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Comments: I am a mother, grandmother, and retired scientist. Advocating for climate solutions is of highest priority for me, particularly the conservation of forests of mature and old-growth trees. I am submitting the following comments as part of the scoping period for the proposed Northwest Forest Plan amendment.

Forests offer the single most powerful and effective way to remove carbon from our atmosphere. Mature and forests and big trees are the natural champions of carbon sequestration, storing carbon for decades, if not centuries. They are a low-cost resource that continues to grow as we all benefit from the services they provide, including clear air, clean water, habitat for wildlife, a haven for biodiversity, and myriad options for recreation.

President Biden's 2022 Executive Order on forests and the climate gave the Forest Service clear guidance that it should 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.

In crafting an amendment to the North West Forest Plan, I hope you will consider the following points:

*The Northwest Forest Plan governs the largest natural carbon reserves found anywhere in North America, and an amendment must recognize and safeguard the vast amount of carbon that can be sequestered and stored in these forests. The plan amendment should protect all mature and old-growth trees and forests.

*As an Oregonian for almost 40 years, I would like to point out that Oregon's Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands contain some of the most carbon dense forests in the U.S. As numerous logging projects move forward on BLM lands, these mature and old-growth trees and forests must be protected alongside US Forest Service lands.

*Conserving mature forests and trees is consistent with U.S. federal agency's efforts to protect communities from the risk of wildfire. Fuels and fire management should focus on the home ignition zone and on non-commercial treatments and beneficial fire use, not commercial logging. Standards must ensure that fuel reduction is both needed and effective before logging is allowed.

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

*Amendments 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 also clean water, climate stability, quality of life, and outdoor recreation.

We need a strong forest plan that addresses modern science and public values, tribal concerns, and the needs of future generations. The agency should use a transparent, science-based approach that includes and reflects public values, Tribal concerns, and the needs of future generations.

Thank you for your consideration.