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Comments: To: U.S. Forest Service

Re: The Northwest Forest Plan

I am an avid birder, hiker and wildlife watcher, I enjoy and find solace in being in nature. I live in Minnesota but have traveled west to see the amazing forests. I care deeply for old growth forests and understand that it is more important than ever to protect our mature and old growth forests for now and into the future.

Now, 30 years after its creation, it is clear that the Northwest Forest Plan's vision to protect and restore old-growth forests and imperiled species has been overwhelmingly effective.

Updating the NWFP now should keep the clear vision of the original but include incorporating perspectives of Tribes and indigenous communities who were functionally left out of the original planning process; addressing climate change and fully recognizing the carbon storage and sequestration values of old-growth forests; and ensuring land managers follow best available science to appropriately manage forests in an era of wildfire.

A large area of Old-growth and Mature Forests within the plan area still remains unprotected and it is more important than ever that these acres are protected. We need mature forests and old growth! They are important for: Safeguarding biodiversity and establishing climate refugia These forests reduce flood and erosion risk and provide clean, cold drinking water.

Any amendment must prioritize the health of the ecosystem and redress tribal exclusion. The Forest Service has added tribal inclusion components that were long overdue in these alternatives but must ensure implementation of those inclusion provisions.

The proposed alternatives weaken protection for the region's forests, clean water, endangered and threatened species such as the Northern Spotted Owl, salmon and bull trout, and wildlife habitat, substantially weakening the science-backed, ecosystem-driven vision of the original plan - this must not be allowed. Protecting endangered species was a core tenant of the original plan, but the proposed amendment has lost this focus, this also must not be allowed.

In an era of climate change and increasing wildfire intensity, some vegetation management for wildfire risk reduction may be necessary, but that must be driven by best-practice science for creating fire-prepared communities along with ecosystem integrity and resilience - not driven by lumber profits.