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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Please accept these comments from a former Oregonian. I was born in Ellensburg, Washington, and grew up in Portland, Oregon. I studied natural resources management at Utah State University, and then my duties in the US Air Force took me to the east coast, where I have lived since then.

I compliment the Forest Service on the process involving a broad spectrum of the public in the development of this plan.

No Cross-country Vehicle Travel: One of my concerns is the handling of travel in the forests by motor vehicles, in particular off-road vehicles (ORV). Experience in many national forests and BLM public lands has shown that unregulated ORV traffic will cause unacceptable impacts against wildlife and fish habitat and against recreational values. The Forest Service and BLM have learned from experience that ORVs must be restricted to designated routes on which agency experts have determined that the impacts will not destroy the values of the forest. This has become standard practice for both agencies. No cross-country vehicle travel should be allowed in the Blue Mountains plan.

Close Unacceptable Routes: Roads and trails that have suffered unacceptable damage should be closed and rehabilitated to natural conditions. Some may be old routes dating back 50 years or more; they should be closed as necessary to end the unacceptable impacts. Revised Statute 2477 was repealed by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. It cannot be used as justification for unacceptable travel routes to remain in use.

Wilderness: I heartily support more recommended wilderness areas in the new plan. The US Congress will make the ultimate decision, and the process begins with this planning project and the public participation contributing to it.

RNAs: I favor more research natural areas wherever the values of the land and its plant and animal life would be endangered without protective status.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments.