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First name: Pamela

Last name: Keller

Organization:

Title:

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.

My name is Pam Keller and I am writing to plead the case for protecting what remains of mature forests in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska. I am a lifelong resident of Oregon and have sadly watched the loss of our big trees until there are now just scattered remnants. I pray these remnants can be saved.

Old growth and mature forests are worth preserving, not only for their beauty, but because of critical ecosystem functions. As a professional soil scientist and botanist, working across Oregon and Idaho, I understand the importance of large trees, and the diversity they support, for capturing and storing carbon. The soil/plant/atmosphere carbon cycle is very complex, but there is no question that large trees store exponentially more carbon than small trees. Globally our northwest forests are one of the best carbon stores and that carbon is considered "irrecoverable" because, if lost, the carbon storage cannot be recovered for generations.

The Northwest Forest Plan amendment process is an opportunity to implement President Biden's goals for strengthening and protecting America's forests. The U.S. is a signatory to the United Nation's IPCC-6 and engaged in other multilateral efforts. A forest plan that clearly and robustly addresses climate change will be a signal to the world that America recognizes its role in global environmental issues and is ready to step up to the challenge.

Lastly, moving ahead with forest preservation can add jobs in recreation, restoration work such as road-removal and tree planting, inventory, and monitoring. Concentrating on carbon and species monitoring, watershed and wetland restoration, and recreation and fishing will create more jobs than the now highly mechanized logging done on industrialized private forests.

Thank you for reviewing my comments.

Sincerely, Pam Keller