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Comments: I am writing to urge your support for strengthening the Northwest Forest Plan by increasing the protections it provides for mature and old-growth forests. The Northwest Forest Plan is an effective policy that is already helping to address climate change and providing additional habitat needed to recover the threatened Northern Spotted Owl and Marbled Murrelet.

Successful restoration efforts in the Pacific Northwest are being guided by the Northwest Forest Plan, a unique regional ecosystem management strategy that has allowed previously harvested public forests an opportunity to regrow, while also protecting critically important mature and old growth-forests. Under this landmark conservation plan, the region's forests went from being a source of carbon emissions to a significant carbon sink -- a rare and much-needed climate success story.

Please strengthen the Northwest Forest Plan, and build upon the conservation gains made in the Pacific Northwest and northern California, by providing additional protections for the region's mature and old-growth forests. And please oppose proposals to eliminate reserves or weaken forest management standards in designated Northern Spotted Owl critical habitat. This will benefit endangered birds, as well as the global climate.

Thank you for your consideration.