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First name: Natalie

Last name: Stameroff

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I have been an outdoor educator, permaculture practitioner, and I have been doing contract work for the forest service for habitat creation, as well as a mushroom and herbal forager and river kayaker for fifteen years.

Please accept this comment on the draft EIS for the proposed northwest forest plan amendment. These forests are important to me because they have been part of my livelihood, they are the place I go for physical mental and emotional renewal, they are a very important part of my well-being and sense of belonging on the planet.

These forests are not just a personal renewal location, their ecological functions are immense. They create the rain we depend on further inland for fire reduction, agriculture, and all things we need water for. They cool water in streams making them habitat to keystone species that the entire ecosystem depends on. They store massive amounts of carbon and biodiversity which do not exist in forest plantations.

I am concerned that the forest services proposed amendment to the plan weakens protections for our regions forests, clean water, and habitat. If enacted these changes would double or triple logging on our public lands that we pay taxes to maintain for our public good. We depend on these old growth mature forests on economic, environmental, and spiritual levels.

I support some elements of the amendment that include beneficial fire approach and indigenous cultural burning and co stewardship. The forest service should retain all of the tribal inclusion components that are in alternative B but must uncouple them from the forest management strategies that increase the age of old growth and mature stands.

Preserving biodiversity and connected wildlife habitat across the region should be a core principal of this amendment. This includes threatened species, those impacted by habitat fragmentation, and those awaiting state or federal listing protections. If we do not protect our ecosystem we will not have an economy as our economy is based on functional ecosystems.

The amendment should recognize the wide variety of social and economic benefits that far outweigh the value of the timber, by 20 to 100 times. Clean water, climate stability quality of life, recreation and tourism actually create jobs and prospering communities not timber harvest.

Preserving and restoring mature and old growth forests bolsters fire resistance. Cleared forests burn hotter and faster with a much slower recovery rate. Fire management only makes sense in the home ignition zone and non commercial treatments and beneficial fire use for creating patchy diverse habitat.

You must strengthen protections for mature and old growth forest to ensure habitat, water quality, local climate stability, and carbon storage for a functional ecosystem.

Maintain or expand protections for the network of forests reserves to allow natural processes to flourish. Further reductions in forest reserve protections will increase harmful impacts to an unknown level and potentially cause collapse of 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, cultural burning, first food harvesting, and youth education. These do not have to be paired with weakened environmental protections. This is a false manufactured choice.

Address environmental Justice by analyzing impacts on the air, water, and communities ensuring fair and sustainable working conditions.

Shift wildfire strategy to prioritize community safety and scientifically proven measures over logging for profit.

We need a strong forest plan that incorporates science, public values, tribal consultation and the needs of future generations.

Thank you.

Natalie Stameroff , Eugene