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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Sirs,

I am writing to request that the Blue Mountains forest plan include aviation use and maintaining existing, historically used airstrips in the forest plan as approved and appropriate uses.

The airstrips within the Blue Mountains have been in use since the 1930s, and enable responsible public uses such as wildfire operations, hunting and fishing, emergency access and commercial uses that benefit the people living in the area. The airstrips, themselves, are low impact, and function as meadows. Airplane access is low impact as noise is brief and transient, and peer-reviewed studies in adjacent national forests show no negative impacts on wildlife.

The airstrips can be maintained in partnership with recreational aviation organizations such as the Recreational Aviation Foundation, at little or no cost to the government. There is already precedent for successful partnerships to maintain public airstrips within the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest. The same arrangements can readily be implemented for the airstrips in the Blue Mountains.

These airstrips have been in historical use for nearly 100 years, and provide dispersed and low impact public access. In addition, they serve as emergency facilities both for airplanes and for remote areas that are otherwise extremely difficult to reach on the ground in a timely fashion.

Thank you for your consideration.