), their consumption by NO₂ leads to less than 2% reduction in the C_{10} ^{CI}RO₂ signals. Therefore, the more significant decrease in signals of ^{CI}RO₂ and related HOMs as compared to the OH-derived ones in the synergistic O₃ + NO₃ regime is primarily due to the more efficient cross reactions of ^{NO3}RO₂ with ^{CI}RO₂ than with ^{OH}RO₂."

5. Figure 1. For (a) and (b), I suggest further clarifying what fractions of the RO₂, monomers, and dimers are made of compounds containing nitrogen. For (c), I suggest including CHO compounds as well, but using a different color. It might be also nice to show a mass spectrum with O_3 only, so that the comparison can be more clarified. In Line 207, the authors claimed "substantial formation of these dimeric ONs"; having a direct comparison can support this. In (c), $C_{10}H_{17}NO_8$ is the largest peak. Its formation should be briefly discussed. How does it form if $C_{10}H_{16}NO_5$ does not autoxidize rapidly, and the RO from RO_2+RO_2 reactions mainly release NO_2 and produce pinonaldehyde? Besides these suggestions, I wonder if the relative changes can be affected if the sensitivities are different from different species. This is such a major assumption, but it was not discussed in the manuscript.

Response: Thanks for the reviewer's comment.

(1) We have replaced Figure 1a with a new figure that shows the signals of total RO₂, total monomers, and total dimers normalized by the total reacted α -pinene, with the bars subdivided to indicate the fractions of CHO and CHON species, in both O₃-only and O₃ + NO₃ systems. In addition, we have provided a difference mass spectrum (i.e., mass spectrum in O₃ + NO₃ regime minus that in O₃-only regime) in Figure 1c, which highlights the changes in the species distribution in the synergistic oxidation regime compared to the O₃-only regime.

We have rewritten the discussion of this figure in Section 3.1 of the revised manuscript.

"The abundance of gas-phase RO_2 species and HOMs in different oxidation regimes is shown in Figure 1a. The species signals are normalized by the total reacted α -pinene in each regime. Compared to the O₃only regime, the normalized signals of total RO_2 and HOMs decrease by 62 - 68% in the synergistic O₃ + NO₃ regime. Although NO₃ oxidation accounts for a considerable fraction of reacted α -pinene in the synergetic oxidation regime, the signal contributions of HOM-ONs are not significant. This might be due to the low sensitivity of nitrate-CIMS to the ONs formed involving NO₃ oxidation (Section 2.1).Figure 1c shows a difference mass spectrum highlighting the changes in species distribution between the two oxidation regimes. Almost all $C_xH_yO_z$ -HOM species decrease significantly in the O_3 + NO₃ regime compared to the O₃-only regime. Besides, a large set of HOM-ON species are formed, despite their relatively low signals......"



Figure 1 Distributions of RO₂ and HOMs in the O₃-only and O₃ + NO₃ regimes. (a) Signals of total RO₂, as well as HOM monomers and dimers normalized by the reacted α -pinene in each oxidation regime (Exps 1-5, 7-11). (b) Relative changes in the normalized signals of C_xH_yO_z-HOMs in the O₃ + NO₃ regime versus the O₃-only regime. Ion signals are normalized to $\Delta[\alpha$ -pinene]_{O3} in each oxidation regime to highlight the suppression effect of the synergistic chemistry between ^{NO3}RO₂ and ^{CI}RO₂ or ^{OH}RO₂ on C_xH_yO_z-HOM formation. (c) Difference mass spectrum between the two oxidation regimes. The positive and negative peaks indicate the species with enhanced and decreased formation in the O₃ + NO₃ regime compared to the O₃-only regime, respectively.

