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First name: Alek

Last name: Kreiger

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Our nation's forests can provide both perpetual resource needs and recreational opportunities when managed sustainably. As a hunter, angler forager with no access to private forest land, I rely on public land for my primary source of protein. I believe the Forest Service should carry forward the locally crafted desired conditions for elk security. The Blue Mountains Intergovernmental Council, made up of county governments, Tribes, and state and federal agencies, developed an agreed-upon desired condition for elk security. The Forest Service should honor collaborative work and build it into the final plans.

Also, decades of research from the Starkey Experimental Forest, located within these very forests, tell us what elk need to stay on public lands. The final plans should reflect that best available science in an enforceable direction, not set it aside.

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Protect cold, clean water and salmon habitat. The Blues hold some of the west's most important headwaters of cold, clean salmon streams in the west. The final plans should include clear and enforceable direction for riparian areas, stream temperature, sediment, floodplain and wetland function, and road-related impacts. Restoration treatments should improve the habitat needed by salmon, steelhead, bull trout, and other native fish.

Retain core roadless protections. Roadless areas provide secure big-game habitat, intact headwaters, and important backcountry hunting and fishing opportunities. The final plans should retain protections against unnecessary permanent roads while allowing targeted restoration and temporary access where appropriate.