

989

RECEIVED

NOV 14 2007

November 7, 2007

Mr. Tim Reuwsaat
BLM Medford District Manager
3040 Biddle Road
Medford, Oregon 97504

Subject: WOPR: Proposed Worthington Road /Obenchain Road OHV Park

I strongly oppose the creation of an OHV Park around the Worthington Road and Obenchain Road Area.

I understand BLM's desire to have multiple uses for public land. **However, BLM does not need to accommodate optional recreational (FUN) areas that create nuisances for homeowners.**

There are a number of problems with The BLM National Management Strategy on Motorized Off-Highway Vehicle Use (January 19, 2001).-

- The strategy does not address the negative impact to homeowners.
- The strategy does not provide a method to evaluate the negative impacts to homeowners.
- The strategy does not provide criteria on where OHV Parks should not be located.
- No consideration has been given to the increased traffic on local unpaved roads to access these OHV areas.
- Since this issue is absent, it is clear that the strategy assumed that these OHV areas would have no negative impact (e.g., noise dust, fumes, trash, traffic) to private homeowners. This is not the case.

Since BLM lands in Western Oregon are a checkerboard pattern with private land it is essential that not only BLM objectives are met but more importantly private landowners not be impacted.

- Families do not want to live near nuisances. We specifically did not consider buying several homes because motor-cross tracks were located within a mile of the property.
- Private property values near OHV parks will be depreciated.
- This plan creates optional recreational (FUN) areas at the expense of local private homeowner.

Worthington/Obenchain is primarily a quiet, small farms area. Families farm and live in this area because of the environment.

- **Worthington and Obenchain are uneven, dirt roads.** Even one car can make a terrible dust mess. Currently local residents must pay for dust abatement in front of their houses. This year's application did not last the entire summer and increased

traffic will only make this problem worse. This has a negative impact on people, livestock and crops.

- **The local residents have already experienced the negative aspects of OHV usage which are described in the BLM document dated September 22, 2005.** "Extensive damage has occurred on the public lands adjacent to Worthington Road. The damage... caused by motorized vehicles driven off roads" resulting in "deep ruts". A restoration project was funded and the positive results are just beginning to be realized.

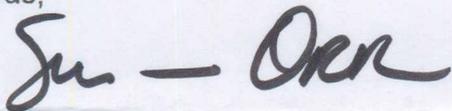
An OHV Park is incompatible with the protection and preservation of the Roosevelt Elk in this "Highly Sensitive" habitat.

- **The Oregon Elk Management Plan (February 2003)** identifies as a major issue: "Large increases in off-road vehicle use and other recreational activities are causing harassment to and displacement of elk, degradation of habitat, and loss of hunt quality." The number one strategy to combat this problem is "Coordinate with public land management agencies (USFS, BLM) to keep ATV out of important wildlife habitat and enforce existing regulations on public land".

The BLM National Strategy on OHV Usage does not fit our local needs. The WOPR Plan developed from this National Strategy also does not fit our local needs. BLM should figure out how to

1. Recognize that OHVs are incompatible with this area and focus on compatible recreational activities (e.g., horseback riding, hiking, hunting).
2. Locate OHV Parks on public lands (BLM, USFS) that have no impact to homes and wildlife.
3. Pay for the enforcement of OHV guidelines before enabling OHV parks.

Regards,



Susan T. Orr

1288 Worthington Road
Eagle Point, Oregon 97524