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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Date: October 5, 2025

To: US Forest Service

From: Patty Dorroh, Harney County Oregon resident

Subj: Dorroh Public Comment on the Blue Mount Forest Plan Revision

Thank you for taking public comment on the plan to manage our Blue Mountain Forest. My name is Patty Dorroh and my family has lived in rural Harney County, Oregon for 23 years in the southern Malheur National Forest area. We respectfully access the Malheur National Forest for recreation. Our community, neighbors and friends utilize the forest for many more purposes such as access for grazing management, hunting camps, and firewood. Our home, property, and livestock have faced danger in recent years, multiple times, due to wildfire fueled by the unnatural fuels conditions that now exist on US forest land from decades of inadequate forest management. In addition to my personal perspective, I serve as a Harney County Commissioner and frequently hear comments, conversations, and concerns from our community members regarding this plan revision, which are also incorporated here.

Assuring the Blue Mountain Forest remains an Open Forest - in clear, written, and sufficient language - must be the plan's foundation. Prioritizing this will provide the legal foundation to address the need to improve our forest across these areas: forest access, maximizing multiple use for beneficial and economic benefit, reduction of wildfire, and enabling sufficient amounts of timber harvest to help clear the overcrowded stands and produce commercial forest jobs.

I support many of the recommendations that have been voiced during the community meetings and public comment opportunities in our communities the past two years. I respectfully ask that the plan incorporate the following corrections for the topics listed, in which forest access, rural cultural traditions, zoning, equity, and public assurances of an open forest are briefly described:

*Written, Formal Open Forest Public Assurances Aren't Reflected in the Plan. The Forest Service said, "the forests will remain open," in public meetings, but the written plan doesn't guarantee this. Translate and add verbal public commitments into enforceable plan language that protects roads and forest use.

*Motorized Access Not Protected. The plan fails to guarantee continued motorized access to roads and areas people have used for generations. Add a desired condition that clearly states motorized access will be maintained forestwide for all residents throughout the life of the plan.

*Cross-Country Travel Not Allowed. Cross-country travel by ATV or pickup is no longer permitted, even where it's currently practiced. Add a standard affirming that cross-country travel is permitted across the forest, unless restricted through a separate public Travel Management process.

*Legacy Roads May be Closed. The plan allows roads built before 1976 (often protected under RS 2477) to be closed or decommissioned. Add a standard that roads built prior to October 1976 cannot be closed, decommissioned, or obliterated under this plan without a separate legal process.

*Rural Cultural Traditions Ignored. Only Tribal cultural practices are protected in the plan - traditional uses by non-Tribal communities (e.g., hunting camps, woodcutting) are excluded. Recognize rural traditions as valid cultural practices under the National Historic Preservation Act (as Traditional Cultural Properties), and change plan language to reflect this.

*Rural, Non-Tribal Subsistence Road Use is Not Protected. The plan only mentions Tribal rights and fails to acknowledge rural non-tribal communities that rely on the forest for subsistence. Include a standard explicitly recognizing subsistence motorized access for rural residents as a valid cultural and economic use of the forest.

*No Binding Language to Protect Access in Future Forest Projects. Future forest projects (like fuels reduction or

restoration) are not required to follow any plan commitments to access. Add a guideline requiring that all future project-level decisions must uphold forestwide plan commitments to motorized access.

*Recreation ROS Zones Limit Motorized Use Without Justification. The plan assigns "Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized" zones to many areas without analyzing the effect on current motorized use. Require formal NEPA-level analysis of all ROS zone changes and add an alternative that protects existing motorized use.

*ROS Zoning Outside Wilderness Is Misused. The plan uses SPNM or Primitive zones in areas that are not wilderness, preemptively cutting off access. Rezone these areas as Semi-Primitive Motorized or Roaded Natural.

I respectfully request that the Forest Service revise the draft plan to clearly, specifically, and in writing protect motorized access, recognize rural traditions, and ensure that long-time users of these public lands are not excluded - as described in my recommendations.

With these changes, this plan can reflect the needs of the people who live here and rely on these forests - not just outside groups, or prior rejected plans. I appreciate the opportunity to comment and ask that you carefully consider the real-world impacts this plan will have on forest health and the needs of people who live here, rely on these forests, and respect these forests.

Thank you.

Sincerely, Patty Dorroh