

# Siuslaw Action Teams: Northwest Forest Plan Amendment Process

## Suggested Action Group Purposes

The Coast Range Association (CRA) is organizing six grassroots groups in response to the **Forest Service Northwest Forest Plan amendment process**. Our focus is on the one national forest in the Coast Range region—the Siuslaw National Forest (SNF). The SNF has a unique feature that sets it off from other national forests. That feature is the lack of old growth forest similar to the national forests in the Cascade region (Mt. Hood NF, Willamette NF and the Umpqua NF). Instead, the SNF has extensive intact, mature, native forest generally in 100 years to 140 age class. The Biden administration is committed to the conservation of mature forest as well as old growth.

The Plan amendment process began December 2023 with the Forest Service calling for public input related to the agency's stated purpose and need for a Plan amendment. Five reasons were offered for the purpose and need (See Section 3).

Key points in the amendment process are:

1. Forest Service issues a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) in June or July.
2. Public comment period to the DEIS (generally 30 to 40 days).
3. Issuance of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) in October 2024.
4. Comment period for public objections to the FEIS.
5. Responsible officials sign the Record of Decision.

## Summary of Action Team purposes

1. **Ground Truthing** maps the Siuslaw National Forest's (SNF) remaining mature, native forest.
2. **Educate** and alert your local community about the (1) Plan amendment process, (2) the Northwest Forest Plan/Siuslaw National Forest Plan and (3) the location and benefits of local mature, native forest.
3. **Expand** the circle of local community people aware of the SNF mature forest and involved in the Plan amendment process.
4. **Celebrate** your community's Siuslaw NF native forest for its beauty and wonder.

# Proposes of Action Groups

1. **Ground Truthing** maps the Siuslaw National Forest's (SNF) remaining mature, native forest.

The CRA's GIS stand data and map products are more accurate than the Forest Service's satellite derived data of mature and old growth forests. At issue here is the SNF's remaining native (previously not cut) forest. We believe the SNF's native stands are in the one hundred years to 130-year age class and therefore mature forest.

Our hope is that people in each Action Group will use the CRA's maps and ground truth a selection of stands. We do not anticipate this being difficult or technical. Nor do we expect people to bushwack through the forest in order to view forest stands. Instead, a selection of local area stands will be chosen near the Forest Service Road system. Ground truthing may involve taking a photo and measuring the diameter (DBH) of representative trees and describing the area relative to what the map suggests.

Our goal is to have an inventory of representative stands and trees identified that validate or correct the mapped mature forest stands. We will work with each group to prepare documentation materials for submittal to the Forest Service during the DEIS comment period.

## **Actions**

1. Create a ground-truthing team in the Action Group.
2. Identify and document candidate stands to visit.
3. Work with other Action Group teams and CRA staff to archive documented trees and stands.

2. **Educate** and alert your local community about the (1) Plan amendment process, (2) the Northwest Forest Plan/Siuslaw National Forest Plan and (3) the location and benefits of local mature, native forest.

Our goal is to create a set of people in each Action Group and community who are knowledgeable about the basics of the Northwest Forest Plan, the Siuslaw National Forest's management plan, and the Plan amendment process. A library of basic documents and fact sheets will be provided and local workshops by CRA staff will occur.

## **Actions**

1. Share key SNF documents via email with friends and neighbors.
2. Hold a local educational workshop on SNF management, forest plans and laws governing the national forest management.
3. Distribute maps and flyers of the Forest Service management areas relevant to your local community. For example, are people aware of the location of Late Successional Reserves of the NWFP?
4. Build and advertise a Flickr folder of beautiful SNF native forest photos near your community.
5. Advertise Google Earth views of local forest landscapes with easy-to-use KML/KMZ overlays the Coast Range Association has created.

### **3. Expand the circle** of local community people aware of the SNF mature forest and involved in the Plan amendment process.

The most important work of each Action Group is to expand the circle of involved and aware local citizens. By June or July, when the Draft Environmental Impact Statement is released, we hope to have over 1,000+ individuals ready to submit Siuslaw focused comments into the formal Forest Service comment website. The Coast Range Association has a long history of list building to identify local forest and watershed supporters and advocates. We will work with each Action Group to conduct outreach and build a local list of forest supporters.

#### **Actions:**

1. Review prospect lists and indicate friends and acquaintances who support forest and watershed protection.
2. Create a phone tree to promote local educational events.
3. Engage local social media or create new social media focused on forest and watershed issues.
4. Reach out to and work with local climate and water quality activists as natural allies.

