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FROM: MARILYN KOENITZER; 20856 BOBWHITE CT; BEND, OR 97701

TO: US FOREST SERVICE

RE: NATIONAL OLD GROWTH AMENDMENT DRAFT EIS (NOGA) (DEIS)

I support the testimony of the Coast Range Association (CRA) on the NOGA DEIS.

If your proposed Do Nothing option keeps the NW Forest Plan (NWFP) in place, then I strongly agree that is what should be done.

Through aerial photo-interpretation and ground truthing, our former business, Forest Data Incorporated, mapped the Siuslaw NF, the Deschutes NF and others. In some cases, we reported on 26 attributes of the forests. If my late husband, Will Koenitzer, were alive, he would be greatly in favor of saving as much old growth as possible, cutting as little as possible and letting the forests do the work we need now to save our climate.

Looking at hundreds of USFS photos we interpreted to determine tree types, heights, canopy layers, etc., our employees saw hundreds of clear cuts that disturbed the continuity of the forests and homes of its wildlife. Over the years we all remarked at the broken forest systems. Fortunately, areas of old growth were saved due to the spotted owl and the existing NWFP.

Over the years, much knowledge has come to light about how healthy forest ecosystems work and how to manage them or not!

Since we started our forestry business in 1980, foresters learned that healthy forests need all their varied tree species, tree ages, undergrowth and wildlife to remain healthy. They published papers on healthy forest management that differed from the past clear-cut mentality. These papers focused more on keeping varied aged and type stands intact and applying selective thinning. These papers by Jerry Franklin, Norm Johnson and Gordon Reeves led to the enactment of the NWFP under President Clinton.

Also, because of public outcry, foresters began to advocate for restoration of rivers damaged by logging. Rivers in the Siuslaw NF were restored through helicopter placement of logs to improve damaged fish habitat. Logging

destroyed many riverbanks which allowed streams to flow unnaturally. Intact riparian areas are also part of healthy forests. Within the past ten years, Oregon State University researchers found that introducing top predator species helps restore riparian areas. Many riparian areas have been diminished by USFS policy that allowed barely minimal setbacks.

Then in 2021, Suzanne Simard's seminal book on how trees communicate, *Finding the Mother Tree*, became an international sensation. It confirmed her decades of research on how trees communicate, compete and cooperate with one another with sophistication with the help of fungal networks. Her book shows why nature knows best how to save us from climate change: Leave nature to do its work.

Many critics of forest practices feel that forests would be better off left alone rather than managed in the ways of the past. I understand that Congress has not funded the Forest Service properly to do the stewardship work our public forests need. Operating funds coming from cutting seems to encourage mismanagement even under the NWFP.

Chuck Willer of the Coast Range Association recently mobilized an army of citizens to map the old growth in the Siuslaw and brought to further attention the amazing ability of our forests to capture carbon.

Our forests need stewardship, not management for clear cutting of even aged stands. Our coastal forests especially should be used to alleviate the worst of the climate crisis upon us. They are uniquely superb at capturing carbon. Meanwhile the earth's lungs, the Amazon, is burning as I write this and is releasing carbon, not capturing it. Please steward the forests for our planet's future.

As Coast Range Association testimony says: "The final record of decision should end the cutting of old-growth trees in all national forests and end the cutting of mature and old growth trees in high carbon sequestering moist forest types." I agree with CRA testimony.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

MK