

3-13-2025

US Forest Service,

This letter includes comments that I agree with on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP) Amendment. The US Forest Service needs to approve a forward-looking, ecologically sound and socially-just regional plan to address the multiple intersecting crises involving climate change, wildfire activity, biological diversity and water quality. The following key issues need to be included in the final EIS and decision document for the amended NWFP:

Tribal Sovereignty

The National Forests within the NWFP are the homelands of over 80 tribes and other Indigenous communities. Their land stewardship practices helped sustain native species.

The forced removal of Native peoples and criminalization of their stewardship practices has resulted in losses of old growth forests and impacts to native prairies and forest meadows and impacts to native biodiversity in national forests.

Indigenous co-stewardship is necessary to protect wildlife habitat and restore ecological justice on national forests. As a matter of ~~that~~ habitat vitality the Forest Service must respect Tribal sovereignty, honor treaty rights and authorize Indigenous co-stewardship programs and ^{projects} ~~programs~~ in the NWFP amendment.

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Ecological Fire Management

Fires from lightning ignitions and indigenous cultural burning helped shape and maintain much of the ecological sustainability of national forest lands.

The Forest Service's fire exclusion and wildfire suppression policies have caused widespread harm to ecological integrity.

Wildfire resilience and ecological integrity can best be restored through the careful, intentional use of beneficial fire. The Forest Service can create this opportunity by authorizing prescribed fire, indigenous cultural burning and managed wildfires for ecological benefits across broad landscapes in the NWFP amendment.

Old Growth Forests

The current NWFP was created mainly to protect

old-growth forest ecosystems from industrial clearcutting.

The notion that big, old trees are protected by cutting

them down is carelessly destructive! The only proven

means of humans actively managing and maintaining

resilience in old-growth forests has been through indigenous

cultural burning. Tribal inclusion requires fire inclusion, and old-growth forest resilience requires ecological fire

management.

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Please do every thing you can to authorize including Indigenous decision makers and action teams in the NWFP amendment for the sake of future generations of trees, animals and human beings.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gretchen Stolfo'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized 'G' and 'S'.

Gretchen Stolfo

Gretchen Stolfo
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PORTLAND OR RPDC 972

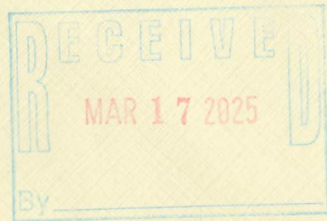
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Keep Safety in View as We Drive for You!



USDA Forest Service
PNW Regional Forester
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97204



97204-282985

