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Comments: Intact forests are our best and least expensive defense to mitigate the impacts of climate change. climate change is arguably the single most important issue facing the planet and humans right now. Impacts of climate change do and will continue to affect everything! There is much about this project that is troublesome, environmentally.
Perhaps of greatest concern are the plans proposed parameters for changing our already minimal Old Growth Standards on the forest as well as amending current standards for thermal cover for wildlife and Coarse Woody Debris. This proposed plan would significantly expand old growth logging options and reduce established tree stand habitat maintenance that is essential as part of the natural forest life cycle on which many native species depend, species already suffering from habitat loss and fragmentation. Prospective Climate change is also an issue for these species that should be considered in the plan. The latest climate change research indicates that our best chance for reducing atmospheric carbon effects is through mature forest protection. This research should be weighed in any plan for fuels management that is dictated in part by wildfire concerns. Research is quite clear that the largest factor in wildfire danger in the Rocky Mountain West is climate change toward hotter and dryer fire seasons.