

Dear Forest Service

Land Management Plan Direction for Old-Growth Forest Conditions Across the National Forest System #65356. Comments

This is a critical time for our forests, which means it's also a critical time for our planet and all who live here. The plan for "forest management" needs to begin with an understanding of what current science teaches us about what a forest actually is. A forest is not just a collection of trees to be harvested for products and profits. A forest is a complex living system of diverse life above, in and below the soil. There's much documented research about the importance of forests in carbon capture and the relationship of that process to helping ease the climate crisis. What is not as known is the role of soil and of diverse life, especially the mycorrhizal network. Without the nutrients provided and processed by this network of diverse life system, there is no healthy forest and no healthy planet.

Whether you are a proponent of timber industry objectives or someone devoted to preserving the life that makes up a forest, we all share the same planet and the same needs for clean water, free of herbicides and fungicides, oxygen rich air and a world safe from increasingly destructive extreme weather conditions.

This planning committee has an opportunity to make policy based on current science that respects the long term needs of life over the short term goals of industry. Please use the linked research on the necessity of healthy soil and of biodiversity in old growth forests to guide your decisions.

<https://www.woodwellclimate.org/protect-us-mature-and-old-growth-forests/>

<https://www.woodwellclimate.org/global-forest-carbon-storage-explained/>

<https://www.woodwellclimate.org/study-soil-carbon-fails-to-recover-in-cleared-forests/>

<https://www.scienceinschool.org/article/2024/trees-and-soil-microbes/>

<https://www.biocast.com.au/lessons-from-dr-christine-jones/>

Sincerely,

Samantha White, Waldport OR