

**American Bird Conservancy ✨ Natural Resources Defense Council ✨ Sierra Club
Center for Biological Diversity ✨ Friends of the Earth ✨ Endangered Species
Coalition ✨ Oregon Wild ✨ Conservation Northwest ✨ WildEarth Guardians ✨
Cornell Lab of Ornithology ✨ Geos Institute**

Sign-On Letter to President Obama

July 2, 2012

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington D.C. 20500

Dear President Obama,

The undersigned organizations urge your support for the conservation of the mature and old-growth forests in the Pacific Northwest. These magnificent forests provide clean drinking water for millions of Americans, a world-class tourism destination, sustainable forestry, and habitat essential to the survival of hundreds of species of wildlife.

Conservation of the old-growth ecosystem as symbolized by the Northwest Forest Plan developed under the leadership of President Bill Clinton was a significant environmental advance that ended decades of unsustainable management practices in the region.

Studies show that the Northwest Forest Plan is working as intended to retain mature and old forests, and that the highly fragmented forest ecosystem is growing back into the large blocks of mature forest habitat needed to maintain water quality and recover threatened species such as the Northern Spotted Owl, Marbled Murrelet and Pacific salmon stocks.

Your administration recently released a draft Critical Habitat proposal for the Northern Spotted Owl that identifies sufficient habitat necessary to conserve the threatened species and the old-growth ecosystem upon which it depends. We commend the agency's use of modeling to identify the proposed acreage which we believe represents the best available science.

However, the draft plan and accompanying Presidential Memorandum raise concern because of the proposed active management in owl critical habitat that is not supported by the best available science. Three major scientific societies are advising the administration to conduct more research on the effects of active management on owl populations before treatments are applied more broadly. We agree with the scientists' call for caution.

The draft also includes provisions that could have the unintended consequence of weakening or

eliminating habitat protections of the Northwest Forest Plan. We respectfully urge the administration to modify the proposed Critical Habitat rule to ensure that the protected reserves of the Northwest Forest Plan are maintained so that future generations of Americans will be assured they will have an opportunity to enjoy the splendor of these old-growth forests.

Sincerely,

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