

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/30/2024 5:15:29 AM

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Comments: [External Email]Please update the NW Forest Plan to protect our mature and old-growth forests.

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Dear Ms. Buchanan,

We need the Northwest Forest Plan. It is a science-based, regional ecosystem management plan to ensure the viability of fish and wildlife associated with the old-growth forest ecosystems in the Pacific Northwest as well as to economically support local communities.

The forest ecosystems are vital to our region; clean water for people and wildlife, support against climate change, biological diversity, as well as inspiring places for contemplation and recreation. Furthermore, plants and animals living there, including many very rare, unique species only found in the Pacific Northwest.

Sadly, impacts from climate change are increasing and thus impairing the ability to maintain healthy, resilient forests and watersheds.

We need to:

Protect mature and old-growth stands in moist forests and protect mature and old-growth trees in seasonally dry forests from flood and fire activity. We must establish clear standards and guidelines.

Partner with Tribes to develop management goals and strategies related to co-management and co-stewardship informed by indigenous knowledge, access to cultural and religious sites, cultural burning, indigenous hunting and gathering on national forests.

Maintain and improve protections for at-risk fish and wildlife and ensure that plan components sustain the ecological integrity of national forests.

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

Regards,

Karen Genest

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