### **4. Celebrate Siuslaw NF native forest** for its beauty and wonder.

The SNF is a tremendous natural wonder of coastal and inland temperate rainforest. The SNF has the potential to be the greatest storehouse of sequestered carbon in the world. Across the SNF emergent old growth features are developing in the big mature forest stands.

It is our hope that Action Groups will lead visits to local mature forest areas and celebrate the great forest and clean streams on SNF lands.

**Actions:**

1. Organize local daytrips into Siuslaw NF stands with big, native forest.
2. Create a photo library in Flickr of local native forest stands and advertise the photos in local social media.
3. Publicize the maps of where local native forest exists.
4. Promote the use of Google Earth to view the remaining native forest stands in the SNF.

## **Resources**

Maps and Key Document webpage:

<https://coastrange.org/coast-range-association/siuslaw-action/support-materials/>

Action Group Project overview page:

<https://coastrange.org/coast-range-association/siuslaw-action/>

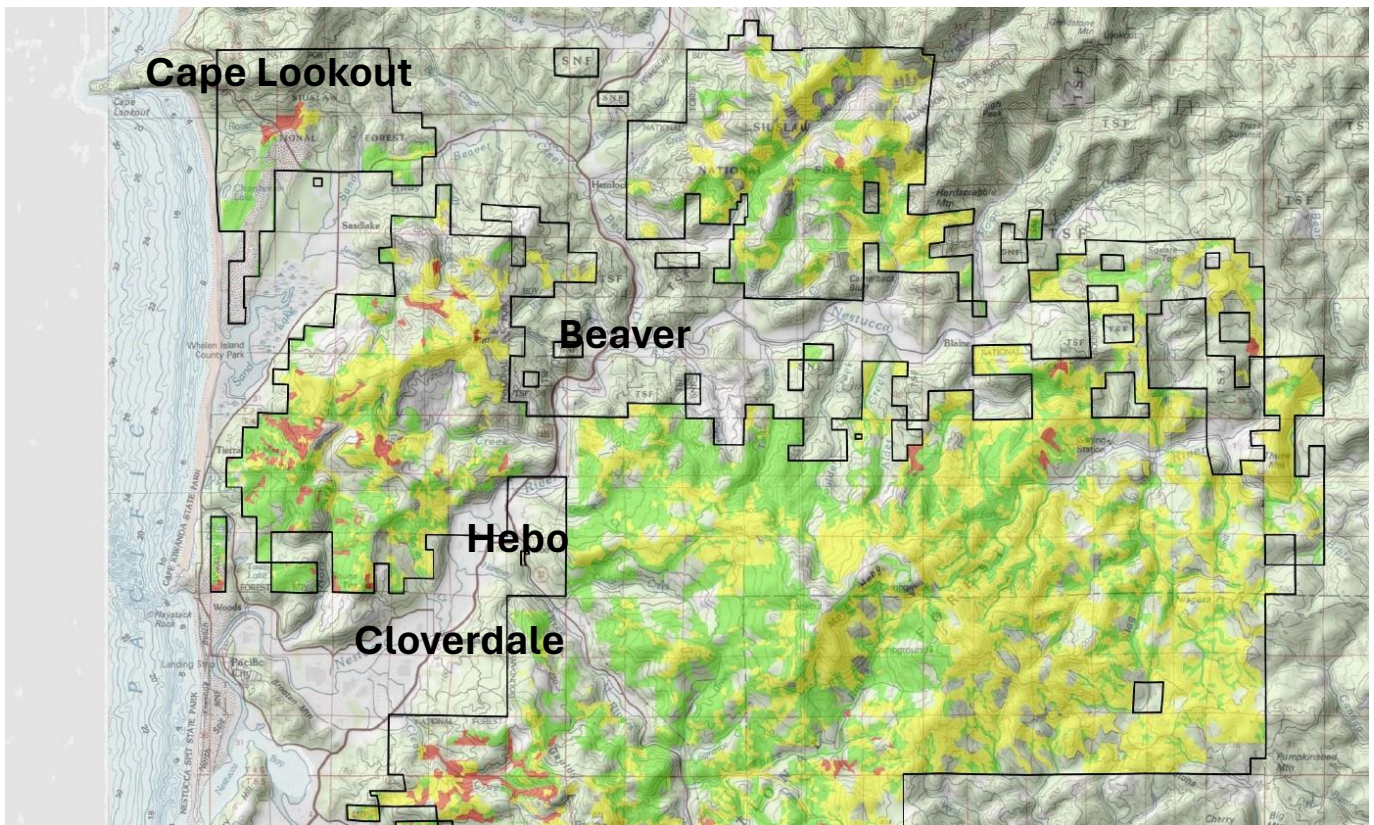
### **Signup for an Action Group:**

<https://coastrange.dm.networkforgood.com/forms/siuslaw-national-forest-north-central>

