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Response to Western Oregon Plan Revisions

I strongly urge BLM to uphold the Northwest Forest Plan to ensure the protection of our public forests. We, as citizens, need to be involved in all future decisions concerning our public forest. Thinning existing tree plantations on almost 700,000 acres along with restoration work under the NW Forest Plan would provide plenty of jobs for Oregonians without having to destroy the beauty and health of our last remaining old forests. Oregon residents have a heritage worthy to protect, unlike many parts of the world that no longer have their old growth forests. Scientists from Oregon University at Salem have shown that these forests of old growth and mature trees (80 years or older) help reduce global warming, and are not nearly as susceptible to forest fires as tree plantations. These forests provide for healthy wildlife and plant communities, which in turn benefit all of us whether we hunt, recreate, enjoy clean air and water, or simply appreciate their beauty, magnificence, and diversity. Thinning existing tree plantations would not only provide jobs and wood products, but also help lessen forest fires. I am opposed to logging within 25 feet of water bodies as is being recommended under one of the BLM proposals. I have seen the water quality of streams and watersheds destroyed when logging has been within 100 feet or even more. I also urge the BLM in any logging they do in the future to not resort to applying pesticides and herbicides that contaminate our waters. People wonder why cancer is on the rise. We live in a sadly poisoned world and history has shown that by not continuing to apply these poisons we can begin cleaning up the water, land, and air and make our environment a healthier place to live and raise our children. BLM plays an integral role in conserving our fish and wildlife habitat, our clean air and water. My husband and I live next to BLM land and appreciate their current no-spray policy, and the beauty of the forests and abundant wildlife. Liz Matteson Days Creek, Oregon

Elizabeth Matteson Dec. 4, 2007