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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear U.S. Forest Service,

I am writing to express my strong support for the protection of old-growth and mature forests across our public lands. These forests are invaluable for their ability to store carbon, promote biodiversity, and provide resilience against wildfires-critical functions in the fight against climate change. Logging them would only worsen the biodiversity crisis and reduce our ability to mitigate climate impacts.

Beyond their environmental importance, these forests serve as irreplaceable habitats for species like the northern spotted owl, marbled murrelet, and coho salmon. Their presence also safeguards drinking water for countless communities across the Pacific Northwest by naturally filtering and regulating water sources. Weakening protections for these ecosystems threatens not only wildlife but also the people who rely on these forests for clean water, recreation, and cultural significance.

The Northwest Forest Plan was established to balance ecological integrity with forest management. I urge you to strengthen or expand protections under this plan rather than roll them back. Forest reserves should be maintained and enhanced to support habitat recovery, protect waterways, and increase carbon storage-not opened to logging that would degrade these irreplaceable landscapes.

Forest management decisions must respect Tribal sovereignty and incorporate Indigenous stewardship practices. Tribal nations have been caretakers of these lands for generations, and meaningful consultation with Indigenous communities must be a cornerstone of any policy changes. It is unacceptable to frame environmental protections and Tribal engagement as mutually exclusive; both must be prioritized in forest policy decisions.

On a personal level, these forests hold deep significance for me. Much of my life both now and when I was growing up was spent in forests, campgrounds, and nature. Learning in the outdoors is invaluable. Protecting them ensures that future generations can continue to experience the same wonder, solace, and adventure that I have been fortunate enough to enjoy.

I urge the Forest Service to take a stand for our remaining old-growth and mature forests by strengthening their protections, preserving critical habitats, and upholding commitments to environmental justice and Tribal sovereignty. The future of our climate, wildlife, and communities depends on it.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Danielle Scroggs

Denver, Colorado