

**From:** [Dennis Smith](#)  
**To:** [BLM\\_OR\\_RMPs\\_WesternOregon](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on western Oregon RMP revisions  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 30, 2012 6:35:06 PM

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Dear BLM Officials

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the revisions being considered for the Western Oregon BLM RMPs.

Two areas I would like to comment on are the "types of recreation opportunities" and economic impact on local economies.

When planning for recreation on BLM land please consider aviation interests. The maintenance, renovation, and possible creation of backcountry airstrips on BLM lands represents recreation possibilities for many pilots and their families, but it also serves several other important interests. Backcountry airstrips provide emergency access to remote areas for medical or other teams, easier access for survey teams and wildlife officials, access for fire control teams, emergency landing sites, and other uses such as law enforcement.

The footprint of aviation is very small compared to other forms of recreation transportation. An airstrip can be a grassy field or old stream bed. They are usually under 2500 feet in length, compared to hundreds of miles for roads and atv trails. They require only minimal maintenance and in some cases can be maintained by pilot groups under agreements with the BLM for no cost to the government. OPA and the RAF are very happy to discuss this possibility.

Pilots also make good neighbors. Aircraft noise is short lived and we police each other if there are any complaints against us. If a pilot is not acting in a manner that is appropriate for the environment, we encourage anyone observing this behavior to contact the Oregon Pilots Association or the Recreational Aviation Foundation. We will contact these offending pilots and see that they understand their mistake and not repeat the offense. We've done it before and it works.

Aviation is a low impact and neighborly user of public lands. When considering your BLM airstrips please remember this. If other forms of transportation are allowed access to BLM lands (4x4s, ATVs, SUVs, boats, motorcycles, etc.) then discriminating against aircraft and their owners would be inappropriate. We are just as good a steward of the land as any other citizen.

And lastly, in certain areas incoming aircraft have large impacts on local businesses. Nearby airports sell fuel, local restaurants sell food, dude ranch visitors get access to remote areas, fishing guides make an income, etc. Restricting aircraft from BLM lands, lakes, and/or airstrips has a potentially negative affect on many businesses in those local areas.

Thank you again for an opportunity to comment. If I can answer any questions please feel free to contact me by email or phone.

Sincerely

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