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Comments: Dear Forest Service,

The North Fork Nooksack "Vegetation Management" Project cannot proceed without the completion of an Environmental Impact Statement. The myriad of negative impacts this project would bring to our watershed must be examined in full before any harvesting or cutting may begin.

Lummi and Nooksack have the first and oldest rights to water in the Nooksack Basin watershed, and they have called for adjudication of water rights to protect the Nooksack and tributaries. Lummi Nation has already requested an EIS for this North Fork Vegetation Management Project; you must acquiesce to the request, as neither of your Alternatives include the input of the original stewards of the Nooksack Basin watershed.

Historically, the Forest Service has focused on the extraction and maintenance of natural resources rather than the protection of holistic natural ecosystems. This is a model that no longer works -- as this environmental assessment has overlooked, extraction in general and clearcut logging specifically only degrade an ecosystem:

--Old growth forests are the best carbon sinks around. To remove old growth or near-old growth is about the dumbest thing anyone could do in the face of climate catastrophe.

--Areas around Canyon Creek that contain old and near-old growth are the homes and habitat of a plethora of threatened and endangered species; destroying their habitat destroys their chances of survival, and directly violates their protections as protected, threatened, and endangered species.

--With roots removed, soil structure is disturbed, and more water runs along the surface rather than into the soil, creating a vast amount of runoff in streams, clouding tributaries and slowly destroying the landscape's ability to hold water.

--This decreased ability of a landscape to retain water increases desertification of the land, increases likelihood of landslides, increases winter overflows in rivers, and decreases summer flows in rivers, directly endangering salmon, who are more vulnerable to sickness with decreased water and increased temperatures.

Complete an EIS. This project doesn't provide benefits to the ecosystem or the myriad of creatures that call it home, and completion of an EIS will reveal this. We know you want to avoid that accountability, because you can make more money by destroying rather than saving environments. Get a conscience. Complete an EIS. Give up the practice of logging on National Forest land, which is already being proposed and pursued politically in Washington state. Get with it.