## Section 2. Suggested Areas for Action Group Work

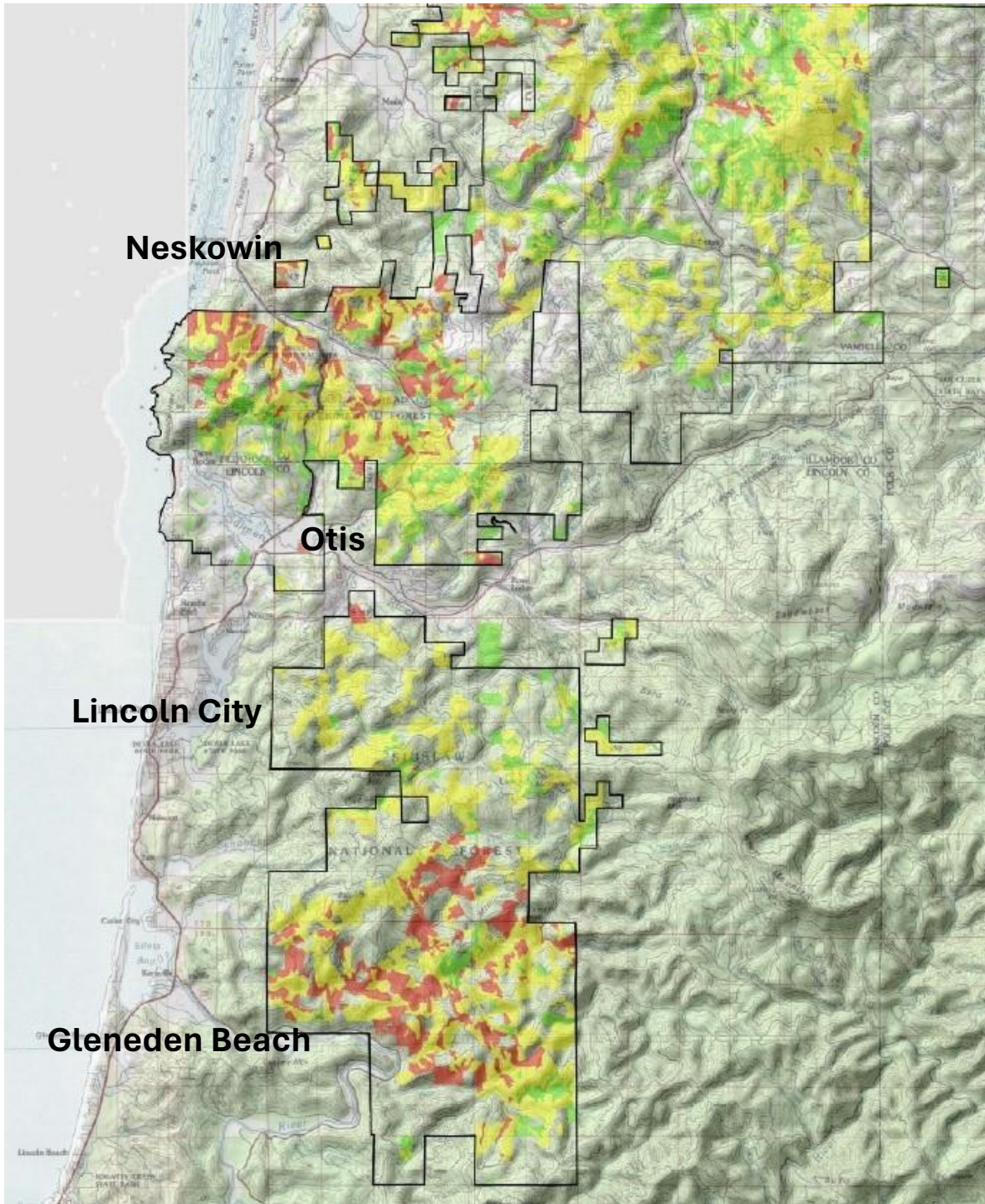
### Tillamook Action Group Area:

Mapped area of the Tillamook Action Group which includes Hebo, Beaver, Cloverdale, Neskowin and extensive SNF ownership east of Hebo.