(2) There are two possible explanations for the relatively high signal intensity of $C_{10}H_{17}NO_8$: (i) Although the RO radicals from cross reactions of $C_{10}H_{16}NO_5$ -RO₂ are prone to release NO₂ and form pinonaldehyde, a small fraction of them possibly undergo intramolecular H-shift/O₂ addition to form $C_{10}H_{16}NO_6$ -RO₂, followed by further autoxidation to form $C_{10}H_{17}NO_8$; (ii) Although CI is a soft ionization method, the fragmentation of chemically labile species still occurs during the ionization in nitrate-CIMS. It is possible that some of dimeric HOM-ONs are fragmented to $C_{10}H_{17}NO_8$ during nitrate-CIMS measurements. We noticed that in a recent study by Li et al. (2014), $C_{10}H_{17}NO_8$ was also identified during the synergistic oxidation of α -pinene by O₃ and NO₃. However, the exact origin of this species remains to be clarified.

We have rewritten this part of discussion in the revised manuscript.

"As shown in Figure 1c, although several closed-shell monomeric HOM-ONs have been observed in the synergistic oxidation regime, only a few of them exhibit relatively high signals. Among them, $C_{10}H_{17}NO_8$ may be formed by the autoxidation of $C_{10}H_{16}NO_6$ -RO₂ derived from the intramolecular H-shift of primary ^{NO3}RO radicals ($C_{10}H_{16}NO_4$ -RO). In addition, although CI is a soft ionization method, the fragmentation of chemically labile species still occurs during the ionization in nitrate-CIMS. It is possible that some of dimeric HOM-ONs are fragmented to $C_{10}H_{17}NO_8$ during nitrate-CIMS measurements. In a recent study by Li et al. (2024), $C_{10}H_{17}NO_8$ was also identified during the synergistic oxidation of α -pinene by O₃ and NO₃. However, the exact origin of this species remains to be clarified."

(3) Considering that different compounds could potentially have different CIMS sensitivities, we have conducted a sensitivity analysis by using different instrument sensitivities for different compounds to clarify their influences on the relative changes in RO₂ and HOMs in the $O_3 + NO_3$ regime versus the O₃-only regime. Taking a 10 times higher sensitivity to the compounds with an O/C ratio less than 0.7, the total signals are elevated in both oxidation regimes, but there remain significant decreases in total RO₂ and HOM signals in the synergistic oxidation regime compared to the O₃-only regime (Figure S4a). In addition, given that the sensitivity of nitrate-CIMS to ONs are relatively low, a 10 times higher sensitivity was also considered for the ONs. Under this condition, although ONs make a larger contribution to the total HOM monomers and dimers in the $O_3 + NO_3$ regime (Figure S4b), the signals of both total and $C_xH_yO_z$ RO₂ and HOMs still decrease significantly due to the presence of NO₃ oxidation. Therefore, different instrument sensitivities to RO₂ and HOMs with different oxygenation levels would not significantly influence the results (e.g., Figure 1) in this study.



Figure S4 Influences of different instrument sensitivities on the relative changes in RO_2 and HOMs in the synergistic oxidation regime versus the O₃-only regime. A 10 times higher instrument sensitivity to (a) compounds with O/C < 0.7 and (b) ONs was considered.

We have added the above discussion in Section S1 of the supplement and the following statement in Section 3.1 of the main text.

"Although there remain considerable uncertainties in instrument sensitivities to different compounds,

sensitivity analyses suggest that varying the CIMS sensitivities to RO₂ and HOMs by a factor of 10 would not significantly influence their relative distribution across different oxidation regimes (see Section S1 for details)."

6. Line 249. This is related to comment #1. It is not true if the different RO₂ cross reactions could also change branching ratios of ROOR. This possibility needs to be discussed.

Response: Thanks for the reviewer's comment. Recent studies suggested that the rate constants of the ROOR dimer formation for the highly oxygenated RO_2 appear to be fast (Berndt et al., 2018; Molteni et al., 2019), therefore a relatively high dimer formation branching ratio of 50% was used in this study. This branching ratio does not change with different RO_2 cross reactions. To estimate the influence of dimer formation branching ratio on the relative changes in RO_2 and related HOM concentrations in the synergistic $O_3 + NO_3$ regime versus the O_3 -only regime, we have conducted a sensitivity analysis of this ratio and added the following discussion to Section S3 in the Supplement.

