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Comments: I am commenting on the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision because I rely on motorized access to reach the places my family and I use across the Elkhorns, including Anthony, Antone Creek, Muddy, Rock, Pine, Marble, Elk Creek, Auburn, Denny, Black Mountain, Dean Creek, Deer Creek, Baboon Creek, Clear Creek, China Creek, and the areas in between. We use these areas for hunting, camping, gathering firewood, and bringing older or disabled family members into the forest. Motorized access also matters for emergency and fire response and for getting to county roads. Under the 1990 Forest Plan, we have been able to access forest roads and travel cross-country for game retrieval as long as we avoid resource damage. If access is limited or reduced to designated routes only, it will be much harder for us to get firewood-especially with fire restrictions coming earlier every year-and for older or less mobile family members to enjoy camping and recreation. My household depends on the forest for firewood, hunting, food gathering, and other products. The ability to heat our home and shop with local wood is especially important because older rural homes are not energy efficient and the cost to convert to other heating sources is high. These are not just recreational uses or county-wide statistics-they are daily needs for rural families. The analysis and final plan must recognize the real ways people rely on the forest and not just average our dependence into broad numbers. Wildfire risk is another major concern. Our rural Oregon landscape has been hit hard by fire. We need active management, thinning, prescribed burning, and a maintained road system for quick fire response. Rural roads that taxpayers paid to build should not be abandoned or left to grow over. These roads are critical for emergency access and can be reopened quickly during a natural disaster. The final plan must maintain the existing road system, water access, material sources, and safety areas needed for fire response, and must publicly report whether promised fuels treatments and response capabilities are actually delivered. I am also concerned that language about wildlife, elk security, wolves, habitat, riparian areas, or disturbance could be used to justify reducing motorized access. The final plan must protect existing motorized access and clearly show where these components apply, what standards are being used, and how they affect local users and communities. There needs to be honesty from all agencies about predator numbers, diseases in game animals, and the policies that drive these decisions. The Forest Service must not use wildlife or habitat direction to reduce existing motorized access. The agency must separately analyze and disclose the effects of any wildlife-related direction on local people and communities. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) does not provide enough route-level information for the public to understand how plan direction connects to real roads, routes, Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) settings, management areas, or future Travel Management decisions. Without clear maps and explanations, people cannot give meaningful input or see what the plan will mean on the ground. I have process concerns about missing or late reference materials, the transparency and role of the Blues Intergovernmental Council (BIC), how public comments will be coded and answered, and whether access and Travel Management were separated from plan-level analysis. I attended some BIC meetings and was told roads, trails, and areas would be closed unless signed open, which is a complete reversal from the current plan. The elimination of Travel Management from the plan and the use of "future study areas" with no explanation leaves the door open for closures without public information or input. The Forest Service must address these process issues before relying on the DEIS or finalizing the plan. The agency must provide the missing materials, explain the BIC's role, show how public comments are handled, clarify how access and Travel Management concerns were considered, and reconcile public meeting statements with the DEIS. The BIC process was not well balanced and seemed to take too much from people depending on their interests, such as access for grazing. The "future study areas" approach is too broad and unsupported. The plan must keep the forest open unless signed closed, not the other way around. I am asking the Forest Service to provide a current route baseline, analyze usable access effects by alternative, protect and maintain existing public motorized access-including open-area and cross-country opportunities where they exist-use Roaded Natural for existing roaded working forest landscapes, minimize Semi-Primitive Motorized designations where motorized access already exists, and adopt a preferred alternative that keeps public access protections in place. Plan components must not set up future reductions in motorized access. The final plan must

maintain existing access, restore access where it has already been reduced, and include direction that prevents access from being narrowed in future decisions.