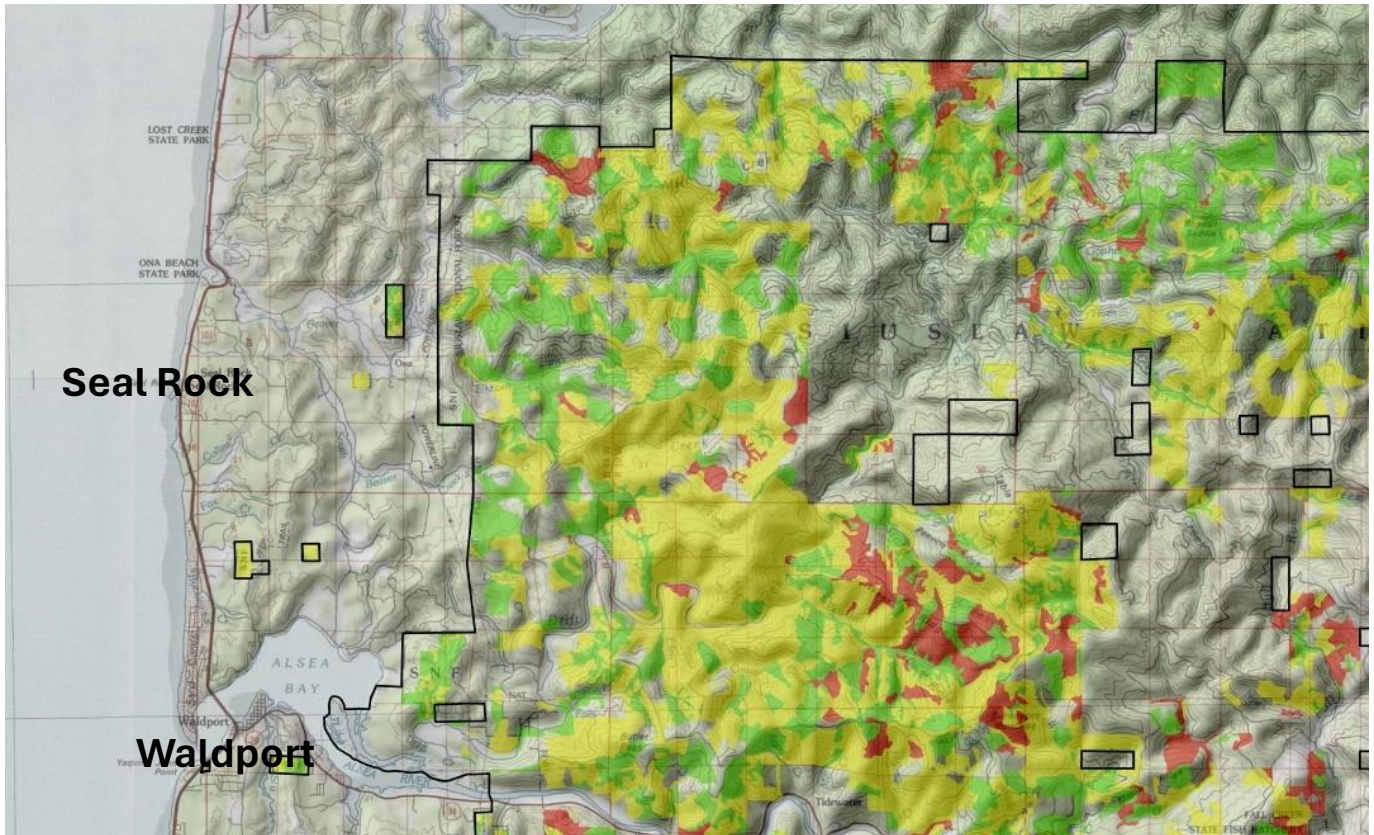
## North Lincoln Action Group:

Mapped area for North Lincoln County Action Group which includes Otis, Lincoln City, Lincoln Beach, Neskowin and Pacific City related SNF lands.



