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First name: Joe

Last name: Moore

Organization:

Title:

Comments:

My name is Joe Moore. I'm a registered voter in Oregon. I've been paddling a canoe, day hiking, backpacking, and car camping in the National Parks, National Forests, BLM lands, and other public lands of the Pacific Northwest since 1995. Starting in the early 1980s, I did all that in the Ozark and Ouachita National Forests of Arkansas, and also on areas of Weyerhaeuser timberlands in Southwest Arkansas. I've also spent time digging through the lumber bins at certain home improvement stores, and in my garage with a circular saw and a drill.

Regarding the proposed Northwest Forest Plan Amendment #64745, as outlined in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement of November 2024:

None of the proposed Alternatives are acceptable as presented.

Alternative C comes the closest to what I would like to see, but still misses the mark.

I applaud bringing in Tribal voices to the discussion of the NWFP. The Forest Service has just over 100 years of experience with these ecosystems. The Tribes have thousands of years. The parts of Alternative D pertaining to listening to, working with, and working for the Tribes should be part of the final Amendment.

But shoving the rules giving the Tribes a bigger voice into the same Alternative that gives Big Timber more power to 'get the cut out' is a disservice (if not an insult or injury) to the Tribes, to the plants and animals whose home is the Forest, and to those of us who wish to protect the biosphere of the Forest.

The Forest Stewardship Proposed Action Topic Area should adopt many of the rules of Alternative C, but also add consideration of climate change; also the language regarding maintenance or restoration of habitat "...for other species that depend upon younger stands..." should be dropped. If we do a really good job of protecting current mature forests now, then that policy can be revisited in 80 years or so. Fires, windstorms, and landslides have the potential to provide plenty of younger stands in the meantime; stands that in 80 years could grow into mature forests. Forests outside the scope of the NWFP also have much potential to provide habitat for species that depend on younger forest stands.

The age limit after which a mature tree cannot be cut should be maintained at 80 years old. This age was adopted in the original NWFP based on scientific evidence at the time as to when forests began to act like mature forests. To my knowledge, no scientific evidence has shown a change to that time period.

The forests of the PNW are vast and diverse, but also interconnected. We should take into account that interconnectedness by having certain decisions made by those whose roles allow them to see the big picture, the interconnectedness, and act to preserve it. That said, the input of foresters and researchers on the ground in specific locations should be taken into account.

The Fire Resilience Proposed Action Topic Area: This should not be used as cover to 'get the cut out.' Commenters more knowledgeable than me can show where the line is between "fire resilience" and "logging for profit." The Forest Service should abide by that line.

Fire damaged and fire killed trees should be left where they are, unless they threaten to fall on a road or building, so as to provide habitat for wildlife, and so the landscape can heal itself naturally. More knowledgeable people than me can speak to the specifics of fire resilience and standing snags in the forests, and also to road building

and decommissioning in the Forest. But I've seen firsthand the aftermath of having heavy machinery in natural areas, and the scars do not heal quickly or cleanly.

The Climate Proposed Action Topic Area: the final Amendment should include the language of Alternative D, regarding recreational facilities. However, like the Tribal voices above, including this with the option that most 'gets the cut out' is deceptive.

Also, Climate should be a much bigger part of this whole thing.

The Support Economic Opportunities and Sustainable Communities Proposed Action Topic Area:

We can't depend on timber harvests and lumber milling to reinvigorate the small towns of Oregon. There are other ways - beyond the scope of this document - to help these communities. 'Timber towns' are company towns, and company towns, no matter the company, decline when the company leaves.

There are ways to harvest timber sustainably. You'll need to listen to people more knowledgeable than me to find those ways, but I'm not sure even Alternative C, much less Alternative B or D, does this. (I understand the Dierks family in Southwest Arkansas did sustainable logging for a generation or more, as did other family owned outfits more familiar to those folks who grew up in the PNW.) But sustainable timber harvesting, along with other forest uses, including but not limited to fishing, hunting, hiking, camping, boating, mushrooming, maple syrup production from Bigleaf Maples, photography, painting, birding, Bigfooting, foraging, forest bathing, orienteering, and more; along with other economic policies, can work toward making what used to be 'timber towns' become communities where people not only want to stay, but can, and places other people want to come to. A better Proposed Action to Support Economic Opportunities would address ways to make these other uses part of the NWFP.

My Thanks go out to everyone who has worked and continues to work on addressing the NWFP. This is a huge undertaking and I know a lot of people have put a lot of work into this, and I appreciate that work. I also offer my apologies for not starting sooner, to have more time to read through all the documentation you all have provided, before sending in my comments.

We now have a crop of newly-current leaders who, for reasons beyond the scope of this discussion, wish to only sow chaos and distrust. We must work together against their chaos, and let the processes of this document, this amendment, play out. I hope we all have the opportunity to continue working together. I would hope that no one who has put any effort at all into working on this Amendment wants to see a repeat of the timber wars of the 1980s.

Thank you for your consideration.