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Comments: Dear Jacqueline Buchanan, US Forest Service, Regional Forester for the Pacific Northwest Region:

Please accept this comment as part of the scoping period for the proposed Northwest Forest Plan amendment.

Climate change is an existential threat - to forests, humans, and the environment in general. By this I do not mean that there will be no environment if we do not adequately address climate change. I mean that the environment will evolve to a new balance of life where human civilization will have no place, and the scope and extent of change will not include most of what makes up the environment now.

From one philosophical standpoint I suppose one can simply say, "Well, that's just natural evolution. Every species changes its environment, sometimes to the extent that it becomes unlivable for that species. It is a natural progression." True enough. But I would rather we don't do that.

Protecting mature trees, mature forests and old growth is the second best strategy to draw carbon out of the atmosphere and store it. The primary strategy should be regenerative agriculture, but that is for a different arena. This arena is forests. Reducing the threat of climate change is the best method to reduce the severity of wildfire, drought and other threats to the forests.

The Pacific Northwest forests can take up and store more carbon than any other forest in the world. President Biden's goal of 30 percent protection of mature and old growth forests by 2030 must be included in the guiding principles of the NW Forest Plan amendment. The U.S. is a signatory to the IPCC-6 which calls for forest protection as a major solution in reducing climate change.

The forests of this region are important to me as a source of clean water, fish and wildlife habitat, recreation, and personal renewal. Moving ahead with preservation can add more jobs in recreation, preservation work such as road-removal and tree planting, and monitoring than in any additional logging.

Old growth is much better at protecting our water resources and biodiversity in the face of the threat of climate change and drought. Therefore, the Plan must provide the greatest protection for mature forests and trees to build up old growth and mature reserves to 50% stock by 2050.

Amendments to the Plan should have clear and enforceable limits on logging and road impacts. The amendment must have clearly protected, connected, and redundant reserves by including all mature and old-growth forests and core wildlife areas without roads (1000 acres or larger).

Thank you for allowing input on the Northwest Forest Plan Amendment.

Sincerely,