

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/11/2025 8:39:08 PM

First name: Stephanie

Last name: Morgan

Organization:

Title:

Comments: My name is Stephanie Morgan and I have spent all but 6 of my 70 years living in CA and OR west of the Sierras and Cascades. Forests, in general, and mature and old growth forests, in particular, have played an important part in my, my family's, and my various communities' emotional and physical well-being. I am writing today to comment on the Forest Service's Northwest Forest Plan Amendments DEIS. I am deeply concerned that the proposed amendment to the NWFP weakens protections for our area's mature and old-growth forests, clean water, and wildlife habitat. If enacted, these changes would significantly increase logging levels across our public forests, open mature and old-growth trees to commercial logging, and sideline the protections that communities, wildlife, and ecosystems depend on for social and economic benefits, safety, health, and enjoyment. Preserving biodiversity and connected wildlife habitat across the region should be a core principle of this forest plan amendment.

I support elements of the proposed amendment that include beneficial and common sense fire approaches for ecosystem integrity/fire resistance and human safety and enjoyment/fire resilience, and I applaud the DEIS Option-B's general position on fuel load and industrial wildfire use. Wet and rainforest zones, however, require radically different thinking and approaches than do temperate forests. Kudos to climate change issues being included in the DEIS, but given that we are now in a "code red" phase of climate change, the analysis unfortunately is dated and not current to real-world conditions. Wet and rainforest temperate ecosystem integrity is not supported by commercial logging practices and extensive road networks. What works is non-commercial thinning (minimum 70% canopy cover) and underplanting. And forest thinning must be based on wildfire resistance and ecosystem integrity - especially since human wildfire fighting resources are decreasing daily while the economics of disaster are already out of control and expanding. We must ensure our forests of all types strike a balance of fire resistance, resilience and maintaining human enjoyment and ecosystem health. This includes maintaining a healthy respect for wet zone biomass, above-ground carbon in all areas of the NWFP region. Clear-cutting and scorch the earth policies have long been proven to be wholly detrimental to all "stakeholders" from human enjoyment and health, ecosystem repair and biodiversity to fire resistance and resilience. Our forests are still the primary and best means of CO2 sequestration and the only way that works is through proper forest stewardship.

Thank you for your attention and thoughtful consideration of comments.