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Organization:

Title:

Comments: To whom it may concern:

I am a scholar and practitioner of conservation management and ecologically restoration, and I am deeply concerned about plans to open vast acreage of the Nooksack to environmentally unsound logging practices for the sake of short-term profit.

Forests are more valuable than the market price of their timber. They are complex social-ecological systems that are the foundation of regional environmental resilience, and any modification to them **MUST** be strategically and scientifically vetted through **RIGOROUS** environmental impact assessments and public hearings. Failure to do so ignores potential cascades of social, ecological, and economic reciprocities.

I echo the concerns of many in relaying these points:

- Due to the huge scale of proposed logging in this proposal, its radical departure from previous Forest Service management direction, its controversial nature, and negative impacts on local communities, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) must first be completed.
- The Forest Service must fully weigh the importance of this National Forest for reducing the existential dangers of climate change to both our regional ecosystems and human communities. Logging these forests defeats their carbon sequestration potential for decades to come.
- In the face of extensive and ongoing clearcutting operations on private and state timberlands nearby, the Forest Service must prioritize allowing our National Forest to mature naturally for carbon capture, clean water, sensitive wildlife habitat, and compatible recreation.
- The Forest Service must not construct new logging roads, including so-called "temporary" roads, which act as vectors for invasive weeds and human-caused abuses (including fires), while fragmenting habitat. Instead, the Forest Service should permanently close unneeded decaying roads.

While these points are likely familiar to you due to repetition, I find them to be highly valid and worth repeated consideration. Failure to do so will result in irreversible losses to habitat, ecological function, and ecosystem stability, as well as recreational value for visitors and residents.

THE NOOKSACK IS MORE VALUABLE THAN THE SUM OF ITS PARTS.

Thank you for hearing my concerns.

Sincerely,

Michael Blacketer, PhD

(former Washington resident)