

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 2/2/2024 7:52:50 PM

First name: Zoey

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear NWFP Committee Members,

My name is Zoey Bailey and I live in Eugene, Oregon. My interests and identity primarily lie in connection to Northwest forests, and I am very excited about the pressing opportunity to amend the critical NWFP. I am a fire ecologist and wildland firefighter, and direct my work decisions with the ultimate intention of stewarding Northwest ecosystems for climate and fire resilience. Through my background in fire, I understand firsthand the logistical and political complexity of managing fire for ecology benefit. However, I also have felt the deep frustration as a federal firefighter bound by policy prohibiting my crew from stewarding fires that, if managed, would have offered immense ecological value for native flora and fauna while simultaneously bolstering the fire/climate resiliency of the local community. I appreciate that the proposed amendment makes reference to improving understanding and protocol for safe, intentional, fire use. I am writing to express my hope that the amendment will enable/prompt the revision of forest fire management plans to expand flexibility for prescribed burn operations and management of wildfires when appropriate for resource objectives. I am excited about the current expansion of the Forest Service wildland fire module resources nationwide and see immense potential for PNW WFM's to facilitate said increase in ecologically-managed fire. Unfortunately, I know many Forest Service WFM's are used almost exclusively as suppression resources. I hope to see a restoration of the "fire use" value foundational to the WFM's creation. Furthermore, I hope the amendment makes clear the distinction between wet/dry old growth ecosystems and establishes unique fire management objectives for each.

I am also writing to express my support for the inclusion of climate-informed language in the Aquatic Conservation Strategy. The value of intentional watershed management for ecosystem function and human wellbeing is abundantly clear. While the existing Aquatic Conservation Strategy has served well, it is important that this strategy directly acknowledges and incorporates considerations for a changing climate. For example, riparian reserves will be increasingly essential to manage potential water temperature increases. Watershed analysis programs should emphasize monitoring for climate-change connected water variables such as temporal shifts in annual streamflow. Furthermore, strong language is needed to ensure the watershed restoration component of the ACS includes post-fire restoration priorities and protocols for watersheds damaged by intense fires to insure protection of aquatic life and quality of human drinking water. I am particularly concerned about post-fire salvage logging that occurs outside the normal regulatory harvest bounds and its potential implications for increased sedimentation in water bodies. I do not see language in the amendment concerning post-fire erosion control in watershed management and I wish to express my strong hope that it will be considered for addition.

Thank you so much for your work to revise the plan that will undoubtedly shape my future and the future of the lands I care so deeply about.

I appreciate your consideration,

Zoey