

Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision - 2014

Malheur, Umatilla, and Wallowa-Whitman National Forests



Guide to Commenting

The Forest Service is responsible for managing public lands in the public interest. The comment period is your opportunity to be involved in the Forest Plan revision process, to offer thoughts on alternative ways for the Forest Service to accomplish what is proposed, to comment on the preferred alternative and analysis, and to work with the Forest Service in doing what is right for the land, while also enhancing social and economic vitality.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) "... is intended to help public officials make decisions that are based on the understanding of environmental consequences..." (40 CFR 1501(c)). To achieve this, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) considers the effects of management actions on social, economic, and ecological resources within the planning area. You may have valuable information about places and resources you consider important and the potential effects the proposed federal actions may have on those places and resources. This is your opportunity to work with us so that we finish with Final Land Management Plans (also referred to as Forest Plans) that are good for the land and the public it serves.

Comments that provide relevant and new information with sufficient detail and rationale are the most useful, and are referred to as substantive comments. The Forest Service reads and considers all comments and identifies the topics that are substantive for consideration in the final EIS and Land Management Plan.

The Documents - DEIS and Proposed Revised Forest Plan

We are encouraging the public to view our documents through the following options:

- **Website:** <http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/BlueMtnsPlanRevision>
- **CD or Hard Copy:** Email request to: bluemtnplanrevision@fs.fed.us – or -
Call: 541-523-1246 or 541-523-1302.
- **Read in Person:** Documents to read are available at Forest Service offices across the three Forests and at local community libraries.

How to Submit Comments

Electronically:

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/BlueMountainForestPlanRevisionComments>

Fax: 541-523-6392

US mail:

Blue Mountains Plan Revision Team
P.O. Box 907
Baker City, OR 97814

Please indicate which Forest your comments are applicable for if your comments are only regarding a specific Forest (Malheur, Umatilla, or Wallowa-Whitman). To facilitate analysis of comments and information submitted, we strongly encourage you to submit comments via the electronic format (see page 3 for more information). Comments must be postmarked or received electronically no later than 90 days from when the Notice of Availability is published in the Federal Register, currently scheduled for March 14, 2014. If you need assistance in submitting a comment and/or working through the electronic system, please call 541-523-1246 or 541-523-1302.



for the greatest good

Tips on Useful Commenting

Comments on the DEIS and Proposed Revised Forest Plan are encouraged and are essential to helping us make the right decisions for the good of the land and the public we serve. Comments that provide relevant and new information with sufficient detail and rationale are the most useful and are referred to as substantive comments. Below you will find definitions and examples of what is a substantive comment and what is a non-substantive comment.

Substantive Comments:

As defined in 36 CFR 219.62, substantive comments are written comments, or oral comments recorded by, the responsible official or his designee during an opportunity for public participation provided during the planning process (36 CFR 219.4 and 219.16) and attributed to the individual or entity providing them. Comments are considered substantive when they are within the scope of the proposal; specific to the DEIS, Proposed Revised Land Management Plan; have a direct relationship to the proposal; and include supporting reasons. Substantive comments might include providing new information, identifying a new issue (or expand upon the existing one), providing the basis or rationale for an opinion, identifying a specific flaw in the analysis, or identifying a different source of credible research which (if used in the analysis) could result in different effects.

Examples:

- Please change the Desired Condition for “Water Use” to incorporate the range of possible climate change scenarios, because available water supplies vary based on the current climate conditions.
- In the “xxx area”, I feel strongly that Management Area 3A, which is backcountry non-motorized, should be changed to Management Area 1B, which is recommended wilderness, because there are no roads in that area, the terrain is too steep for any type of timber harvest, and it meets the criteria for recommended wilderness, even though I know the Forest Service doesn’t create Wilderness only Congress has that authority.

Non-Substantive Comments:

Non-substantive comments are outside the scope of the analysis; appear as a “vote” (and the NEPA process is not about voting); do not provide supporting rationale; or lack sufficient specificity to support either a change in the document or to permit a meaningful response (i.e., emotional and without rationale). These comments are not considered in the final EIS and Forest Plan.

Examples:

- I don’t want any backcountry non-motorized management areas. All areas should be left the way they are.
- I prefer Alternative D and think that should be the preferred Alternative.
- I do not support this project at all. It is not in the best interest of the general public.