"Currently, quantitative constraints on the ROOR dimer formation rate constant are rather limited. Recent studies suggested that the dimer formation rates from the highly oxygenated RO₂ are fast (Berndt et al., 2018; Molteni et al., 2019), therefore a relatively high and consistent dimer formation branching ratio of 50% was used for different RO₂ (e.g., ^{CI}RO₂, ^{OH}RO₂, ^{NO3}RO₂) in this study. Considering the large uncertainties in this branching ratio, we conducted a sensitivity analysis to evaluate its influence on the relative changes in RO₂ and related HOM concentrations in the synergistic O₃ + NO₃ regime versus the O₃-only regime. As shown in Figure S8, as the dimer formation branching ratio increases from 9% to 50%, the variation in the abundance $C_xH_yO_z$ -RO₂ and HOMs due to the concurrence of NO₃ oxidation changes slightly (< 9% and < 10%, respectively). These results suggest that the uncertainties in the dimer formation branching ratio of RO₂ and HOMs across different oxidation regimes."



Figure S8 Influences of the dimer formation branching ratio on the relative changes in RO_2 and related HOM concentrations in the synergistic $O_3 + NO_3$ regime vs. the O_3 -only regime.

7. Line 290-294. Can these findings be explained by the kinetic model?

Response: The model simulations show that the concentrations of $C_{20}H_{31}NO_x$ in the $O_3 + NO_3$ regime increase with the addition of cyclohexane as an OH scavenger (Figure S9). However, the simulated enhancement is slightly lower than the measurements, which might be due to the uncertainties in the RO₂ cross-reaction kinetics in the model.

We have added the above discussion to Section 3.2 of the main text and Figure S9 to the Supplement.



Figure S9 Simulated and measured relative changes in concentrations of $C_{20}H_{31}NO_x$ due to the addition of 100 ppm cyclohexane as an OH scavenger in the synergistic $O_3 + NO_3$ regime (Exps 6 and 12).

8. Line 326-328. However, the C* distribution in Figure 5 does not show higher abundance for the SVOC & IVOC range under NO₃/O₃ mixed oxidation conditions. How come the SOA mass loading is higher?

Response: The higher SOA mass loading in the synergistic oxidation regime is mainly due to the formation and condensation of HOM-ONs. However, as discussed in our response to comment #3, nitrate-CIMS may exhibit a significantly lower sensitivity to ONs than to $C_xH_yO_z$ -HOMs, thus the measured signals of HOM-ONs are relatively low and have a small contribution to SVOC signals in the $O_3 + NO_3$ regime.

We have added a more detailed discussion regarding the growth of particles in Section 3.3.

"On the other hand, substantial formation of HOM-ONs is expected from the cross reactions of ^{NO3}RO₂ with ^{CI}RO₂ and ^{OH}RO₂ in the synergistic oxidation regime (Li et al., 2024; Bates et al., 2022), although their signals are relatively low due to the low sensitivity of nitrate-CIMS to ONs in this study. The newly formed HOM-ONs have relatively higher volatilities and are inefficient in initiating particle nucleation, but they are able to partition into the formed particles and contribute to the particle mass growth. Meanwhile, as the particle number concentration decreases drastically in the synergistic oxidation regime, more condensable vapors are available for each particle to grow to larger sizes (Figure 6b), which would in turn favor the condensation of more volatile organic species including ONs due to the reduced curvature effect of the larger particles, ultimately resulting in an increase in SOA mass concentrations."



Figure 6b. Size distributions of particles formed from the ozonolysis and synergistic $O_3 + NO_3$ oxidation of α -pinene (Exps 13-14).

9. Section 3.4. It is nice to expand the chemistry into real-world conditions. The authors considered boreal forest conditions where monoterpenes are high. But they also mentioned southeast US conditions, where isoprene is high. Can the southeast US scenario be modeled? I think this is doable as the same authors published a paper on mixed isoprene/monoterpene oxidation.

