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Organization:

Title:

Comments: January 15, 2024

Jacqueline Buchanan

Regional Forester

US Forest Service,

Dear Jacqueline:

In regard to your proposed updated Northwest Forest Plan and its amendment, these forests are immensely important to me as a source of clean water, clean air, healthy fish and wildlife habitat, wildlife biodiversity and connectivity, hiking, birdwatching, and for sequestering carbon to mitigate the effects of climate change.

In crafting the updated Forest Plan and its amendment, please remember that President Biden's 2022 Executive Order on national forests and the climate gave the Forest Service clear guidance to prioritize the protection and restoration of mature and old-growth forests across the nation as a natural carbon and climate solution. The Northwest Forest encompasses one of the largest natural carbon sinks found anywhere in North America, so the new Plan and its amendment must recognize and safeguard the vast amount of carbon that is and can be sequestered and stored in these forests. The new Plan and its amendment should therefore protect all mature and old-growth trees, and should have clear and enforceable limits on logging and road impacts anywhere within the Forest.

Fire resistance and resilience can also be bolstered by preserving and restoring mature and old-growth forests. It is therefore incumbent upon you to make sure that the updated Forest Plan and its amendment include fire management practices that focus on ensuring that fuel reduction is both necessary and effective before allowing logging within the Northwest Forest.

The new iteration of the Forest Plan and its amendment are crucial for maintaining and strengthening its ecosystem-based conservation goals, and in order to realize these goals the Forest Service should use a transparent, science-based approach that reflects majority public values, includes meaningful tribal consultation, and prioritizes climate mitigation and resilience and the needs of future generations.

Thank you.

Frank Keim