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Organization:

Title:

Comments: [External Email]Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement

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Dear Forest Service:

Thank you for accepting this scoping comment in support of the Forest Service's proposed amendment to the Northwest Forest Plan (NFP). The forests of the NFP region are vital to our region, providing cold, clean water for people and wildlife, inspiring places for contemplation and recreation, older forests home to rare species, climate change mitigation, and job opportunities.

In modernizing the NFP, it is crucial that we ensure that these ecosystem services continue to flow from our national forests and that they are able to adapt to a changing climate. Here are key considerations for the changes to the NFP:

First, the amendment must protect and conserve mature and old growth trees and forests in both moist and seasonally dry forests. While the NFP reserved many older forests in 1994, it did not protect them all, which has led to controversy among stakeholders. Thus, the NFP amendment must sustain and replenish older trees and forests into the future.

Second, the amendment must recognize and address the effects of climate change, particularly the increase in very large and severe wildfires. While the NFP considers the essential role that wildfire plays in our forests, the size and severity of wildfires has far exceeded expectations. The amendment should reassess the conservation strategies for both moist and seasonally dry forests, considering the evolving role of wildfire and incorporating Indigenous and cultural burning practices. Consulting with regional Tribes is crucial.

Third, conservation of the northern spotted owl, marbled murrelet, and native salmonids was a cornerstone of the 1994 Northwest Forest Plan, and an amendment should only maintain and enhance protections for at-risk fish and wildlife. The NFP amendment should bolster efforts to recover wildlife, recognizing the ongoing threat of climate change and past management practices. To protect biodiversity in the era of climate change, the amendment must ensure habitat resilience from disturbances such as wildfire, drought, disease, and insects.

Finally, the amendment should recognize shifts in our region's socioeconomic landscape since 1994. While forest management will always be a part of the Pacific Northwest economy, recreation and other pursuits now draw more people to our region than ever before. Building a modern forest restoration workforce will contribute to ecological resilience of our National Forests and ensure continued public enjoyment of these lands we all value.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on the Forest Service's proposed climate-smart amendment to the Northwest Forest Plan.

I have my own ideas as how to manage a west coast Douglas-fir forest. I consider myself qualified for such a

task as I am a graduate of OSU College of Forestry with 51 years of experience managing our family's private forest. My years of experience covers most areas of forest management. Harvest is high on my list of skills. Our company does all types of harvesting. We specialize in commercial thinning, on all types of terrain, as well as most other harvest regimes.

I believe a broad plan for Federal Forest management should emphasize a large scale forest salvage program that would come close to eliminating the current fuel load that exists in most Federal Forests. Such a program should be self supporting using diligent selective cutting. I would suggest that the planning be a cooperative effort made up of a small committee with no more than seven members. The committee should include a USFS representative as chairman, a representative from the logging community, member from large timber, member of small timber owners, fish and wildlife, preservationists and one member from the public that resides near or is surrounded by a National Forest. It would be a good idea to have an observer, non voting, from a congressional office that represents a district that includes a large area that is National Forest.

This may sound like a radical idea, but has been used by private timber, for many years, even though it is not used very much in private timber at the present time.

I hope this will be included as "food for thought" and included in the Process of the Federal Forest Plan.

Sincerely,
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Sincerely,
David Montgomery

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