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Comments: As a resident of neighboring Whatcom county, a constituent of the federal government and therefore the Forest Service, and as an American patriot, I denounce, oppose, and wholeheartedly condemn this proposed Vegetation Management Project. While timber has long been a backbone of the Washington economy, and is the third largest manufacturing industry in the state, this proposed Vegetation Management Project runs counter to the espoused values of this great state's approach toward ensuring that timber remains an industry that all Washingtonians can be proud of.

While it cannot be denied that the demand for timber ensures that good jobs to remain in Washington state, almost 70% of Washington timber comes from private forests, many of which employ unsustainable techniques like clear-cutting. Because this clearcutting has been happening on such a large scale in our private lands, it is imperative that our public lands, which the Forest Service has vowed to oversee with stewardship and looking towards the future, do not share the same fate. Clearcutting, especially near old-growth, destroys habitats on an unimaginable scale, depleting the woods of their birdsong and diversity which any American who has visited Washington knows to be the jewel of our noble forests.

In addition to habitat depletion and the destruction of biodiversity, our beautiful forests are a major draw for recreation and tourism. Simply put, clearcutting destroys the beauty which brings people out of the cities and into the woods, taking dollars out of the state economy and beauty out of the people of Washington's lives.

The stakes, however, are not just limited to economic ones. Forests are the most potent sequester of carbon that humans currently have: this proposed Vegetation Management Project will have an impact on the ecological health of its community long after the money which is made from this proposed logging operation has changed hands and been spent. If we are to be serious about leaving an enduring legacy for our children, our children's children, and their children after them, the scope and impact of this proposal must be re-assessed.

Toward this end, as a constituent of the federal government, a proud Washingtonian, and a member of the community that this proposal would directly affect, I demand that an Environmental Impact Statement be completed before any further action is taken.

If the United States Forest Service's mission truly is to "sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations," I ask that you take all of the above points into consideration, and show your constituents that these words are no mere talking points, but are in fact guiding principles.