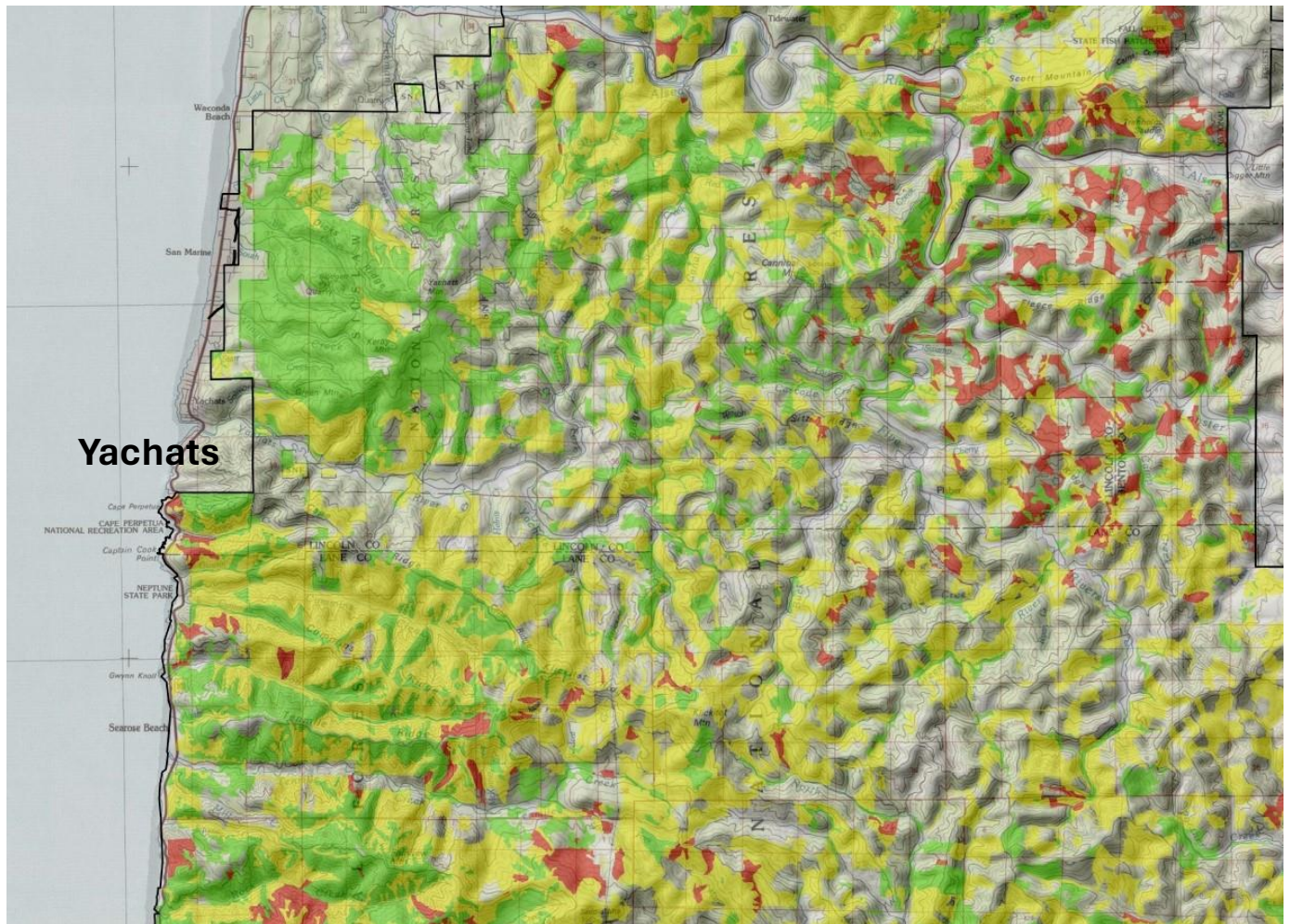
# Central Lincoln County Action Group

Mapped area of the Central Lincoln County action group: Newport, Toledo, South Beach, Seal Rock Beaver Creek & Burnt Woods-Eddyville



