

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/22/2024 6:32:51 PM

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Comments: I was pleased to learn that the U.S. Forest Service is preparing to amend the Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP). The national forests governed by the plan are vital for the wellbeing of both people and wildlife in the region-in addition to offering numerous ecosystem services like clean air and water, they provide local communities with many tangible economic benefits. The amendment to the Northwest Forest Plan should consider the needs of both people and the environment and I'm writing this message to provide my input.

Foremost an amendment to the NWFP should pay particular attention to protecting mature and old-growth forests, which were not equally protected by the initial policy. These older forests offer unique habitat and are culturally important for many different communities-including Tribal Nations. Sadly these forests are increasingly rare in the United States, and face escalating threats from climate change impacts like fire, drought and insect damage.

For that reason an amendment should take specific steps to address severe wildfires. Since the NWFP's initial development, wildfires have grown exponentially in size, strength and frequency-far surpassing expectations. The Forest Service should reassess current management strategies in light of escalating wildfire threats and consider incorporating Indigenous cultural burning practices. In general, consultation with local Tribal Nations and incorporation of Indigenous Knowledge will be critical steps for the Forest Service to take in amending the Northwest Forest Plan.

It is also important that the amendment should consider the Pacific Northwest's current socioeconomic landscape and the importance that national forests play in the regional economy. Tourism and recreation draw more people to the region than ever before, spurring job creation and growth in rural economies. An amendment should be sensitive to the socioeconomic needs of local communities and build a modern forest restoration workforce to protect these forests for generations to come.

And lastly time is important, the size of these national treasures is dwindling and the danger is increasing. Please work quickly and responsibly to keep the shine on our national treasures.