

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/28/2026 1:26:41 AM

First name: Darcy

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Sirs,

I have lived and worked in and around the northern Blues most of my life. Over the last 20 years I have engaged with the revision of the 1990 Forest Management Plan as it evolved from a focus on restoration and forest health to most recently, 'Active Management' guided by targeted levels of timber output and grazing units. In retirement I have sought to build awareness and appreciation of the Blues by leading wildflower walks on designated forest service trails in Asotin, Columbia, Garfield, Umatilla, Walla Walla, Union and Wallowa Counties. As a rare plant and associated species monitor for University of Washington's RareCare I have worked with BLM, UNFS and WF&W personnel throughout Southeastern Washington. It has been my passion to contribute to management plans in the preservation of the unique geology, waterways and plant life. I cannot use scientific technical terminology nor cite research studies. You already have the data but must adhere to current leadership priorities. My statements come from reading archival forest service studies, historical accounts of resource extraction 1880s-1950s, taking OSU online Forestry Class and my own observations over the last 12 years of walking many ridges and their slopes, four numbered blocked roads and peaks/buttes in the Blues.

Briefly. Alternative 1 is not a legal option. Alternative II, although preferred by the USDA, is optimistic in terms of amount of timber available or number of cattle and sheep ranchers In Walla Walla and Pomeroy Districts. Timber and Grazing increases could not be reached without clearcutting and logging of wilderness areas and opening up closed roads to formerly logged and grazed meadows and 'flats'. The expense would negate any revenue, a complex/mosaic forest would not be achieved, grazers would be difficult to being 'managed' and compliance of logging companies to requirements (i.e. protection of designated species, clean up of debris) have not been observed in the past. Finally there no longer exists an infrastructure in the Northern Blues to provide an economic benefit to the communities. The communities in the Northern Blues, historically relied upon timber in the Blues for personal use - fenceposts, firewood - and the small, sustainable scaling and trimming mills were utilized on private lands. The few mills still operating are producing chip board and pulp from salvaged timber.

Alternative 3 is preferred with amendments:

Increased the protection for riparian areas and meadows; connective corridors and eco system processes.

Assign values to research, soil productivity, water quality and quantity, wildlife habitat/plant ecologies, biomass production. Emphasize mixed conifer regeneration (age, size, shade tolerance, fire tolerance, insect tolerance) in logging requirements.

"In forested environments, the full spectrum of structure from young to old stands are represented, including snags and down wood. The distribution and abundance of forest structural stages create conditions that are ecologically resilient, sustainable, and compatible with natural levels of disturbance." Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision DEIS

Provide stronger protection for aquatic wetlands and springs. Add the grasslands of Bracken, Sheep, and Sourdough Ridges, Indian Campground and Tiger Ridge and Creek as Botanical Areas. Designate the wet meadows, fens, riparian areas, springs from Tollgate to Jubilee Lake as Research Natural Areas. Retain Table Rock as Scenic Overlook.

Finally, value existing but now abandoned trails and trailheads and invest maintenance resources for their 'soft' sustainable recreational use. Having people walking the trails is your best resource as a presence for responsible behavior.

Prohibit the recreational use of OHVs, automated weapons & 'target' shooting (public safety, destruction of property, litter), electric bikes beyond a certain capacity and drones. Use is usually destructive and disruptive to

all other recreations. Restrictions cannot be enforced and damage to landscape is irreversible.

Thank you for your consideration. It is a terrible time for all our public lands.