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Comments: Any components to a NWFP amendment that weaken core protections for mature and old-growth forests and the suite of water quality, species habitat, and carbon storage values they provide should not move forward, while those components that strengthen the NWFP's commitment to Tribal sovereignty and inclusion, environmental justice, and beneficial fire use should move forward without being tied to increased logging in these vital forests.

Any amendment to the Northwest Forest Plan should recognize the wide variety of social and economic benefits National Forests provide for local communities and the region as a whole-not just timber, but also clean water, climate stability, quality of life, and outdoor recreation.

Fire resistance and resilience can be bolstered by preserving and restoring mature and old-growth forests. Fuels and fire management should focus on the home ignition zone and on non-commercial treatments and beneficial fire use, not commercial logging. Indigenous cultural burning and wildland fire use should be prioritized. Commercial logging for fuel reduction can negatively impact wildlife habitat, remove large fire-resistant trees, introduce invasive species, and create hazardous fire conditions. Standards must ensure that fuel reduction is both needed and effective before logging is allowed.

The Forest Service must reject plans to weaken core protections of the Northwest Forest Plan, and do the following:

- Strengthen protections for mature and old-growth forests to ensure habitat, water quality, and carbon storage, and recruit more mature and old forests to restore a functional ecosystem.
- Maintain or expand protections for the network of forest reserves to allow natural processes to flourish, ensure connectivity for wildlife, and support the recovery of imperiled species. Any reduction in forest reserve protections would increase harmful impacts such as habitat destruction, sediment in streams, and carbon loss, further endangering sensitive ecosystems.
- Genuinely consult with Tribes, respect their sovereignty, and provide resources to support their full participation in decision-making. The Forest Service must support co-stewardship agreements, cultural burning practices, first food harvesting, and youth education while ensuring equitable access to planning processes. Pairing these components with the Forest Service's plan for weakened environmental protections is a false choice manufactured by the agency.
- Shift wildfire strategies to prioritize community safety and proven prevention measures over logging.

I believe we need a strong forest plan that incorporates modern science and public values, robust and honest tribal consultation, and the needs of future generations. Your proposed amendment is full of actions that will ignore the best available science and will harm the forest, the environment, our communities, and your duties under the law.