

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/16/2025 4:00:00 AM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Forest Service,

I am writing to urge you to consider a modified version of Alternative C in the Northwest Forest Plan Amendment #64745 that incorporates stronger environmental protections and includes the tribal considerations outlined in Alternatives B and D. Specifically, I propose maintaining the original purpose of Late Successional Reserves (LSRs) by prohibiting salvage logging and ensuring that these reserves continue to function as vital sanctuaries for the recruitment of old-growth forests. Additionally, I encourage you to integrate the tribal components from Alternatives B and D to uphold the sovereignty of Tribal nations and honor their invaluable connection to the land.

The current alternatives proposed in the DEIS present a disturbing shift from the original goals of the Northwest Forest Plan, which aimed to recover and sustain mature and old-growth forests. Reducing protections and allowing for increased commercial logging would harm not only the delicate ecosystems these forests support but also the communities that rely on them for clean water, biodiversity, and climate resilience. The imperative to safeguard these forests is not just ecological, but cultural. Many Tribes have maintained deep stewardship of these lands for millennia, and their inclusion in decision-making processes is essential to the health and wellbeing of the entire region.

I am particularly concerned about the increased logging under Alternatives B and D, which would jeopardize critical wildlife habitats and exacerbate climate change. The protection of large, carbon-sequestering trees in mature and old-growth forests is paramount to mitigating the climate crisis. As we face increasingly extreme climate events, the importance of these forests in supporting biodiversity, water quality, and wildfire resilience cannot be overstated. I firmly believe that we can protect these vital resources while also fostering Tribal sovereignty and supporting the cultural practices that have long nurtured these lands.

In conclusion, I urge the Forest Service to modify Alternative C to prohibit salvage logging, uphold the original mission of the LSRs, and integrate Tribal considerations as described in Alternatives B and D. This balanced approach would offer meaningful environmental protections while also ensuring that Tribes have the resources and support they need to continue their traditional stewardship of these lands. I have lived in the Pacific Northwest for the past 10 years, and the ability to hike, camp, and enjoy the forests is one of my top reasons for calling this part of the country home. Destruction of the old-growth forests would break the heart of so many Oregonians who have come to rely on these forests as an escape from city life, and as an essential part of our health and wellbeing. It is imperative that we protect the Pacific Northwest's forests, not only for the health of the environment but also for the cultural and economic wellbeing of the communities that depend on them.

Sincerely,

Megan Beck