# South Lincoln County Action Group

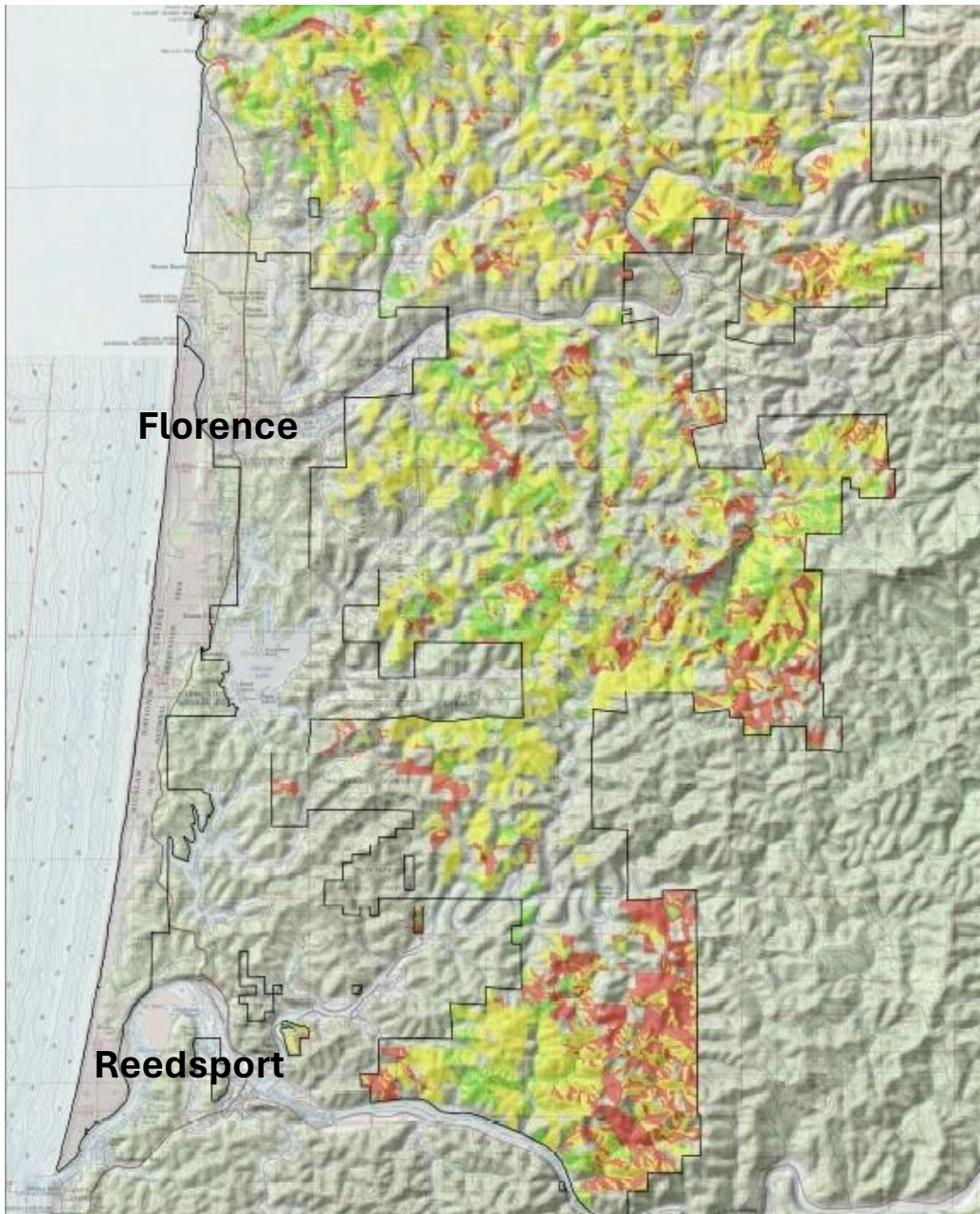
Mapped area of the South Lincoln County area: Waldport, Tidewater, Five Rivers, Yachats & Searose Beach





## South Action Group

Mapped area of the South Group: Florence, Mapleton, Swisshome, Westlake & Reedsport-Smith River



## Section 3.

### The Forest Service's stated **Purpose and Need** for the Northwest Forest Plan Amendment

1. Improving fire resistance and resilience across the NWFP area.
2. Strengthening the capacity of NWFP ecosystems to adapt to the ongoing effects of climate change.
3. Improving conservation and recruitment of mature and old-growth forest conditions, ensuring adequate habitat for species dependent upon mature and old growth ecosystems and supporting regional biodiversity.
4. Incorporating Indigenous Knowledge into planning, project design, and implementation to achieve forest management goals and meet the agency's general trust responsibilities.
5. Providing a predictable supply of timber and non-timber products, and other economic opportunities to support the long-term sustainability of communities located proximate to National Forest System lands and economically connected to forest resources.

Each of the above reasons to amend the NWFP may be interpreted in such a way as to create opportunities for unwise management in the Siuslaw. The Coast Range Association website will contain a selection of key Forest Service documents as background to the amendment process.

#### **Maps and Key Document webpage:**

<https://coastrange.org/coast-range-association/siuslaw-action/support-materials/>

#### **Action Group Project overview page:**

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#### **Signup for an Action Group:**

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