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Comments: Thank you for an opportunity to comment on the Northwest Forest Plan amendment process. This plan impacts ALL of us. We have an urgent responsibility to preserve, NOT destroy, the vital and diverse benefits that these ecosystems provide, including a robust ability to sequester carbon in counteracting the imminent global impacts of climate change. The Siuslaw National Forest serves as a biodiverse habitat to invaluable old growth trees, endangered birds, and many wildlife. It also encompasses protected watersheds for diverse fish populations and provides domestic water sources to municipalities and its thousands of residents. In an era faced with all of the adverse effects of climate change that is NOW upon us, the preservation of these established bountiful forests are crucial to mitigating the risks and vulnerabilities of destructive wildfires and other natural disasters that impact ALL of us.

Furthermore, I fully support the following:

The only alternatives that should be considered in this amendment process are those that maintain and expand protections for old growth and complex mature forest through measures like the Late Successional Reserve designation and Aquatic Conservation Strategy. I support a modified alternative to better recruit old forests, burn dry forests, improve habitat connectivity, protect aquatic ecosystems, and restore old forests in reserves. The addition of climate change adaptation into forest planning is essential. We need to continue to harmonize forest management across ownerships to prepare for exacerbated climate impacts like flooding, drought, wildfire, and hotter temperatures. However, guardrails are needed for forest health and wildfire resilience projects in older forests to ensure that ecological function and climate goals remain a priority over maximizing timber revenues. The current language proposed for expanding active management on federal lands should be amended to reflect an ultimate prioritization of the plan's original science-based, species and habitat-oriented goals. Indigenous stewardship of forests has shaped our landscape since time immemorial and is essential to building a climate resilient future for our region. The incorporation of tribal consultation and co-stewardship of our federal forest lands is a much needed addition to the National Forest Plan. Adopted elements should support tribal co-management and co-stewardship informed by indigenous knowledge, access to culturally important sites, subsistence hunting and gathering on federal lands, and other issues of interest to tribes. I am in support of a plan that ensures these elements are successfully and sustainably implemented.