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First name: Lloyd

Last name: Vivola

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Regional Foresters Jacqueline Buchanan and Jennifer Eberlien:

Thank you for receiving scoping period comments for the proposed Northwest Forest Plan Amendment.

As someone who has long enjoyed our national forest lands as a recreational nature-lover and as a wildlife survey tracker with Cascadia Wild, I greatly appreciate the biodiversity and many resources that Mt. Hood National Forest in particular affords communities in the greater Portland region. Confronted with the unpredictable impact of climate change, I am also aware of the role that our forests must play in assuring the good health and sustainability of those communities.

Accordingly, I support an NWFP amendment that substantially invigorates the region's mature and old growth forests by 1) maintaining protections for already established Late-Successional Reserves, 2) expanding the range of those LSRs wherever possible, 3) enhancing connectivity of already established LSRs, and 4) creating new LSRs wherever possible.

Mature and old-growth forests must play an instrumental role as carbon sinks well into the future. Increasing the size and enhancing connectivity of LSRs will also prove beneficial to wildlife adaptability and biodiversity as species - endangered species among them - respond to the yet unforeseeable challenges of climate disruption.

In a similar fashion and regarding climate change - something not addressed in the standing NWFP of 1994 - I would urge that any NWFP Amendment address the role of "active management" in greater detail and with greater emphasis on potential challenges that may lie ahead for all our federal forests. As an alternative to thinning, fuel treatment, and mastication, I support an NWFP Amendment that recommends and articulates the application of science-based prescribed fires wherever possible, along with a concerted effort to include indigenous knowledge in Forest Service assessments and actions, not least of all by welcoming greater participation of the region's tribal communities.

In fact, after thirty years of regional development both environmental and economic, an NWFP Amendment must address and articulate a new plan for outreach and partnership with increasingly diverse communities. The historical importance of timber harvest should be addressed as only one of the many values provided by our federal forests in changing times. Recreational and health benefits, clean water and air, and community resilience and safety regarding wildfire, flooding, or landslides, must be given highest consideration.

Respectfully,

Lloyd Vivola