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Comments: Comment on proposed North Fork Nooksack Vegetation Management Project

by John Herbert

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The North Cascades are my favorite place to hike, camp, and backpack because of their wild, beautiful forests, rivers, and mountains. The North Nooksack should be protected as wilderness. Instead you want to log it.

We do not have enough wild and scenic forests for all of us who need to come to them, nor do we have enough mature forests sequestering carbon to meet our goals to stop global warming before it kills us.

In Oregon, and likely Washington, logging is the biggest emitter of greenhouse gases and thus the biggest driver of global warming. I understand that there is more carbon stored underground in forests than above ground. Clearcutting exposes the soil to the sun and kills most of the life there, driving huge releases of stored carbon.

You should have banned clearcutting decades ago. Do it. Remove Alternative 1. Clearcut-plantation forestry degrades water quality and destroys salmon habitat by increasing the rate of erosion and landslides. Clearcutting makes water move faster through the hydrologic system, which means there is too much water in the winters and too little water in the summers.

Alternative 2:

1. You should not be logging the wilderness we need. There is not enough North Cascades wilderness to go around. We can get our wood elsewhere. You should reject this proposal to log the North Nooksack, called "Manage Vegetation", entirely.

2. Any logging anywhere must meet criteria to meet national climate goals, so an EIS must show how to do this, then follow that.

3. Any logging will harm water quality and endanger people and conditions downstream from landslides, etc. The EIS needs to tell how not to disturb the forest, keep it growing.

4. The Canyon Creek Watershed has already been adversely impacted by logging, as clearly documented by the USFS Watershed Analysis for the basin.

5. Mount Baker Ranger District should advance selective thinning rather than clearcutting to meet its ecological goals and responsibilities. And not in de facto wilderness or what can become wilderness if you leave it alone.

6. Threatened species, including the northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet, will be indisputably pushed ever closer to extinction as their forest is felled.

Sincerely,

John Herbert