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Comments: Dear Regional Foresters Jacqueline Buchanan and Jennifer Eberlien,

Please accept this comment as part of the scoping period for the proposed Northwest Forest Plan amendment.

The Northwest Forest Plan was instrumental in protecting much of the remaining old-growth forests in our region, ensuring that these places can continue to function as habitat for endangered species and other plants and animals. Unfortunately, not all of the remaining old-growth was protected. Amendments to the plan must protect the remaining old-growth forests and trees outside of reserves and work to grow and connect these vital ecosystems.

Climate change caused by a reliance on fossil fuels is projected to bring about a wide range of impacts to northwest forests. Amendments must recognize the incredible carbon capture and storage potential of northwest forests - especially forests of the western cascade and coastal ranges of Washington and Oregon. Climate change is further reason to protect old-growth forests that have not yet received protection.

Since time immemorial, fire has had a critical role across the northwest and will continue to shape these landscapes and ecosystems into the future. Amendments to the plan need to recognize the important role of fire and work to shift policy away from full suppression of all fires.

The NWFP primarily considers NW forests. Strengthening the NWFP to include all old-growth forests, and to protect forests of the western cascade and coastal regions, will additionally contribute to efforts to prevent or slow biodiversity loss. Biodiversity loss is a factor even in forests, as forest species are declining with climate induced insect outbreaks. Carbon sequestration in our old-growth forests is vital to slow down that climate change and as a result to prevent tree species losses.

Please take steps to make the NWFP as strong as possible for preservation of old-growth, including that currently protected and additional old-growth which has not previously received protection.

Thank you for your consideration.

Dena Turner

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