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Organization:

Title:

Comments:

Dear Forest Service:

I'd like to comment on the Forest Service's proposed priorities for changing the Northwest Forest Plan. I value our National Forests for clean water, wildlife habitat, biodiversity, carbon sequestration, and sustainable recreation, and hope that management can conserve these values into the future.

I urge you to not weaken the old-growth and riparian protections of the original Northwest Forest Plan. Experience has shown these to be viable, workable, and valuable aspects of forest management.

As you make changes, I urge to you to highlight as a top priority the crucial role of forests in conserving our region's waterways, exceptional water quality, drinking water supply, and aquatic habitats. Rivers and water are central to the vitality of our ecosystems and communities.

Preserving biodiversity and connected wildlife habitat across the region should also be a core principle of the forest plan revisions. While the proposed priorities highlight the important biodiversity of old-growth forests, I'd like to see that the Forest Service ensure that biodiversity from other unique and vulnerable ecosystems-such as the unique serpentine fens, and Jeffrey Pine savannahs of the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest-are also regarded as valuable. Please ensure that protections continue for sensitive plants and rare endemic trees, such as the Brewer's spruce.

President Biden's 2022 Executive Order on forests and the climate gave the Forest Service clear guidance to prioritize the protection and restoration of mature and old-growth forests (trees generally over 80 years old) as a natural carbon and climate solution. The proposed amendments should follow this guidance and protect all mature and old-growth trees and forests, which beyond their habitat values can play an important role in sequestering carbon. All primary forests should also be protected to conserve genetic diversity of trees and plants adapted to their places.

To support sustainable economies of local communities, the Forest Service should look beyond only timber and recognize the role of forests in supporting sustainable sport and commercial fisheries and also sustainable recreation.

Thank you for considering my views as you work on this plan revision.