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First name: Lisa

Last name: Billings

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Please accept this comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Northwest Forest Plan Amendment. The Northwest Forest Plan continues to be instrumental in keeping the Pacific Northwest a special place through the restoration of forests and watersheds damaged by decades of destructive logging and road building, recovery of economically and ecologically valuable salmon runs, protection of wildlife habitat and old-growth forests, and ensuring our national forests are part of a natural climate solution. The landmark plan warrants updates to address Tribal inclusion and incorporation of Indigenous Knowledge, address the dual climate change and biodiversity crises, and increase wildfire resilience.

I am concerned that the Forest Service's proposed amendments weaken protections from logging in our region's forests. Without safeguards, these changes would double or even triple logging levels across our public forests increasing wildfire risk, impairing water quality, and inhibiting climate resilience. Managing forests for biodiversity and connected wildlife habitat across the region should be a core principle of the forest plan amendment. Fire resistance and resilience can be bolstered by conserving and restoring mature and old-growth forests. Standards must ensure that fuel reduction is both needed and effective before logging is allowed.

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

Thank you for your consideration.