Response: We appreciate the review's point. We have conducted a model simulation to evaluate the influence of the synergistic $O_3 + NO_3$ oxidation on HOM formation under typical nocturnal conditions in the southeastern US. We find that in the mixed isoprene/monoterpene oxidation regime, the synergistic $O_3 + NO_3$ oxidation can still suppress the formation of $C_xH_yO_z$ -HOM monomers and dimers, and the presence of isoprene can strengthen this inhibition effect to some extent.

We have added the following detailed discussion to Section S4 of the Supplement.

"A model simulation was also conducted to evaluate the influences of synergistic oxidation on HOM formation under typical nocturnal conditions of the southeastern United States. The constant concentrations of α -pinene (1.5 ppb), isoprene (4.5 ppb), O₃ (30 ppb), NO (20 ppt), NO₂ (2 ppb), NO₃ radicals (1.4 ppt), OH radicals (2.5 × 10⁵ molecules cm⁻³), and HO₂ radicals (4 ppt) were used according to field observations in this region (Ayres et al., 2015; Lee et al., 2016). The rate constant of self/cross reactions involving isoprene-derived RO₂ radicals (termed RO₂(isop)) was set to 2 × 10⁻¹² cm³ molecule⁻¹ s⁻¹, with a dimer formation branching ratio of 50% for RO₂(isop) with RO₂ arising from α -pinene (termed RO₂(ap)) and 30% for RO₂(isop) + for RO₂(isop) (Berndt et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2021)."

We have also added the following paragraph to Section 3.4 of the main text.

"Furthermore, model simulations for conditions typical of the southeastern United States (see details in Section S4) suggest that the coexistence of isoprene appears to exacerbate the suppression effect of synergistic oxidation on HOM formation from monoterpenes. As shown in Figure S14, in the absence of isoprene, the synergistic $O_3 + NO_3$ oxidation of α -pinene leads to a reduction of 13% and 24% in the formation of $C_xH_yO_z$ -HOM monomers and dimers, respectively. When isoprene is present, as the isoprene + NO₃ oxidation produces a significant amount of nitrooxy RO₂ that can aslo scavenge α pinene-derived ^{CI}RO₂ and ^{OH}RO₂ via cross reactions, the synergistic oxidation leads to a slightly larger reduction in $C_xH_yO_z$ -HOM monomers and dimers (15% and 31%, respectively)."



Figure S14 Simulated concentrations of $C_xH_yO_z$ -HOMs from the ozonolysis and synergistic $O_3 + NO_3$ oxidation of α -pinene in the (a) absence and (b) presence of isoprene under typical nocturnal conditions in the southeastern United States.

Technical comments:

1. Line 109. Change "their" to "its".

Response: We have revised this.

2. Line 164. Does $^{NO3}RO_2$ represent only the primary RO_2 from NO_3 + alpha-pinene (i.e., $C_{10}H_{16}O_5$ - RO_2) throughout the manuscript? It should be clarified if that is the case.

Response: ^{NO3}RO₂ represents the RO₂ radicals from NO₃ + α -pinene, and here we want to highlight the primary ^{NO3}RO₂, i.e., C₁₀H₁₆NO₅-RO₂, the cross reactions of which were added to the model.

We have clarified this statement in the revised manuscript.

"We added the cross reactions of the primary nitrooxy- RO_2 derived from NO_3 oxidation ($^{NO3}RO_2$), i.e., $C_{10}H_{16}NO_5$ - RO_2 , with RO_2 derived from ozonolysis ($^{CI}RO_2$) and OH oxidation ($^{OH}RO_2$)."

3. Line 233. Change "strong" to "stronger".

Response: We have revised this.

4. Figure 4. On the y-axis, "conc" is not accurate. Should be intensity or signal. Also, does "CA" mean cyclohexane? It should be clarified.

Response: We have changed "conc" to "signal" and "CA" to "cyclohexane".

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