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Comment -

I support the vegetative treatments identified in this project. Our forest are overgrown, and susceptible to catastrophic fires causing mass erosion and degradation to the resources needed to sustain our communities.

I do not support the concepts to re-close "currently closed roads" in the project areas. The public should have the opportunity during scoping to see the proposed closures and give input up front as to if current use of the roads targeted for decommissioning/closure in the project and have those roads currently in use removed from the "re-closures".

Throughout the Travel Management process it was found that the roads identified as "closed" were incorrect and that roads were currently being used by the public. Also, roads that were put into place prior to Oct. 1976 are public domain access right of ways protected for the use of the general public to access the natural resources of the county to sustain their lives.

I am asking that prior to the development of alternatives that the Blue Mountains Resiliency Team conduct meetings in the affected communities in and around the Wallowa-Whitman, Umatilla, and Ochoco National Forest to ask if the roads identified as "closed" in the proposed treatment areas are actually closed and not being used.

Also, an inventory of the roads constructed prior to Oct. 1976 needs to be conducted and those roads being considered for closure that were constructed prior to Oct. 1976 need to be removed from the closure/decommissioning list for this project.

Please use these comments to work with the residents of Eastern Oregon so that a true vegetation treatment project is developed that meets the needs of the residents and for a healthy forest and open access to the resources they need to sustain their families.

Thank you,

John D. George  
Bates, Oregon