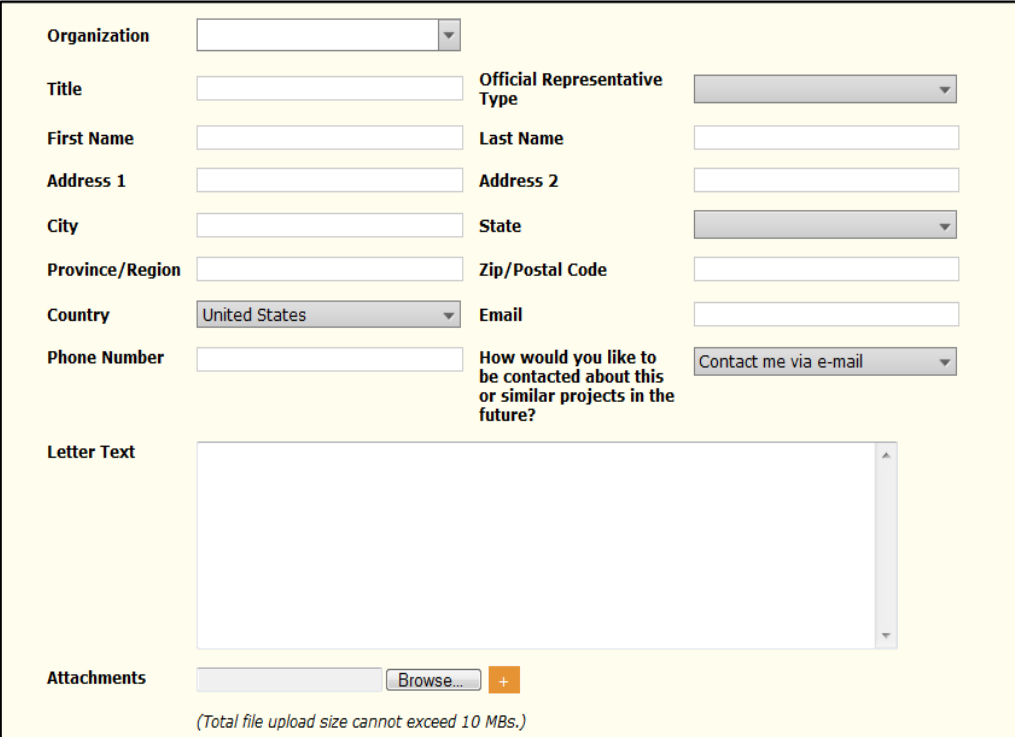
Note: To have standing in the objection process, comments must be substantive and include the names and addresses of commenters. Anonymous comments will be accepted and considered; however will not provide standing for objection. The Forest Service will use the “predecisional administrative review process,” also referred to as the “objection process” described in 36 CFR 219 Subpart B of the 2012 Planning Rule (Federal Register, Vol. 7, No. 68, p 21162-21276). This process gives an individual or entity an opportunity for an independent Forest Service review and resolution of issues before the approval of a plan revision. Subpart B identifies who may file objections to a plan revision; the responsibilities of the participants in an objection; and the procedures that apply to the review of the objection (36 CFR 219 Subpart B, §219.50). Individuals and entities who have submitted substantive formal comments related to this plan revision during the opportunities for public comment for this decision may file an objection. All “substantive” comments must be addressed in an appendix to the EA/EIS or in the project record for a decision documented through a decision memo (40 CFR 1503.4).

Electronic Commenting System

We are using a new system for submitting comments electronically, which is the preferred method of receiving comments versus postal mail because it is more efficient in the analysis process. All commenters, whether they submit their comments electronically or via the postal mail will be added to the Forest Plan Revision mailing list.

A National website called PALS (Planning Appeals & Litigation System) provides information about projects across the Forest Service and linked to this system is a system called CARA (Comment Analysis and Response Application). This system provides an opportunity for the public to submit their comments electronically, and for the Forest Service to gather comments electronically, which aids in efficiency of analyzing all the comments received on a project. Following are instructions on how to submit a comment through this new system.

Go to the following web site: (<http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/BlueMountainForestPlanRevisionComments>), which will bring you to the screen below:



The screenshot shows a web form for submitting comments. The form is titled "Electronic Commenting System" and contains the following fields and options:

- Organization:** A dropdown menu.
- Title:** A text input field.
- Official Representative Type:** A dropdown menu.
- First Name:** A text input field.
- Last Name:** A text input field.
- Address 1:** A text input field.
- Address 2:** A text input field.
- City:** A text input field.
- State:** A dropdown menu.
- Province/Region:** A text input field.
- Zip/Postal Code:** A text input field.
- Country:** A dropdown menu with "United States" selected.
- Email:** A text input field.
- Phone Number:** A text input field.
- How would you like to be contacted about this or similar projects in the future?:** A dropdown menu with "Contact me via e-mail" selected.
- Letter Text:** A large text area for entering the comment.
- Attachments:** A text input field with a "Browse..." button and a "+" icon.

