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Comments: To whom it may concern:

Regarding the old growth forest plan amendment (#65356), I support the proposed action (Alternative 2) as developed by the U.S. Forest Service in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

According to the Ruffed Grouse Society/American Woodcock Society- Old forests are one of several critical successional stages in healthy ecosystems. Disproportionate emphasis on old growth - without respect to forest type and in a way that prioritizes them over other forest types - could hinder the USFS's ability to optimize wildlife habitat, carbon stewardship, resilience and biodiversity.

I am encouraged that commercial timber harvest is available to the FS land managers to achieve their goals of proactive stewardship of old growth stands. Disturbances create early successional habitat that is necessary for many species of wildlife. Management activities that allow FS staff to properly manage those stands for forest health, and at the same time create habitat diversity, is a win-win situation.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

Tom Pratley