

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/5/2025 4:37:24 AM

First name: Sue

Last name: Cole

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Greetings,

My name is Sue Cole and I live in the beautiful state of Oregon. I am a new member of Third Act Oregon and a longtime member of the Sierra Club. I am a retired librarian and teacher and have been hiking, backpacking, rafting and camping in the Sierra Nevada and Cascade mountains for over 50 years.

Please accept my comments on the draft EIS for the proposed Northwest Forest Plan amendment. These forests are important to me because they sequester more carbon than the Amazon, they are home to a multitude of wondrous wild creatures, and offer humans boundless recreational opportunities--including just existing as a feast for our eyes. I have had countless experiences in forests that have opened my eyes to the diversity Nature offers, learning about trees and the understory, including wildflowers that can be tiny and shy or bold and strikingly colorful. They are friends I greet anew after each winter. Witnessing wildlife in their habitat feels like a particular honor. Insects in their mind-blowing variety of forms are fascinating, birds a marvel of design fitting function, and mammals are beautifully shaped and furred neighbors in total harmony with the environment...unlike most humans, in my experience.

The Northwest Forest Plan is a valuable instrument in keeping the Pacific Northwest healthy through restoration of forests and watersheds by irresponsible past logging and road building, and recovery and protection of wildlife habitat. Our forests are a crucial part of a solution to climate change.

I am concerned that the Forest Service's proposed amendment to the Plan weakens protections and careful husbandry of our region's forests, clean water, and wildlife habitat. If enacted, the amendments would double or even triple logging. But research following the implementation of the original NWFP found timber production undermines community sustainability, will not guarantee jobs, and ignores economic tradeoffs. A typical logging truck carrying some \$4000 in logs incurs climate costs ranging from \$20,000 to an astounding \$100,000. This last data comes in part from the EPA, 2022, "EPA External Review Draft of Report on the Social Cost of Greenhouse Gases; Estimates Incorporating Recent Scientific Advances."

I support elements of the amendment that First Peoples' co-stewardship agreements and beneficial fire approaches. The Forest Service should retain Tribal inclusion elements but DETACH them from plans that increase the age of trees and forests that can be logged.

Preserving biodiversity and connected wildlife habitats should be essential to the Plan amendment.

The amendment should recognize the wide variety of social and economic benefits national forests provide for local communities and the region--not just timber, but also clean water, climate stability, quality of life, and outdoor recreation. People do not benefit from stumps.

Fire management should focus on a home's ignition zone and on non-commercial treatments and beneficial fires use, not commercial logging. Commercial logging for fuel reduction negatively impacts wildlife habitat, removes large fire-resistant trees, introduces invasive species, and creates hazardous conditions. Standards MUST ensure that fuel reduction is both needed and effective before logging is allowed.

The Forest Service must reject plans to weaken core forest protections of the NWFP and do the following:

\* Strengthen protections for mature and old-growth forests to nurture habitats, water quality, and carbon storage

\*Maintain or expand protections for all forest reserves to allow natural processes to flourish, ensure connectivity for wildlife, and support recovering of endangered species

\*Consult with Tribes, respect their sovereignty, and provide resources to support their participation in decision-making related to all forest ecology and stewardship matters, but do not tie this to any Plan amendment

\* Address environmental justice by analyzing impacts of industry on air, water and communities

\*Shift wildfire management strategies to prioritize community safety and proven prevention measures over logging

I believe we need a strong forest Plan that incorporates modern scientific findings and public values, Tribal consultation, and the needs of future generations. I want my grandnieces and grandnephew to enjoy the marvels of our forests, not acres of clear-cut wasteland.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sue Cole

Eugene