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**RE: Comments on the Revision of the Northwest Forest Plan**

**To:** Jacqueline Buchanan, US Forest Service, Regional Forester for the Pacific Northwest Region;

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the revision of the Northwest Forest Plan, NWFP. I have lived in Cascade Scenic Research Area at Cascade Head Ranch for 45 years and see first hand how our forests are changing. I have been a volunteer with our local watershed councils for more than 20 years and as such have spent a lot of time doing research in national forests and also private timberlands. As such I have seen how climate change over has impacted the local watersheds, especially reduced stream flows and the quality of the undergrowth within forested lands which very much impacts both the quality and quantity of the stream flow as well as impacts the salmonids and other wildlife that use these areas.

**Updating that NWFP is a perfect opportunity to address the face the crisis of climate change head-on. This requires the USFS to act in ways that will help mitigate climate change and thus improve biodiversity, water resources and wildfire resilience.**

I ask that the USFS **practice climate smart forestry** throughout the Pacific Northwest region, that will manage forests such that it optimizes carbon sequestration, storage and resiliency, **protects all mature and old growth trees**, and maintains a diversity of species, ages, and structures. We know that by far the most important natural climate solution is to simply grow trees longer. Our science now tells us that our older northwest forests hold more carbon on a per acre basis than any other forests in the world. Unfortunately, due to unsustainable levels of logging prior to the NWFP very little old growth is left.

The USFS needs to create the conditions to enable mature forests to become old growth forests over time. We can greatly increase the amount of carbon stored on the landscape by simply letting trees grow longer so that rather than only 10% of Oregon's forest in old growth we will have the extent of old growth prior to major commercial logging – 75% or greater.

Also living in the forest, I have 6 150 year old Sitka spruce trees around my house and thus are very concerned about another major threat that has changed significantly over the past 30 years: **wildfires**. We will not be able to address the problem through commercial logging, as forests near here mostly need to be left alone.

I urge the USFS to dedicate a much greater extent of our forests as carbon reserves. In that way we will be doing our part to help mitigate the climate crisis while also achieving other important goals including promoting biodiversity, ensuring safe drinking water, reduce fire danger and providing expansive recreation opportunities.

Sincerely,



Paul C. Katen, PhD