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First name: Nichol

Last name: Phillips

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to express strong support for continued and enhanced motorized recreation access in the Blue Mountains and to highlight areas where the Preliminary Draft Forest Plan falls short in meeting our community's needs.

#### 1. Motorized Access and Route Closures

The plan's reliance on zoning and "suitability" rules threatens to limit motorized access now and in the future. Ignoring years of consistent public comment, these measures risk closing routes that are crucial for recreation, hunting, firewood gathering, and rural connectivity. I urge the Forest Service to remove or revise these suitability designations so all current open routes and established motorized use remain accessible. The agency must heed the overwhelming community feedback that opposes further restrictions.

#### 2. Protection of Cross-Country Motorized Travel

Banning cross-country travel in most areas disregards long-standing traditions and essential access for subsistence activities. The plan should explicitly protect these opportunities, especially within the Malheur, Umatilla, and Wallowa-Whitman National Forests. Desired conditions, objectives, and standards must be rewritten to ensure continued cross-country motorized access for all users-not just specific groups.

#### 3. Arbitrary Road Closures

Allowing the closure or decommissioning of roads constructed before October 1976 discounts decades of local use and public investment in infrastructure. These historic routes are integral to the community's recreational and economic needs. The plan must prohibit closure, decommissioning, or obliteration of any such roads to preserve vital access.

#### 4. Flawed Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) Application

The use of ROS to label large areas as non-motorized-without site-specific NEPA analysis or genuine public engagement-unfairly limits motorized opportunities. The Forest Service must commit to completing thorough, site-specific reviews and solicit meaningful input before applying any ROS classifications that restrict access.

#### 5. Ignoring Public Input

It is concerning that over 1,000 public comments favoring open access have been largely ignored. The Forest Service must incorporate these prior comments into the official planning record and respond substantively to dissenting voices and recurring concerns before moving forward.

#### 6. Foundation for Future Closures

The plan explicitly lays the groundwork for future Travel Management closures, despite assurances that current "interim" access will be maintained. To protect community interests, all plan-level motorized use restrictions that predetermine future Travel Management outcomes must be removed, and any such decisions should be made only through separate, transparent public processes.

#### 7. Threats to Subsistence and Rural Lifestyles

Access for hunting, firewood, gathering, and rural living is not protected for local residents-only for certain Tribal uses. The Forest Service should include binding standards in the plan to protect subsistence and traditional uses for all rural communities.

In conclusion, the current plan does not fairly address the needs and input of the motorized recreation community or the broader rural public. The Forest Service must:

Maintain and protect all existing motorized routes and cross-country opportunities.

Commit to open, site-specific analysis and robust public participation before imposing new restrictions.

Incorporate and respond to prior public comments that overwhelmingly support motorized access.

Ensure traditional uses remain protected for all who depend on these public lands.

Failure to genuinely address these issues will further erode trust and diminish the agency's ability to serve the public interest. Please revise the Forest Plan to reflect the priorities of motorized users and our community.