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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am both a private pilot and avid outdoors enthusiast. I wish to express my strong support for aviation and airstrips to be recognized and formally included in the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision #64157. Inclusion of aviation and airports will ensure safe, continued access to regional airstrips, including Reds Horse Ranch (68D), and others.

My reasons for this comment are numerous:

Historic Use: Both commercial and private aviation activity has historically occurred on these Forests since the 1930s. Please consider adding "aviation" to the list of approved activities.

Management and Maintenance: Aviation organizations have established Airstrip Integrated Operations and Maintenance Plans on the Wallowa-Whitman Forest. This plan can be replicated on each Blue Mountains Forest for airstrip maintenance. This is cost effective partnering with aviation groups to maintain the airstrips, saving USFS funds.

Transportation Infrastructure: Airstrips are a component of the USFS nationwide transportation system, as are the roads and trails, and should be considered as such in any management plan. Airstrips support Federal and State land management activities, wildfire operations, recreational and hunting use, emergency evacuation, access to private in-holdings and commercial ventures that support the local economy.

Objectives: Please add "Maintain Airstrips" to this list.

Dispersed Usage: Airstrips provide locations for dispersed back country recreation.

Aesthetics: Airstrips appear as open meadows on level terrain, and offer habitat for wildlife.

Effect on Wildlife: Scientifically peer-reviewed studies show that aircraft noise has no detrimental effect on wildlife.

Thank you,  
Frankie Ridolfi