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Comments: Please accept this comment on the proposed Northwest Forest Plan amendment. These forests are important as a source of clean water, fish and wildlife habitat, recreation and personal renewal. They are for storing carbon and mitigating the effects of climate change.

The Northwest Forest Plan continues to be instrumental in keeping the Cascadia bioregion a special place through the restoration of forests and watersheds, recovery of economically and ecologically valuable salmon runs, protection of wildlife habitat and old-growth forests, and ensuring that our National Forests are part of a natural climate solution.

President Biden's 2022 Executive Order on forest and the climate gave the Forest Service clear guidance to prioritize the protection and restoration of mature and old-growth forests (trees generally over 80 years old) across the nation as a natural carbon and climate solution. The plan amendment should protect all mature and old-growth trees and forests.

Preserving biodiversity and connected wildlife habitat across the region should be a core principle of any forest revision.

The amendment should recognize the wide variety of social and economic benefits National Forests provide for local communities and the region as a whole - not just timber - but clean water, climate stability, quality of life and outdoor recreation.

Any amendment should enhance protected, connected, and redundant reserves by including all mature and old-growth forests and core wildlife areas without roads 1000 acres or larger.)

Fire resistance and resilience can be bolstered by preserving and restoring mature and old-growth forests. Standards must ensure that fuel reduction is both needed and effective before logging is allowed. Indigenous cultural burning and wildland fire use should be prioritized.

Thank you for your consideration.