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I strongly support additional protections for Type Np streams.

The proposed changes are the minimal protection that common sense and Ecology's own scientific analysis say must be adopted.

If anything, these changes are not protective enough. Activity in a watershed even 180 meters from a stream may affect the microclimate, even with a buffer in place. The rule allows 85% of a watershed to be harvested. That's a huge amount.

Studies show that peak flow increases if substantially less than 50% of a watershed is cut. These increased peak flows displace juvenile fish and amphibian habitat. We know that climate change is producing more intense winter storms. How well has Ecology considered the effects of increased peak flows on habitat in this rule making?

Also, larger species are harmed by cutting 86% of a watershed. Bear and elk need cover. Where will they find sufficient cover when most of the watershed is removed? This will impact the hunting community.

Finally, no one wants to see a clearcut. It is in the public interest, and congruent with the Make American Beautiful Again Executive Order, to create a landscape that is not just a straight line riparian buffer, but includes dispersed trees in the landscape as well.

I encourage the Board to retain as many trees as possible. Trees are important for the environment, for habitat, for recreational revenue and for the integrity of our natural resources.

Thank you.