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Glen M. Intermill
Debra C. Flynn
1222 Craiglea Dr.
Eagle Point, OR 97524

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WOPR
PO Box 2965
Portland, OR 97208

This letter is to express my concern and anger over the proposed Off Highway Vehicle Emphasis area designation for the Worthington Road/Obenchain area as suggested in the WOPR. I strongly encourage you to reconsider this action.

Designation of the area as an Off Highway Vehicle Emphasis area prioritizes one set of recreational activities over the many others that currently utilize the area, including hikers, horseback riders, bird watchers, mountain bikers, and many others. For people currently living in this area, many of whom moved here in order to utilize the recreation opportunities that the adjoining BLM lands offer, designating the area as an OHV Emphasis treats us as lesser citizens in our own communities.

As an avid outdoors enthusiast, I regularly utilize these BLM lands for rewarding activities and often see others doing the same. This is not empty land waiting for BLM to encourage people to use it. We currently share these neighborhood trails with many law-abiding quad and motorcycle riders. Unfortunately, I have also seen first hand the significant damage done by inappropriate OHV use. Existing roads and trails have been badly rutted, expanded, mangled and fractured. In turn, this has created substantial erosion problems funneling large amounts of mud and silt into Little Butte Creek polluting the water and threatening the salmon spawning.

While many OHV enthusiasts are law abiding and responsible, many are not. Increased vandalism, trespassing, fence cutting, careless or illegal shooting, and new trail formation are inevitable consequences of the OHV Emphasis designation. Currently, the shared use model of the area lands serves as a check on these inappropriate and illegal activities. With only two BLM law enforcement agents in the entire district, this current system of checks is a necessary component in protecting the area's natural public resources. OHV Emphasis designation will actively discourage multiple use and public oversight of these shared resources.

In addition, by designating our area as an Elk Habitat Management area BLM has already acknowledged the importance of protecting this impressive animal. Designating the Worthington Road/Obenchain area as an OHV Emphasis works against this important goal by concentrating large numbers of riders in acknowledged productive elk habitat.

Please reconsider the designation of the Worthington Road/Obenchain area as an OHV Emphasis area. The local community is against this. There is no reason that a small contingent of OHV enthusiasts should command so much in the way of BLM's attention and public resources. Continued shared use is a more appropriate model for the region given the interests of all members of the community and the state.

Sincerely,
Glen M. Intermill & Debra C. Flynn