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First name: Matt

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear US Forest Service,

I value our public forests for the wildlife habitat they provide, for the ecosystem services they provide including clean water and a stable climate, and for the social benefits they provide. I love to visit our public forests and experience the awe of hearing bird calls, seeing animal tracks in the snow, drinking from the clear creeks, breathing in the smell of mushrooms and duff and enjoying the richness of forest life. I bring my family with me when I can. The Siuslaw, Willamette, Deschutes, and the Umpqua national forests are some favorites of ours. The forests here in the Northwest are special. They need and deserve our protection.

As I understand it, the proposed amendment to the Northwest Forest Plan will weaken forest protections. We should not increase logging of mature and old-growth trees on our public lands, particularly now as the climate is changing rapidly. Preserving biodiversity and connected wildlife habitat should be prioritized, along with including tribes and their indigenous knowledge. I believe that adhering to these priorities will lead to forests that are more healthy, and more resistant and resilient to fire. Commercial logging will help corporate profits, but it harms wildlife habitat, and does little to help rural communities, and it does little to protect against wildfire. Much of what burned in recent years near where I live was on recently-logged private timberland.

Please preserve and restore mature and old-growth forests on our public lands, which provide so many benefits to humans and non-humans in the Pacific Northwest.

Thanks,

Matt