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First name: Sam

Last name: Butler

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I urge you to strengthen the Northwest Forest Plan by increasing the protections for mature and old-growth forests. The Northwest Forest Plan is vital for providing protections and habitat for endangered species such as the Northern Spotted Owl and Marbled Murrelet. It is now time to build on these gains and move to enhance protections for the region's mature and old-growth forests, thus providing the habitat that is crucial to these species.

This requires the adoption of a modified version of Alternative C, providing added protection for mature forests essential to restore sufficient habitat. Increased buffers for forest management activities around Marbled Murrelet nests are also crucial to reducing nest predation, a key factor preventing population recovery.

All other alternatives are flawed, as they contain language regarding increased logging of mature forests. These mature forests are essential for increasing the amount of old growth habitat and must not be sacrificed.

This plan also fails to address the extinction risk facing the Northern Spotted Owl, which is suffering from a severe and rapid population decline, as well as the slower decline of the Marbled Murrelet population. It is essential the existing habitat protections of the Northwest Forest Plan be maintained and built upon, not weakened or watered down.

Please protect mature and old-growth forests to preserve biodiversity, fight climate change, and ensure the recovery of vulnerable bird species. Given the catastrophic declines in biodiversity, we must prioritize eco-system protection and enhancement over corporate profits.

Thank you for considering my comments.