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Title:

Comments: My name is Wendy Roedell, and I am a member of the Great Old Broads for Wilderness, the Audubon Society, and the American Birding Association, as well as being a parent and grandparent. Over the course of my lifetime I have hiked, backpacked, and birded throughout many of the Pacific Northwest forests. These forests are dear to my heart, and I hope that my children and grandchildren will be able to continue to enjoy them.

Please accept this comment on the draft EIS for the proposed Northwest Forest Plan amendment.

I'm concerned that the amendments redefine "mature" and "old-growth" forests, and eliminate protections for unlogged mature forests 80-120 years old in some places. Mature forests can be protective in the fight against climate change because older forests accumulate carbon stocks (Pan et al, 2-024, Law et al. 2022). Older trees and forests store their accumulated carbon for centuries. In addition, biological studies have found that mature and old-growth trees are more resilient to the impacts of climate change. For example, it's the small trees that are vulnerable during drought; the mature trees have the wherewithal to live through varying climates (Vickers et al, 2012, Irvine et al. 2004). And these older trees act as a buffer against rising temperatures, as they create a cool microclimate, benefiting both animals and people.

One of the things I most appreciate about mature and old growth forests is the role they play in supporting biodiversity, both of plant and animal species. Of course, we know about protecting Spotted Owl and Marbled Murrelet habitat, but a greater diversity of species in general is possible within a protective mature forest.

In addition, both mature and old-growth trees tend to be fire resistant because they have thick bark, and their canopies are high above the threat of surface fires. Logging these big old trees opens the canopy and makes the stand hotter, dryer and windier, which stimulates the growth of more hazardous surface and ladder fuels. Mature and old-growth forests are also important for clean water quality, as well as for providing clean air for all to breathe.

In short, I'm in favor of modifying the proposed amendments to continue protection for mature forests older than 80 years, and to cut back on the logging of all mature and old growth forests in general.

On a positive note, I'm very happy to see the multiple ways that the Tribes are included throughout the plan and hope that this continues to be part of the forest plan.

Thank you for your consideration of these points as you strive to create a plan that will work now and for future generations. Please remember that once a mature or old growth tree is cut down, it's gone forever. We don't want forests consisting of thin little new trees that would be unsustainable. It takes a long time to grow big trees.

Wendy Roedell

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