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Comments: Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Northwest Forest Plan amendment process.

In its first three decades, the Forest Plan has helped not only to manage our forest resources in a sustainable way, but also to work toward carbon reduction goals, since management choices result in preservation of old-growth and mature forests that are critical to carbon sequestration and storage at scale (as covered in USFS Pacific Northwest Research Station, Watts et al. 2017). As such, I urge you to consider only alternatives that maintain and expand protections for old-growth and complex mature forest, particularly measures like Late Successional Reserve designation and Aquatic Conservation Strategy. I support a modified Alternative B (B+) that would better recruit old forests, burn dry forests, improve habitat connectivity, protect aquatic ecosystems, and restore old forests in Reserves.

It is crucial that we add adaptation to and slowing of climate change to the purview of forest planning, since forests are so critical to those processes and those processes are so critical to the preservation of the environment on which we all depend. We must rationalize management of forests across jurisdictions to prepare for exacerbated climate impacts like flooding, higher winds, drought, higher temperatures, and wildfire. We need guardrails 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. Thus, I urge you to expand language for expanding active management on federal lands in order to reflect 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. It is thus imperative that local tribes be consulted in the management and co-stewardship of our federal forest lands as part of the NFP, and that indigenous knowledge be applied in forest management, and that access to culturally significant sites be preserved, that subsistence hunting and gathering be maintained, and that tribes be active participants in the process.