Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/12/2026 3:12:39 AM
First name: Jeffrey
Last name: Gritz
Organization:
Title:
Comments: November 11, 2026
RE: Public Comments - Whitman Post-Fire Recovery Project (#446982)
Dear District Ranger Aujero,
Jeff Gritz
Cabin Owner/Snowmobiler
80418 Jones Ln Hermiston, Or 97838
(541) 561-7299
Official Public Comment
Whitman Post-Fire Recovery Project (#446982)

As a cabin owner on a Forest Service Leased parcel, I am submitting comments regarding the proposed Whitman Post-Fire Recovery Project on the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest.
I truly understand the importance of post-fire recovery following any devastating fire specifically the 2026 Anthony, Olive Butte, and McCully fires. It's important to address hazardous trees, restore forest health, reduce future wildfire risks, and repair damaged infrastructure.
However, it is also just as important to ensure that existing snowmobile trails, grooming operations, and winter recreation access are considered throughout the planning and implementation of these projects.
My family respectfully requests consideration of the following:
1. Protection of Existing Snowmobile Trails and Grooming Routes;
We request that the Forest Service identify any established snowmobile trails and grooming routes within or adjacent to the project area and evaluate how proposed activities may affect them.
Many designated winter recreation routes utilize existing Forest Service roads. The activities such as salvage logging, road reconstruction, timber hauling, and equipment staging could potentially interfere with these routes.
We ask that existing winter recreation opportunities be maintained wherever possible and that any necessary changes be coordinated with the affected snowmobile clubs and emergency service groups that access these routes.
2. Coordination of Logging and Hauling Activities
We request that logging, timber hauling, road maintenance, and other heavy equipment operations be scheduled to minimize conflicts with winter snowmobile use and grooming activities.
3. Road Closures and Winter Recreation Access
We request that the Forest Service carefully evaluate any proposed temporary or permanent road closures, reconstruction, or changes to access routes for potential impacts on snowmobiling.
Forest Service roads frequently serve as important connections between established snowmobile trails, parking areas, warming shelters, and other winter recreation facilities.
We ask that existing winter access be preserved and that affected user groups be consulted before decisions are made that could alter these connections.
4. Post-Fire Hazards and Trail Safety
We recognize that fire-damaged trees and unstable conditions may present safety concerns for winter recreationists and volunteer grooming operators.
We request that the Forest Service evaluate hazardous trees along established snowmobile routes and work with local clubs to identify areas requiring mitigation before winter grooming operations resume.
We also ask that any restrictions or closures be clearly communicated, including anticipated timelines for reopening affected roads and trails.
5. Coordination with our Local Snowmobile Clubs
We strongly encourage clear communication with our local clubs and emergency services to determine whether theirs established grooming routes that have been altered. If this coordination is not done it could impact lives.

6. Maintaining Winter Recreation Opportunities

We encourage the Forest Service to recognize snowmobiling as an important component of winter recreation and the impact and importance it has to our local economies.

Oregon's snowmobile trail systems depend heavily on volunteer clubs and partnerships with federal land management agencies. Protecting established trail connections and maintaining access for grooming equipment are essential to the continued operation of these systems.

These clubs work collaboratively with the Forest Service to support responsible forest recovery while maintaining safe and reasonable access for winter recreation.

Conclusion,

I support responsible efforts to restore areas affected by wildfire and recognize the challenges involved in managing these landscapes.

My primary concern is ensuring that snowmobile trails, winter recreation access, and grooming operations are considered during project planning and implementation.

Thank you,

Jeff Gritz