At the bottom of the form, there is a note: "(Total file upload size cannot exceed 10 MBs.)"

Please be as detailed and specific as possible when completing this form. The "Name and Email" fields are the only two required fields; however all of the information is useful and we encourage you to include the information. By submitting a comment on this project, you will automatically be added to our mailing list. If an email is provided you will be on our email mailing list; however if you wish to be on the postal mailing list we need all of the information in the fields above. You may enter "Anonymous" into the name field if you do not wish for your name to be submitted; however realize you will not have 'standing' for this project if you choose to be anonymous (see information on page 2). All comment letters and contact information are included in the project record for this project.

Input your comment in the "Letter Text" space. Attachments can be included, but are not necessary if they are a duplicate of the comment itself. If you decide to attach a document, Word is the preferable format. Some types of useful attachments include maps, pictures, or supportive documents that reinforce the comment you are making. The maximum files size for uploads is 10 MBs. Prior to submitting a comment, you will have to enter the information you see in the example of the encryption box below. Once you hit "Submit", your comment will be entered into the system.



Where to go sit and read the documents

LOCATION	ADDRESS	CITY, STATE
Asotin County Library	417 Sycamore St.	Clarkston, WA
Athena Public Library	146 E Main St.	Athena, OR
Baker County Library	2400 Resort St	Baker City, OR
Blue Mountain Ranger District	431 Patterson Bridge Rd.	John Day, OR
Crook County Library	175 NW Meadow Lakes Dr.	Prineville, OR
Dayton Memorial Library	111 S 3rd St.	Dayton, WA
Emigrant Creek Ranger District	265 Highway 20 South	Hines, OR
Enterprise City Library	101 NE 1st St	Enterprise, OR
Forest Resources Library	PO Box 352112	Seattle, WA
Fossil Public Library	401 Main St.	Fossil, OR
Grant County Library	507 S Canyon Blvd.	John Day, OR
Halfway Branch Library	PO Box 922	Halfway, OR
Harney County Library	80 W D St.	Burns, OR
Heppner Ranger District	117 South Main St.	Heppner, OR
Kennewick Library	405 S Dayton St.	Kennewick, WA
La Grande Ranger District	3502 Hwy 30	La Grande, OR
La Grande Public Library	2006 4 th St.	La Grande, OR
Lewiston City Library	428 Thain Rd	Lewiston, ID
Milton-Freewater Library	8 SW 8th Ave.	Milton-Freewater, OR
North Fork John Day Ranger District	401 West Main St.	Ukiah, OR
Ontario Community Library	388 SW 2nd Ave.	Ontario, OR
Oregon Trail Library	444 North Main St.	Heppner, OR
Pasco Public Library	1320 SW Hopkins St.	Pasco, WA
Pendleton Public Library	502 SW Dorion St.	Pendleton, OR
Pilot Rock Public Library	144 N. Alder Place	Pilot Rock, OR
Pine Field Office	38470 Pine Town Lane	Halfway, OR
Pomeroy Ranger District	71 West Main St.	Pomeroy, WA
Prairie City Ranger District	327 SW Front St.	Prairie City, OR
Richland Public Library	955 Northgate Dr.	Richland, WA
Salmon River Public Library	126 N Main St	Riggins, ID
Sumpter Public Library	245 Mill St.	Sumpter, OR
Tamastlikt Cultural Institute - Library	72789 Highway 331	Pendleton, OR
Ukiah Public Library	201 Hill St.	Ukiah, OR
Umatilla NF Headquarters	72510 Coyote Rd.	Pendleton, OR
Walla Walla Ranger District	1415 West Rose St.	Walla Walla, WA
Wallowa Mountains Office	201 East Second St.	Joseph, OR
Weller Public Library	212 Main St.	Waitsburg, WA
Weston Public Library	108 E Main St.	Weston, OR
Whitman Ranger District Office	1550 Dewey Ave.	Baker City, OR

Contact Information:

Phone: Public Affairs Office at (541) 523-1246 or (541) 523-1302

Email: bluemtnplanrevision@fs.fed.us

Web site: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/BlueMtnsPlanRevision>