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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I'm commenting today in support of a strong Habitat Conservation Plan for state forests. I also support a new Forest Management Plan that protects salmon, wildlife, and clean water, as well as protecting carbon storage to fight climate change.

I live on the coast and spend a lot of time hiking through the forests that grow in this wonderful, temperate climate. I am grateful every day for these forests that contribute to the well-being of all living beings. They are essential for all life. The more I learn about trees and how they contribute and participate in the cycle of life, I want them to stay right where they are. It breaks my heart to see the patchwork of clear-cut throughout the Oregon forests. One of the trails I hike often has had massive blowdowns of trees where there is no buffer because of a clearcut up the ridge. Every time there is a windstorm, I know more will come down. It blocks the trail, but more importantly, the downed trees create havoc for the habitat that live in this area. All because of a very old clear cut up the ridge that will take generations to heal and regrow.

I'm asking the board to support a strong Habitat Conservation Plan that is grounded in science. I oppose any effort to weaken the plan that would open it up to reduce habitat protections and clearcut thousands of additional acres. Please adopt and strengthen Alternative 3 which provides the most long-term protection possible for the survival of salmon, wildlife, endangered species, trees, and water while we face the deepening climate crisis.

I remind the board that state law requires you to make decisions based on the best available science. Any changes to the HCP that would reduce protected areas would not be supported by science. Don't succumb to political pressure. The new timber harvest estimates issued by the Department of Forestry staff show that the HCP will restore balance to state forests, protect habitat, and allow more sustainable levels of timber harvest over time. Additionally, it is necessary to change laws that support logging our precious forests to financially help Oregon communities and schools. Public lands must be managed for the public good for all Oregonians, for current and future generations.

Thank you for caring about our forests!