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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am a resident of La Grande and actively hike, camp, mushroom, and bird watch in all three National Forests. I have lived here for 25 years and cherish this area for the public lands. I have lived in five other western states and this area is special for its incredible diversity. It is unique in the Pacific Northwest because we have some Great Basin ecoregion around Burns, the northern Umatilla Forest is heavily influenced by the storms coming up the Columbia, so those areas have wetter and warmer habitats like the west side, while the wallows and Elkhorns are granite, so unlike most of the northwest, are a piece of the Rockies and the weather is more continental.

One of the things I value is the few remaining old trees that are found outside of wilderness. Old trees and stands of old trees support many other plants and animals. All of them need a place to live and maintain their roles in the interconnected forests. The Forest wide guidelines and standards should protect our remaining old trees.

The proposed action FW-FOR-OLD-GDL (page 142) should include a Standard that states " to maintain, move toward, or achieve old conifer desired conditions, old trees of the target tree species for that habitat shall not be removed or felled ". This would necessitate the removal of the guideline stating removing old trees to promote them might be necessary. That is nonsensical. It might be that removing older (130 year old) grand firs near old (200 years old) pines might be necessary to ensure the old pines don't die. But the old pines never need to be cut. We are not growing old trees, it simply takes so long that is not a management plan with our changing climate. We need to keep the survivors. Where the desired species is growing, we cannot remove the surviving oldest ones. They are too valuable as contributors to the gene pool.