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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to comment on the proposed amendment to the Northwest Forest Plan.

I am an Oregonian, was born in Oregon and my grandparents have been in Oregon since the first decades of the 1900s, having moved from Idaho. My siblings and I grew up hiking, camping, swimming, and cross-country skiing in PNW forests. My family raised our child doing the same. We annually explore the Siuslaw, Willamette, and Deschutes National Forests while camping, hiking, and celebrating graduation milestones and family reunions. Our forests are places that define us as Oregonians and when friends visit they marvel at the old-growth areas we hike in and are shocked by the extent of clear-cuts one can see from an airplane flying in or from aerial photographs.

My specific concerns related to the amendments:

(1) Any amendment should better and more broadly protect mature and old-growth forests. Do not change the definition of late successional forest (LSF) to apply only to those stands older than 120 years, rather than the 80 years, as in the existing NWFP. This would only result in more logging and loss of these critical areas.

(2) I do not support any increases in logging in LSFs. Our old-growth forests are critical areas of carbon sequestration that will help protect us from the effects of climate change and for that reason they are globally important.

(2) The amendment should define ways to increase the amount of protected old growth acres, because we will undoubtedly lose some to climate-induced changes, including more severe wildfires and drought. We've seen how unexpected changes are occurring from climate alteration and we know that issues, such as more severe or extended periods of extreme weather or storms, wildfires, disease and pest outbreaks (or new pest or pathogen introductions) can have cascading effects on the health of trees and other components of the forest ecosystem.

(3) The amendment should reduce, rather than increase, the levels of logging in the existing NWF Plan. The effects of the alternatives are difficult to tease out in their initial description, but the increases in logged forests expected in all of the alternatives should not occur. These forests, especially the old-growth and mature stands, are the carbon stores and biodiversity banks for our children's future.

(4) The tribal connections and increased coordination are important and should be disassociated from the amendment alternatives that would result in increased logging or increased loss of mature and old growth forests.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Diane Steeck