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Comments: The Pacific Northwest, its forests mountains and waters, and its wildlife must be protected from short-sighted legislation and timber profiteering. By deforesting the Pacific Northwest and removing protections on old growth forest, we push our region, nation, and climate further out of balance.

With an unbalanced Northwest ecosystem, we lose critical endemic species which causes cascading and cyclical losses of more critical species. Consider how the loss of various woodpeckers (like Pileated Woodpeckers) which nest primarily in old-growth forest will lead to harmful insect overpopulation (like that of wood-boring beetles) which leads to forest decimation which leads to high forest fire risk and more harm to people, wildcats, bears, eagles, owls, and many other sensitive species. Consider how reduced tree cover leaves our Pacific Northwest watersheds drier which decreases natural salmon spawn from reaching the ocean which reduces food supply for Southern Resident killer whales (of which there are only 73 individuals remaining on Earth) and humans. Consider the loss in carbon sink capacity (per each tree we let fall) which allows more CO2 to rise directly into an already-petering ozone and force more natural disasters and decimation of food crop systems worldwide. These natural losses cannot be undone, and much is already gone.

Please protect the remaining old growth forest and our entire Pacific Northwest ecosystem before it's lost for good. Expand protections of our old growth forests and Pacific Northwest biodiversity to ensure they won't be harmed anytime soon. Develop and support sustainable timber harvesting practices (such as selective logging and synthetic-from-recyclables timber) to meet our nation's increasing housing demands. Our old growth and mature forest is too valuable to trade away; timber can be found and created elsewhere. The future of our nation's wildlife and natural beauty deeply rely on the decisions you make.

Thank you