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Organization:

Title:

Comments: [External Email]QMS comments

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November 23, 2021

Joanie Schmidgall

NEPA Planner-Sweet Home Ranger District

Dear Ms Schmidgall,

Over the last ten months, I've had the privilege to visit a couple different parcels of forests in the Quartzville-Middle Santiam. Why a privilege? Because of the pristine forests and magnificent landscapes that gave me a sense of awe and inspiration. Below are a few of my comments that urge you and your partners to put a pause on logging mature forests in this area.

Like other members of the Willamette Valley Broadband of the Great Old Broads for Wilderness, I care deeply about the QMS project for many reasons. Along with other Broads, I walked in the QMS last summer to learn more about it and better evaluate the reasons to log this area. My family and I love to walk in the forests and discover more about the magic of the natural world. We love to collect mushrooms and watch the birds. I experienced the QMS during the heat dome in June and although it was very hot deep in the woods, the heat was bearable because of shades.

In walking around the QMS with a DBH tape, I was astounded at how many trees were larger than 35 DBH. I noticed a significant array of wildflowers, some very rare in Oregon. But mostly I was struck by the size of the trees and thinking about how important they are to slowing global climate change, providing for wildlife habitat and making sure that we have clean water today and for our future generations.

The Santiam Watershed is a magical and majestic landscape. Neighboring industrial forestland is being aggressively clearcut and devastated for years to come. These public forests proposed for logging represent some of the best remaining mature forests in our area. And they store carbon and are vital to slowing global climate change.

The Alternative 4 in the Environmental Assessment seems to be the best and only option.

I sincerely hope that you and your forest service colleagues will work together to determine other sources of revenue and work to stem global climate change. Our children and grandchildren deserve to have a planet that can thrive and places to go hiking, birdwatching and mushrooming. Please protect this special area.

I look forward to your response to these comments and request you notify me when a decision is made.

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Maya Abels