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Comments: I am writing as a lifelong resident and building contractor in Baker County, with over 55 years living and working here, and as a former Baker County Commission Chairman. My family-children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren-actively use the forest, and our way of life depends on being able to access and work these lands. My main concern is protecting motorized access to the places people rely on for camping, gathering firewood, accessing forest products, emergency response, and bringing older or disabled family members into the forest. Access is already limited-currently, only about 20% of the Wallowa Whitman National Forest remains open to motorized use due to previous restrictions. The forest has always been open for public use since the beginning of the Oregon Territories, and the current Roadless Areas should be removed and reopened for general forest uses. Limiting access further would impact every activity that depends on the forest, and seasonal or designated-route-only restrictions make it impossible to count on being able to reach important places. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and the proposed plan do not provide enough clear, route-level information to show how new layers-like the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS), scenic integrity, wildlife direction, recommended wilderness, roadless areas, and Wild and Scenic River (WSR) corridors-will affect real roads, routes, and uses when combined. The public needs straightforward maps, route baselines, and explanations that show the full, cumulative impact on access, facilities, and working uses. Without this information, people cannot give meaningful input or understand how the plan will change their ability to use the forest. Economic opportunities in our small communities depend on continued access for grazing, ranch work, timber, local mills, forest management, mining claims, community pits, and local contractors. Road closures and loss of access directly harm jobs, household incomes, and the survival of our rural way of life. Congress intended these lands to stay open for forest products, grazing, water, and subsistence living, and those uses remain essential. Working uses require usable access-not just words in a plan-and conditions that let the work actually happen. For mining, material sources, and community pits, restricting historical use threatens local economies and prevents us from managing fuel loads. Historical mining has played a huge role in Baker County's development. The Forest Service must keep historical access open and clearly identify the status of routes, rights, and access authorities before treating any road as optional. The DEIS uses the term "reasonable access" for mining but does not define it or explain how overlapping plan direction might affect usable access on the ground. The plan must distinguish between public, administrative, permitted, private, county, and mining access, and show how each is affected by new direction. I am also concerned that wildlife and habitat direction-elk security, wolves, riparian areas, or disturbance language-could be used to reduce motorized access. The final plan must protect existing access and clearly show where and how these components apply, what standards are being used, and their effects on local users and communities. This plan should be centered on people and communities, not written to restrict access in favor of wildlife at the expense of human use. Recommended wilderness and roadless area direction must not move roaded or historically used areas away from public access. There is no demonstrated need for new wilderness or roadless areas, and these restrictions prevent families from using areas they have always relied on, such as the Bald Angel area. These areas are not managed for forestry or fire and become inaccessible for firefighting. The Forest Service must show clear evidence for any new recommended wilderness or roadless designations and provide maps and analysis of how access would be affected before making changes. For Wild and Scenic River corridors, interim protections and unclear boundaries or values threaten access, grazing, minerals, timber, fuels work, and forest products. Most river access is already controlled and managed, and there is no need for more closures. Adding new restrictions increases fire danger and hurts our ability to manage the land. The Forest Service must provide detailed, segment-by-segment maps and tables showing corridor boundaries, classifications, identified values, interim protections, affected roads and crossings, private or inholding access, and the cumulative effects of overlapping plan layers. River corridor direction must protect and maintain existing access and working uses, with full analysis of effects on communities and users. The final forest plan must protect existing public motorized access, keep current open-area and cross-country opportunities where they exist, and not use plan components to set up future reductions. The Forest

Service must maintain public access across the life of the plan, restore reduced access, and provide clear, transparent information so the public can understand and participate in decisions that affect our communities and way of life.

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