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Comments: As you update your management plans, I urge you to prioritize environmental protection above all else. Our mature and old-growth forests play an essential role in storing carbon, providing resilience against wildfire, and mitigating climate change. These forests should be safeguarded, not logged, to help address the biodiversity and climate crises.

In addition to their environmental benefits, these forests are home to endangered species such as coho salmon. They also protect drinking water for small towns in the Pacific Northwest. Maintaining and expanding protections for these ecosystems will benefit both wildlife and people.

The proposals to amend the Northwest Forest Plan weaken environmental protections, reversing the intentions of the original plan. Expanding reserves would allow for increased habitat, healthier watersheds, and improved carbon storage-critical components of a sustainable future. Opening these areas to logging would undermine these goals and diminish the long-term benefits they provide.

Furthermore, Tribal sovereignty and stewardship practices should be central to forest management decisions. Meaningful consultation and engagement with Tribal communities must be prioritized, ensuring that these voices are heard and respected in shaping the future of our forests.

Personally, these forests hold great significance to me. Hiking in Oregon's wild places provides unforgettable experiences for adults and kids. Their beauty, ecological importance, and recreational value make them irreplaceable, and I hope to see them protected for future generations.

Thank you for considering these concerns. I urge the Forest Service to focus on conservation-first policies that ensure our forests continue to thrive and support the environment, wildlife, and communities that depend on them.