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Western Oregon Plan Revisions

Re: Off Highway Vehicle Emphasis Area

Dear Sirs:

I have noticed a proposal to designate areas adjacent to my home as an off road play area for ATV and motorcycles. I currently live in a rural area that is designated "residential" only and I can not understand how an off highway vehicle emphasis area could be considered next to a zoned residential area. I have lived here 26 years and I realized when I purchased the property that I must accept logging, hiking, birding, hunting, controlled burning and even off road use on a casual basis as part of living in and near forest land. The problem with designating a forested area as an off road area is that is no longer multiple use after that designation takes hold. It is only usable as off road because the nature of 'that' use is restrictive to "all" other forest uses such as birding, hiking picnicking and even logging.

The destruction of forest environments from the use of ATVs and motorcycles is well documented. These areas are fragile enough with just normal use. The BLM has seen fit to place restrictions on the access to roads and trails in this area for many years. Most roads are blocked by gates and the reasons are probably good. And if it was a good idea to block these roads in times of multiple use how will it be a good idea to open them up to motorized use especially as an emphasis area. The only outcome will be further risk of degradation.

Beyond some of the points I have mentioned are the problems of liability with off road use by the public. How is the BLM going to pay for road repair, checking licensing, checking of insurances for participating persons in such a large area? Can my children still play and hike in these areas without harassment? Can these possible problems be worth the small benefit to an extremely small percentage of the forest using population? Will fire hazards be increased and how will the BLM address this important issue especially in light of the major fire problems the Illinois Valley has had to endure in the recent past? Please take these comments into consideration when making your final decisions to put the off highway vehicle emphasis area in a more appropriate area.

Thank you for your consideration.



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