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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear U.S. Forest Service Planning Team,

I am submitting my formal comment regarding the proposed Northwest Forest Plan Amendment, voicing my strong support for Alternative D. This approach strikes the best balance between forest health, wildfire prevention, economic stability, and public access, all of which are essential for the long-term sustainability of our public lands.

The Need for Proactive Forest Management

Alternative D takes a much-needed active management approach, addressing the growing concerns of overgrown forests, excessive fuel loads, and devastating wildfires. The current passive management strategy has led to severe consequences-unchecked tree density, increased fire hazards, and poor forest resilience. By implementing responsible thinning, selective timber harvesting, and controlled burns, Alternative D promotes a healthier, more sustainable forest while simultaneously reducing the risks posed by catastrophic wildfires. Without these measures, we will continue to see forests decline, both ecologically and economically.

Restoring Jobs & Economic Stability

Forestry-dependent communities have suffered immensely since the 1994 Northwest Forest Plan, with many once-thriving towns struggling to survive. Alternative D presents an opportunity to rebuild these economies by increasing timber harvest levels by at least 33%, creating stable employment for loggers, mill workers, and forestry professionals while also benefiting local contractors, suppliers, and support industries. Sustainable forestry is a renewable resource-one that can provide long-term economic benefits if managed correctly. Alternative D recognizes this and offers a pathway to revitalize both natural landscapes and struggling rural communities.

Public Access & Recreation: A Critical Economic Driver

Forest access is more than a recreational luxury-it is a vital contributor to rural economies. The closures of roads, trails, and public land access points have been detrimental to businesses reliant on outdoor recreation, including:

- *Restaurants, gas stations, and retail stores that serve travelers and outdoor enthusiasts.
- *Outfitters, hunting and fishing guides, and camping supply businesses that rely on a steady influx of visitors.
- *Local lodging and service industries, which benefit from tourism and outdoor activity-related travel.

Under Alternative D, road and trail closures would be minimized, ensuring that all forest users-off-roaders, campers, hikers, hunters, anglers, and outdoor enthusiasts-can continue to enjoy these lands. At the same time, maintaining road access ensures fire crews, emergency personnel, and search-and-rescue teams can quickly and effectively respond to incidents.

A Responsible Approach to Conservation

Contrary to opposition claims, Alternative D does not eliminate environmental protections-rather, it enhances them through better forest management. The plan ensures:

- *Old-growth forests (200+ years old) remain protected while allowing sustainable harvesting of younger trees.
- *Dead and diseased trees are promptly removed to prevent the spread of pests and reduce fire hazards.
- *Grazing and mechanical clearing are prioritized over excessive controlled burns, preventing air quality issues while reducing fire risks.

Rather than following a "hands-off" approach that leads to massive wildfires and habitat destruction, Alternative D actively promotes forest resilience and long-term sustainability through scientifically backed management strategies.

Final Thoughts & Call to Action

The 1994 Northwest Forest Plan failed, leading to environmental degradation, economic collapse in rural areas, and the loss of access to public lands. Alternative D is the only logical solution to correct these mistakes and move forward with a plan that benefits both forests and people.

I urge the U.S. Forest Service to adopt Alternative D, prioritizing:

? Active management to improve forest health and prevent wildfires.

? Sustainable forestry to create jobs and revitalize local economies.

? Expanded public access for recreation, tourism, and emergency response.

? Balanced conservation efforts that protect wildlife while maintaining healthy forests.

Our public lands should be thriving, accessible, and managed wisely-not abandoned to overgrowth, fire, and restricted use. Now is the time for change, and Alternative D is the best way forward.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jeff Holland

Concerned Citizen