Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/7/2024 8:00:00 AM
First name: Bill
Last name: Ables
Organization:
Title:
Comments: What the commentor put in RED we had to bold in this text box because changing text color is not a formatting option with the CARA platform. Bill has identified where in the detailed assessment reports he believes it would be appropriate to add mention of aviation by topic and paragraph. Would recommend having the letter PDF open to compare.Submitted Comments for:Final AssessmentForest Plan RevisionDate:Oct.29,2024Infrastructure Detailed ReportI've added verbiage in RED type within areas of the above report for your consideration toinclude aviation infrastructure and access in this Forest Planning process.InfrastructureIntroduction(3rd Paragraph)The history of transportation and facilities development on national forests in the BlueMountains Is primarily related to extractive resource management activities such as mining andlogging. Many roads were located directly adjacent to streams and rivers for ease ofconstruction and to provide access for land use activities associated with water such as placermining, cattle watering, water diversion, and log floating to sawmills. Airstrips on forests wereestablished for mining exploration, access to cattle grazing areas, and fire control. Lode miningnecessitated the construction of roads and railroads to haul ores. Logging operations providedthe necessary building materials for mining activities and often required additional roads.(5th Paragraph)Once constructed, roads and airstrips provided access for other uses, including viewing scenery,camping, hunting, grazing, and gathering forest products, such as berries and firewood. Manytrails within the national forests evolved from game trails, early American Indian hunting trails,and livestock herding trails, or those that were constructed by early recreation users. Thesetrails were constructed to access and connect remote features and destinations, such asremote lakes, hunting and fishing areas, and scenic viewpoints. Most national forest trails andairstrips are in dispersed and backcountry recreation areas.Current Management Direction(1st Paragraph)Transportation: Provide and manage a safe and economical road, airstrips and trail system andfacilities needed to accomplish the land and resource management and protection objectives ofthe forest1Existing ConditionTransportation InfrastructureTable 1. Miles of National Forest System roads by operational maintenance level by Forest andthe total miles on each forest.National Forest ML1 ML2 ML 3 ML 4ML 5Total1Malheur 3888 5203 327 0 0 9420Umatilla 2176 1821 268 61 68 4396Wallowa-Whitman 4255 3513 231 6 73 8079Total Miles 10,32010,538827 67 141 121 ,8951All road mileages are approximate.On the Malheur, Umatilla, and Wallowa Whitman National Forests there are 38, 26, and 50bridges and 1, 1, and 3 air strips, respectively. (This matches Table 2 under RecreationInfrastructure)Key Benefits to People{{3rd Paragraph)Infrastructure on the national forests include National Forest System roads, trails, airstrips,bridges, public utilities, private infrastructure, recreation facilities, drinking water systems,dams, and administrative facilities. This infrastructure is an essential input in economic activityin the region. Recreational use of the national forests relies on accessible roads, t rails, airstripsand developed sites. Households and industries rely on cellular towers, water developments,pipelines, and transmission lines to conduct their business. Like water, forest infrastructure isnot a separate category in the economic contribution analysis because it is embedded in nearlyall market transactions associated with forest uses. Timber cannot be removed from the forestfor processing without National Forest System roads. Recreational visitors will not spend moneyin communities near the national forests if they cannot access preferred recreational sites. Newfami lies and businesses will not move to the communities surrounding the forest if they lackaccess to infrastructure essential to modern life.{{4th Paragraph)The road system on the national forests contributes to connecting people and communities tothe national forest and to each other. The Blue Mountains National Forests' road systemssupport numerous recreation opportunities. Road mileage can be used as an indicator ofrecreation opportunities, including driving for pleasure, which is one of the more popularoutdoor recreation activities on the national forests. Roads and airstrips provide access todispersed recreational opportunities such as hiking, camping, hunting, and fishing. Roads alsoserve as recreation sites for individuals who use off-highway vehicles and bikes on NationalForest System roads.2Trends and DriversInclude a second paragraph after paragraph 1:A trend has been gaining popularity since the 1990 Plan came into existence which isrecreational aviation. Since 2015, Congress has specified that $750,000 of Forest Serviceappropriations be designated to airstrip maintenance . Both State and National PilotAssociations provide

