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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Comment on climate change section: scientific data is consistently showing that drought conditions are trending upward throughout the western US, including on both sides of the Cascade Mountains and elsewhere in the NWFP area. As a result, a shift is occurring in the distribution of forest types as well as their associated plant and animal communities throughout the NWFP area. Also, fires are becoming more common plus burning hotter and longer. Climate change is impacting both wet and dry forests so the best available science should be driving future management decisions. The current "reserve" concept can be used as a central organizing principle but it must address how to increase in both size and number, old-growth, late successional, and riparian reserves to better support connectivity for birds, plants, and animals affected by climate change.

Comment on mature and old growth ecosystems: the biodiversity of mature and old growth ecosystems isn't yet fully understood, despite decades of research. These forests are critical for carbon storage. Some bird, plant, and animal species are found nowhere else. Current and future management plans should better address how to protect mature and old-growth forests and the extraordinary biodiversity they contain. Also, commercial harvesting of timber products on Federal lands throughout the NWFP area should be restricted only to second-growth timber than can be grown and harvested sustainably. Old-growth forests should not be commercially harvested anywhere on Federal lands throughout the NWFP area.

Sincerely,

Mary S.

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