

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/17/2025 9:25:30 PM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am a proud fourth-generation Oregonian, small business owner, and outdoor recreation enthusiast. I grew up hiking and camping in National Forests throughout the Pacific Northwest. I spent my summers walking the lengths of mossy nurse logs and picking huckleberries to accompany pancakes cooked on my grandfather's old Coleman stove. I spent countless hours skipping rocks across crystal-clear rivers while admiring the rippling reflections of giant Douglas fir and cedar. These iconic temperate rainforests are central to my personal identity as a Pacific Northwesterner.

Decades of logging reduced most of the Pacific Northwest's majestic landscapes to forest fragments surrounded by tree plantations and stumpscapes. The 1994 Northwest Forest Plan provided a framework for restoring these fragmented landscapes by allowing forests to recover over the decades and centuries to come.

Since adoption of the 1994 plan, our region's economies have diversified away from dependence on timber production. Simultaneously, modernization and increased mechanization have eliminated many logging and millworking jobs. Today, the economic argument for logging public forests is a weak (and often thinly veiled political) one at best. I, along with the majority of Pacific Northwesterners, want forest managers to prioritize recreation, landscape aesthetics, and long-term habitat protection over short-term economic or political gain.

Reducing protection for mature forests, either by redefining the age requirements for protection or by removing current limits on logging, would be a gross disservice to the progress made under the 1994 plan and the continued recovery we are counting on in the decades ahead. I urge you to reject each of the action alternatives proposed under the amended forest plan, and instead maintain the protections and framework of the original 1994 Northwest Forest Plan (alternative A).