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Comments: Since its establishment in 1994, the Northwest Forest Plan (NFP) has largely been a success story: slowing the decline of several endangered species, protecting large swaths of old-growth forests, and improving watershed conditions. However, changing temperature and precipitation patterns throughout the Pacific Northwest are creating new climate-driven threats to forest health while magnifying impacts from insects, disease, and historically large and severe wildfires. These pressures, along with increased scientific understanding and information gleaned from the NFPs monitoring protocols, highlight the need for targeted updates to the plan to maintain healthy, resilient forests.

To meet these challenges and to secure the health of these forests into the futurefor people and for naturethe agency should take a targeted, science-based, and climate change-informed approach to amending the NFP. Specifically, the amendment should focus on:
Defining goals for sustaining ecological integrity of these national forests, as well as strategies for their achievement that are informed by an understanding of the ongoing and anticipated effects of climate change.
Improving landscape resilience to wildfire by restoring forest health where it is impaired and returning ecosystem-appropriate fire to the landscape.
Conserving existing old-growth forests and recruiting future generations of old-growth forests.
Incorporating Indigenous knowledge to help inform the agencys management goals and strategies to further the agencys general trust responsibilities.
Supporting the sustainability of communities located near these national forests by providing an array of sustainable recreational opportunities and forest products.

Thank you for undertaking this timely, targeted, and science-based update to the Northwest Forest Plan.