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Comments: Old growth and mature forests are essential for clean water and air needed for maintaining life on planet Earth. A healthy ecosystem integrates information and resource provision through and for the many plants and animals that work together. I support the National Old Growth Amendment Alternative 2. Vegetation management should be the first priority, and once this is established, then it is appropriate to consider commercial logging. Besides maintaining old growth, we need to maintain maturing forests, to contribute to future planet health.

This redundancy is necessary because we need to protect against future disturbance from climate events outside our control.

Mature forests combat climate change, resist wildfire, and store large amounts of carbon in their biomass and soil. Already 90% of old growth forests have been destroyed.

It may seem that harvesting these resources is beneficial for humanity, but we must remember how the systems have been developed over tens of thousands of years. Yes, it can re-grow, but not in time to benefit our living planet.

I urge you to adopt Alternative 2, including Standard 2.b and Standard 1 from the Notice of Intent that specifies that management activities must not degrade or impair old growth forests.

Thank you very much for considering these urgent matters.

Sincerely,

Anna Sontag. PhD.

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