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First name: Miles

Last name: McDonald

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing today to advocate for a stronger protection plan for the forests that are so iconic to the PNW and at the core of how Washingtonians maintain their connections to the land.

I urge the forest service to increase the level of protection for old growth forests throughout the state. Beyond preserving what old growth forest still exists the logging management plan should offer protections to additional areas that are vulnerable to slow recovery after logging as well as more sustainable logging. This evaluation and management plan should also consider how the effects of climate change will impact those areas as they are being considered for logging operations. The rate the forest recovers from logging now will likely be diminished in the future and the damaging effects due to landslides and severe weather events more extreme.

I also urge the forest service to codify tribal involvement into this new forest plan so that tribal communities are not only involved in the discussions but also have direct involvement that is written into law. Tribal impact reports authored by the tribes should be required before any land use (logging, sale, re-zoning, prescribed burn) take place. Their connection to the land and their knowledge of forest management is immense and should be central to the management of the land by the Forest Service.