volunteer time and money for needed airstrip maintenance.3Submitted Comments for:Final AssessmentForest Plan RevisionRecreation Setting, Opportunities, Access & Scenic CharacterI've added verbiage in RED type within areas of the above report for your consideration toinclude aviation infrastructure and access in this Forest Planning process.Dispersed Recreation{{1st Paragraph)Dispersed recreation settings offer a broad array of opportunities to users who require fewdeveloped site amenities. National forest dispersed campsites, off-highway vehicle trail heads,airstrips and wayside interpretive sites are examples of minimally developed facilities that arerustic in nature yet appeal to those wanting to be more self-sufficient. The sites lack plumbing,paved surfaces, or potable water sources found in the developed recreation setting. Theseareas are accessed via secondary or primitive roads and trails or airstrips. Scenic and recreationriver corridors also occur within this setting. Many activities occur here that people associatewith a primitive or self-reliant dispersed activity. Peak periods can occur during fall huntingseasons when larger groups tend to congregate for hunting in traditional locations. During therest of the year, campsites and activities are more dispersed, and social encounters tend to beinfrequent.Backcountry Recreation{{2nd Paragraph}}Backcountry recreation occurs in the least developed setting and provides the greatestopportunity for solitude, risk, and challenge in environments of rugged, undevelopedlandscapes. These landscapes are often deep, isolated canyons, heavily forested plateaus, androcky ridgelines. There are minimal facilities, creating more self-reliance and challenge forvisitors. Facilities, which are considered rustic or primitive in nature, such as information ordirection signs, rustic toilets, and trails, may be found. Many existing airstrips provide access totrails that can't be accessed by other motorized vehicles. In roaded backcountry, secondaryroads provide access to small trailheads with only minimal directional signage. Trails for motorvehicle use and trails where motor vehicle use is prohibited are available in some areas but arenot always open or maintained. Activities available in these areas, such as hunting and fishing,mountain biking, off-highway vehicle riding, recreational aviation, trail riding and stock packing,and river boating and rafting, often require self-reliance and higher levels of outdoor skills.4Roads, Trails and Airstrip Access(insert as a new paragraph after paragraph 3)Funding for airstrips comes from annually appropriated funds ($750,000 annually since 2015)and maintenance is performed in collaboration with both State and National AviationAssociations and the USFS. The Wallowa Whitman Forest, in collaboration with State andNational Aviation Associations has created an Airstrip Integrated Operations and MaintenancePlan to ensure the safe operation at airstrips by both the public and management agencies.5Submitted Comments for:Final AssessmentForest Plan RevisionLand Ownership, Uses, and Access PatternsI've added verbiage in RED type within areas of the above report for your consideration toinclude aviation infrastructure and access in this Forest Planning process.Existing ConditionAccess{{1 st Paragraph}}Access via roads, trails and airstrips through the national forests has a long history in the BlueMountains. Trails and migration routes date back to prehistoric times. American Indianmigration routes are well documented through the stories of the Confederated Tribes of theUmatilla, Nez Perce, Warm Springs, and others. Many ancient routes are the basis for roads,portions of roads, or trails that are in use today. Trails within the national forests alsocontributed to 1800s western migration as expeditions passed through the Blue Mountains.One of the most notable routes is the original Oregon Trail.{{2nd Paragraph}}The history of development for the road system on national forests in the Blue Mountains isprimarily related to extractive resource management activities such as mining and logging.Many roads were located directly adjacent to streams and rivers for ease of construction and toprovide access for land use activities associated with water such as placer mining, cattlewatering, water diversion, and log floating to sawmills. Airstrips on forests were established formining exploration, access to cattle grazing areas, and fire control.{{3rd Paragraph}}Prior to the development of the road system, railroads provided primary access into the BlueMountains National Forests. Railroad logging can be traced as far back as 1901. Some railroadgrades were later converted to vehicle roads. Additional roads were constructed to connectcommunities and for fire management and administrative access to the national forests. Onceconstructed, roads and airstrips provided access for other uses, including viewing scenery,camping, hunting, grazing, and gathering forest products, such as berries and firewood.6[middot][bull]Trends and Drivers(insert as a new paragraph after paragraph 4)Funding for airstrips comes from annually appropriated funds ($750,000 annually since 2015)and maintenance is performed in collaboration with both State and National AviationAssociations and the USFS. The Wallowa Whitman Forest, in collaboration with State andNational Aviation Associations has created an Airstrip Integrated Operations and MaintenancePlan to ensure the safe operation at airstrips by both the public and management

