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First name: Anne Haven

Last name: McDonnell

Organization:

Title:

Comments: My name is Anne Haven McDonnell. Please accept this comment on the draft EIS for the proposed Northwest Forest Plan amendment.

Any amendment to the Northwest Forest Plan should recognize that our National Forests provide irreplaceable benefits for local and larger communities. Our forests need to be managed not to prioritize clean water, climate stability, quality of life, and outdoor recreation.

Old growth forests are more resilient to fire, and all of us who live in the west know the dangers of mega-fires in this precarious climate. Restoring and protecting old growth and mature forests is an important strategy of fire prevention. Indigenous cultural burning and wildland fire use should also be prioritized.

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.
- 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.
- Shift wildfire strategies to prioritize community safety and proven prevention measures over logging.