

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/17/2026 4:41:05 PM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: To Whom It May Concern,

I am a lifelong Oregonian, hunter, angler, outdoorsman, and conservationist who has spent countless days in the Blue Mountains and surrounding public lands. I appreciate the tremendous amount of work that has gone into developing the Forest Plan Revision and evaluating alternatives for the future of these forests.

After reviewing the proposed alternatives, I support Alternative 3, particularly because it balances active forest management with strong protections for wildlife habitat, large trees, riparian areas, and roadless landscapes. These forests are not only important for local communities and economies, but also for the hunting, fishing, recreation, and conservation values that make eastern Oregon unique. The additional protections provided under Alternative 3 help ensure those values remain available for future generations.

At the same time, I strongly believe that maintaining the status quo is not an acceptable option. Over the past several decades, Oregon has experienced increasingly large and destructive wildfires that have impacted wildlife habitat, watersheds, recreation opportunities, local economies, and public safety. Anyone who spends time in these forests can see the effects of drought, insect damage, fuel accumulation, and high-severity fire. Action is needed.

While I favor the conservation measures included in Alternative 3, I encourage the Forest Service to retain sufficient flexibility to conduct meaningful fuels reduction, forest thinning, restoration treatments, and other science-based management activities that improve forest resilience and reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire. Healthy forests and healthy wildlife populations depend on proactive stewardship. Allowing conditions to continue as they are today will only increase the likelihood of losing valuable habitat and mature forest stands to future large-scale fires.

As a hunter and conservation-minded public lands user, I believe the best path forward is one that protects the ecological integrity of these forests while actively addressing wildfire risk. Alternative 3 appears to provide that balance by combining restoration and resilience efforts with additional protections for the natural resources and recreational opportunities that Oregonians value most.

Thank you for considering my comments and for your continued work on behalf of Oregon's public lands.

Sincerely,

Bradley Carter

West Linn, Oregon