agencies.7Submitted Comments for:Final AssessmentForest Plan RevisionSocioeconomic Assessment Report in Support of the Malhuer NationalForest Ass[middot]essmentBenefits to People (including multiple uses, other forest benefits,operations and infrastructure)Forest Operations and Infrastructure(1st Paragraph)Malheur National Forest operations and infrastructure include personnel, program activities,roads, airstrips and facilities that contribute to the use and enjoyment of the forest.(6th Paragraph)Infrastructure on the Malheur National Forest includes National Forest System roads, trails,airstrips, bridges, public utilities, private infrastructure, recreation facilities, drinking watersystems, dams, and administrative facilities. Forest infrastructure is an essential input ineconomic activity in the region. Recreational use of the Malheur National Forest relies onaccessible roads, trails, and developed sites. Households and industries rely on cellular towers,water developments, pipelines, and transmission lines to conduct their business. Like water,forest infrastructure is not a separate category in the economic contribution analysis because itis embedded in nearly all market transactions associated with forest uses. Timber cannot beremoved from the forest for processing without National Forest System (NFS) roads.Recreational visitors will not spend money in communities near the Malheur National Forest ifthey cannot access preferred recreational sites. New families and businesses will not move tothe communities surrounding the forest if they lack access to infrastructure essential to modernlife.8Submitted Comments for:Final AssessmentForest Plan RevisionSocioeconomic Assessment Report in Support of the Umatilla NationalForest AssessmentBenefits to People (including multiple uses, other forest benefits,operations and infrastructure)Forest Operations and Infrastructure(1st Paragraph)Umatilla National Forest operations and infrastructure include personnel, program activities,roads, airstrip and facilities that contribute to the use and enjoyment of the forest.{{6th Paragraph)Infrastructure on the Umatilla National Forest includes National Forest System roads, trails,airstrips, bridges, public utilities, private infrastructure, recreation facilities, drinking watersystems, dams, and administrative facilities. Forest infrastructure is an essential input ineconomic activity in the region. Recreational use of the Umatilla National Forest relies onaccessible roads, trails, and developed sites. Households and industries rely on cellular towers,water developments, pipelines, and transmission lines to conduct their business. Like water,forest infrastructure is not a separate category in the economic contribution analysis because itis embedded in nearly all market transactions associated with forest uses. Timber cannot beremoved from the forest for processing without National Forest System (NFS) roads.Recreational visitors will not spend money in communities near the Umatilla National Forest ifthey cannot access preferred recreational sites. New families and businesses will not move tothe communities surrounding the forest if they lack access to infrastructure essential to modernlife.9Submitted Comments for:Final AssessmentForest Plan RevisionSocioeconomic Assessment Report in Support of theWallowa Whitman National Forest AssessmentBenefits to People (including multiple uses, other forest benefits,operations and infrastructure)Forest Operations and Infrastructure(1 st Paragraph)Wallowa Whitman National Forest operations and infrastructure include personnel, programactivities, roads, airstrips and facilities that contribute to the use and enjoyment of the forest.{{6th Paragraph}}Infrastructure on the Wallowa Whitman National Forest includes National Forest System roads,trails, airstrips, bridges, public utilities, private infrastructure, recreation facilities, drinkingwater systems, dams, and administrative facilities. Forest infrastructure is an essential input ineconomic activity in the region. Recreational use of the Wallowa Whitman National Forestrelies on accessible roads, trails, and developed sites. Households and industries rely on cellulartowers, water developments, pipelines, and transmission lines to conduct their business. Likewater, forest infrastructure is not a separate category in the economic contribution analysisbecause it is embedded in nearly all market transactions associated with forest uses. Timbercannot be removed from the forest for processing without National Forest System (NFS) roads.Recreational visitors will not spend money in communities near the Wallowa Whitman NationalForest if they cannot access preferred recreational sites. New families and businesses will notmove to the communities surrounding the forest if they lack access to infrastructure essentialto modern life.10Submitted Comments for:Final Assessment Report of Ecological, Social and Economic Conditionson the Malhuer, Umatilla & Wallowa Whitman National ForestsRecreation Settings and OpportunitiesDispersed Recreation(1st Paragraph)Dispersed recreation settings offer a broad array of opportunities to users who require fewdeveloped site amenities. Visitors often seek this setting to participate in activities such ashiking, hunting, backpacking, stock packing, gathering forest products, recreational aviation,biking, off-highway vehicle riding, fishing, and viewing scenery and wildlife. Outfitter and guidesalso provide commercial services for hunting, fishing, day rides, and river boating and rafting.(2nd

Paragraph}}National forest dispersed campsites, off-highway vehicle trailheads, airstrips and waysideinterpretive sites are examples of minimally developed facilities that are rustic in nature yetappeal to those wanting to be more self-sufficient. The sites lack plumbing, paved surfaces, orpotable water sources found in developed recreation setting. These areas are accessed viasecondary or primitive roads and trails, and airstrips. Scenic and recreation river corridors alsooccur within this setting. Peak periods can occur during fall hunting seasons when larger groupstend to congregate for hunting in traditional locations. During the rest of the year, campsitesand activities are more dispersed, and social encounters tend to be infrequent.Respectively SubmittedBill Ables