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Organization:

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Comments: Dear Umatilla National Forest Supervisor,

The Blue Mountains of eastern Oregon and southeastern Washington encompass more than two million hectares of public land and some of the most important forests, watersheds, wildlife habitat, and roadless areas in the Pacific Northwest - the region that I have called home for all of my life.

These forests help to clean our drinking water, support fish and wildlife, store climate-warming carbon, and offer world-class opportunities for hiking, hunting, fishing, and other recreation. Scientists have identified the Blue Mountains as one of the most important conservation areas in the lower 48 states.

Given this, I am deeply concerned that the USFS' preferred alternative for the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision would weaken protections for and damage clean water, fish and wildlife habitat, mature and old-growth forests, and roadless landscapes while increasing logging and reducing public accountability.

At a time when climate change and biodiversity loss are accelerating, the Blue Mountains should be managed for resilience, ecological integrity, and the long-term public interest. Therefore, I respectfully urge the project team to

- * Maintain strong and enforceable protections for water quality, fish, wildlife, and mature and old-growth forests
- * Protect roadless areas and other intact landscapes from unnecessary development and fragmentation
- * Prioritize climate resilience, biodiversity, and watershed protection in forest management decisions
- * Ensure a transparent and science-based process for future project-level decisions with meaningful opportunities for public participation

The Blue Mountains are the shared property of everyone on Earth, even though they are within the jurisdiction (and should therefore be managed by and on behalf of the people) of the United States. Future generations deserve healthy forests, abundant wildlife, clean water, and wild places that still feel wild, and this is an opportunity to work towards that goal.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a comment on this matter.