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**ANDRIS OLINS      5940 GRIFFIN CREEK ROAD      MEDFORD OR 97501**

Jim Whittington, Medford District BLM  
3040 Biddle Road  
Medford OR 97504

Dear Mr. Whittington,

I am writing in opposition to continued use of many BLM lands in Jackson County by ATVs. For too long ATV riders and organizations have asserted their self-proclaimed "rights" to use public land in ways that seriously harm the environment and prevent others from enjoying these areas in less destructive ways.

One need only look at the areas used by off-road riders to see the destruction of vegetation, soils, and riparian areas this type of use entails. Some blame the scars on the landscape on a few irresponsible riders but the fact is that the very nature of off-road riding destroys vegetation and harms soil – if it's off the road, it's on soil and vegetation. It is also clear from observation of these areas that off-road riding organizations have been ineffective at promoting less environmentally damaging behaviors.

One particularly insidious aspect of ATV use is that the noise from the vehicles is heard for miles around. I live a few miles from Anderson Butte, yet I can hear the noise from ATVs quite clearly. An article in the Mail-Tribune states that you said any management plan will include "being considerate of neighbors". To be considerate of my right to peace and quiet, no ATV use should be allowed on Anderson Butte or anywhere within a few miles of my home. All the other rural residents of Jackson County deserve similar consideration, which would preclude ATV use on almost all public land.

All use of public land has costs and benefits. In the case of ATV use, the benefit accrues strictly to the ATV rider while the costs are absorbed by all other users in the form of damaged landscape, noise, pollution, and habitat loss. As our natural areas are reduced and development increases, maintaining and improving natural areas becomes more important. Areas where one can find peace and untrammled nature are only becoming more rare. ATV use has no place in these areas. We should be actively protecting our last remaining natural areas and seeking to improve their ecological value, not diminish it.

Sincerely,

*Andris Olins*

Andris Olins

