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First name: Neel

Last name: Patel

Organization:

Title:

Comments: [External Email]QMS project- Comment to support alternative 4

[External Email]

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Hello Joanie!

Sorry I missed your call today! Here's the email:

I am writing to voice support for alternative 4 of the QMS project

First off, thank you for your hard work. I know it is extremely difficult to be in a government position right now and you surely have to deal with many strong and differing opinions every day. That's not easy, so thanks for showing up and trying your best. I really appreciated it.

I am writing to support Alternative 4, or at least Alternative 3. I really enjoyed the storymap you all have put together and I feel like I have a full picture of the goals of this project. This project has many admirable goals, especially the proposed work in the late successional reserve which focuses on ecosystem restoration and tries to make this second growth forest have characteristics of primary forest. I hope that more forest service plans use ecosystem restoration and a habitat, biodiversity, and climate/carbon sink focus for more projects in the future.

I take issue with some of the proposals in the matrix lands. The current Alternative 2 plan allows for more intensive logging that I think is appropriate in our current climate emergency. Particularly, it allows for logging of 140 acres of older forests in the matrix lands. In our current climate crisis and extinction crisis, I believe we need to preserve every portion of primary forest we have left in Oregon. Alternative 4 is the closest aligned to that goal. Given the numerous interested parties in Oregon's forests, I could live with Alternative 3, which allows for mainly commercial thinning and some areas of shelterwood with reserves. Compromise is difficult, but hopefully we can make incremental progress away from the industrial extractionist forestry of the past to a more regenerative and ecosystem based forestry in the future.

A little about me- I am a physician who is deeply concerned about climate change and the biodiversity crisis. I did my residency in Oregon, am completing my fellowship in California and will be moving back to Oregon to practice medicine in 2022. I moved from Utah to Oregon and fell in love with the northwest forests. After I moved, I learned with some dismay the history of industrial logging across the northwest changing healthy forest ecosystems into monoculture tree farms. Trying to focus my climate anxiety, I have tried to do some action every week to help be a voice for climate preservation, part of which is trying to be a forest advocate to encourage the preservation and protection of old growth ecosystems in the northwest. I try to do right by my patients at work and right by the climate out side of work.

Thank you again for your consideration, and I hope you have a lovely weekend and get to go outside!

-Neel Patel, MD