

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/13/2025 4:00:00 AM

First name: Gretchen

Last name: Stoflo

Organization:

Title:

Comments: 3-13-2025

US Forest Service

This letter includes comments that I agree with on the Draft Environmental Impact Statements (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 habitat vitality the Forest Service must respect Tribal sovereignty, honor treaty rights and authorize Indigenous co-stewardship programs and projects in the NWFP amendment.

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 require fire inclusion, and old-growth forest resilience requires ecological fire management.

Please do everything 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,

[]

ATTACHMENT-LETTER TEXT: StolfoGretchen_20250313_NWFP_DraftEIS_Comments.pdf; this is the same content that is coded in text box; it was originally mailed in and then scanned and included as an attachment"