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After decades of study, negotiation, compromise, and delay, a proposal is finally moving forward to expand the riparian areas—essential for keeping water cold enough for salmon and other aquatic species, protecting habitat downstream, and helping forests adapt to a warming climate.

This proposal comes at a time when federal forest protections are getting weaker and national standards established to protect the air, waterways and public lands are being dismantled. State action is more important than ever.

Washington has a chance to preserve what nature has so richly given to us and to not bankrupt our children's future. Our climate is getting warmer. We understand the power of cooling and how to achieve it. We need to adopt strong, science-based rules that reflect our values and protect what matters most.

I pray that we have the courage and the leadership to seize the moment and move now: to protect our headwater streams, to uphold our Tribal treaty rights and obligations, and to give salmon and forests a fighting chance.