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Comments: The Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP) has been in effect for 30 years and is vital to keeping our mature and old-growth forests safe from logging while protecting the wildlife that depend on old-growth and mature stands of trees to survive. As we know, the NWFP was first put into place as a necessary plan to eliminate unchecked logging on our last remaining mature and old-growth forests.

Amending the NWFP while proceeding with cutting and harvesting these mature and old-growth forests puts our forests, water, fish, wildlife (such as the Marbled Murrelet, which is already declining due to loss of nesting habitat), at risk and pushing multiple species even further towards extinction.

Allowing logging in these critical habitats could also lead to warming of streams and riparian zones necessary for returning salmon.

Mature and old-growth forests are also proven to store significant amounts of carbon, making these particular stands a necessary attribute when trying to counter climate change. Releasing significant amounts of carbon from cutting down mature and old-growth stands would only add to the rapidity of climate change and the alarming rate at which it is contributing to catastrophic wildfires. Doing everything we can to slow down climate change should be one of our top priorities.

An amendment to the NWFP that only accelerates and prioritizes logging on old-growth and mature forests, and at the same time ignores the plan's original foundations of wildlife and habitat conservation is unacceptable.

Alternative B and Alternative D options in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) would allow logging on stands of trees ranging from 80 years to 120 year-old stands in moist forests and 150 in dry forests. This is unacceptable and would go against every foundational objective of the NWFP and would put sensitive species, such as: Northern Spotted Owl, Humboldt's flying squirrel and Marbled Murrelet, who are dependent on closed-canopy mature and old-growth forests in order to survive. I urge the U.S. Forest Service to retain the threshold at 80 years.

The DEIS justifies that logging and the thinning of mature, west-side moist forest will reduce fire risk. According to current scientific evidence, the best way to decrease fire risk and increase climate resiliency, is to let moist forests grow and develop canopy closure. Further more, USFS needs to adopt and prioritize Natural Climate Solutions, including longer forest rotations, managing for higher forest complexity to sequester as much carbon as possible and leaving mature and old-growth trees on the landscape.

Fire management only needs to occur within the "ignition zone," near at-risk communities and other man-made structures. The most effective way to reduce the threat of wildfire to communities is to treat fuels in the immediate vicinity of vulnerable infrastructure.

Thank you for the USFS's engagement with tribes in the development of DEIS. Meaningful commitments to respect tribal sovereignty, honor treaty rights, fulfill trust responsibilities and facilitate co-stewardship is very much respected. The final plan should advance the Tribal inclusion components forward independently and not tied to any of the alternatives (Proposed Alternative B and Alternative D). The agency should also provide a more comprehensive analysis that reflects the future importance of tribal communities.

The need to create a larger timber "out-put" is apparent in the DEIS. And while this may benefit some, economic values such as: outdoor recreation, clean water and fisheries are well known to provide higher economic value. I urge the U.S. Forest Service to approve a final plan that prioritizes wildlife, climate and ancient forests...not logging at all costs.

Thanks.