

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/6/2025 4:36:57 PM

First name: Lauren

Last name: Teichner

Organization: Teichner Law

Title: Principal Attorney

Comments: To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to urge the Forest Service to strengthen, not weaken, protections for the mature and old-growth forests within the Northwest Forest Plan. These forests are irreplaceable in their role as carbon stores, biodiversity refuges, and providers of clean water for communities across the Pacific Northwest. Logging them would exacerbate the climate and biodiversity crises at a time when we should be doing everything possible to mitigate these threats.

As a parent, I've had the privilege of introducing my young children to the magic of the outdoors through camping trips in the forests of northern Michigan. I'll never forget the first time we set up camp beneath a towering canopy of old-growth trees, their branches filtering the golden evening light. My kids were wide-eyed with wonder as they explored the soft moss underfoot, traced the patterns of bark with their tiny fingers, and marveled at the quiet rustling of the leaves above. At night, we listened to the sounds of the forest-the distant call of an owl, the wind whispering through the trees, the gentle crackle of our small fire. In those moments, I was reminded of how deeply connected we are to these landscapes and how essential they are for future generations to experience the same awe and connection to the natural world.

These forests are not just trees-they are living ecosystems that sustain wildlife, filter drinking water, and store carbon to help fight climate change. Protecting them is critical for species like the northern spotted owl, marbled murrelet, and coho salmon, all of which depend on these forests for survival. Logging these areas would not only accelerate biodiversity loss but also threaten the clean water sources that many communities rely on.

I strongly urge the Forest Service to:

- Maintain and expand forest reserves to ensure greater habitat protection, clean water filtration, and carbon sequestration.
- Reject any proposals that would open old-growth or mature forests to logging, which would have irreversible consequences.
- Uphold Tribal sovereignty and incorporate Indigenous stewardship practices into management plans through meaningful consultation and engagement with Tribal communities.
- Prioritize climate resilience and ecological integrity over short-term extractive interests.
- These forests are a national treasure, and it is our responsibility to protect them for future generations. Please act in the public interest by reinforcing, not diminishing, the protections outlined in the Northwest Forest Plan.

Sincerely,

Lauren Teichner

Principal Attorney, Teichner Law, which is a public interest environmental law firm in Traverse City, Michigan