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Comments: To the USDA Forest Service:

As a person of faith and conscience, I want to see the rich biodiversity in our oldest forests protected. I oppose opening up logging to over 800,000 acres of previously protected forests and creating loopholes for older trees to be logged. This significant increase in logging ignores the Forest Service's duty to protect species listed under the Endangered Species Act, and would drive northern spotted owls, marbled murrelets, salmonids, and other old-growth dependent species toward extinction.

Instead, I urge the Forest Service to protect all remaining mature and old-growth moist forests in the Plan area to preserve ecosystems, save more carbon-storing trees, and improve fire resilience.

The proposed increased logging could reduce the landscape's resilience to wildfire. The logging that could occur pursuant to the Proposed Action and Alternative D under the guise of "fuels reduction" largely represents a handout to the logging industry and could make wildfires worse by removing older, fire resilient trees. It would also cause harm to biodiversity and watersheds.

The Forest Service should modify and select Alternative C to better protect ecosystems, increase carbon storage, and meaningfully incorporate Tribes into forest management. While Alternative C is more protective of ecosystem function than the Proposed Action, it fails to incorporate the tribal involvement provisions contained in the Proposed Action and should be modified to include the same robust commitments to Tribal stewardship contained in the other action alternatives. Alternative C should also be modified to prohibit post-fire salvage logging, which harms an ecosystem's regeneration processes, pollutes our water, removes important habitat features, and reduces carbon storage.

Thank you for receiving these comments,

Lauren Van Ham