

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/20/2026 12:39:31 AM

First name: Nathan

Last name: Jacob

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing because I am concerned about how the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision will affect access, working lands, rural communities, forest health, and traditional uses in areas I know well. My main areas of use are around the South Fork Catherine Creek and North Fork Catherine Creek, including Buck Creek Trailhead, the road down Corral Creek to South Catherine, up to Taylor Green and road 77, the 900 road, and all roads leading off 77 from the summit off Highway 203 to West Eagle Meadows. I use these roads for sightseeing, gathering firewood, berry and mushroom picking, and other traditional activities. The final plan must protect and maintain all existing motorized access in these areas and restore any access that has already been reduced. Roads and places that have always been open and used by the public must not be moved into more restrictive management that would reduce long-term access. Grazing, timber work, road work, and other working uses depend on practical access and realistic plan direction. The Forest Service must analyze and account for household use, rural community dependence, local family traditions, and the needs of older, disabled, and less-mobile people. The alternatives in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) must be compared with the 1990 plans so the public can clearly see what is being changed, increased, or decreased. The final plan must have measurable baselines, public reporting, and required corrective action when promised outcomes are not met. Standards for old growth and large trees must allow active management and clearly show how they will affect forest health, treatments, and access. The plan must support fuels work, active management, dependable emergency access, and effective fire response. It must also protect usable access for mining claims, material sources, and other lawful uses. I want the Forest Service to keep all the roads I named above open. Berms that have been put in place by Forest Service policy should be removed, and these roads must remain fully open for logging, grazing, travel, fire and medical emergency access, and for traditional family uses and enjoyment. This is personal to me. I have lived in Union County since 1946 and have used these areas for decades. Over the years, I have seen my ability to travel and use many of these roads decline as more roads are closed. I still enjoy gathering wood, picking berries and mushrooms, and camping in these areas. I have also seen how closing roads blocks access for fire fighting equipment and medical help, with real impacts on safety and emergency response. I made my living in the wood products industry and saw how the loss of timber sales and closure of sawmills destroyed a key source of jobs in Union, Wallowa, and Baker Counties. I have witnessed fires spread faster when roads are closed, knowing that these roads are the fastest way to get fire equipment in. The Forest Service must protect and restore access to these areas and address these real-world impacts before relying on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement or finalizing the plan.