



County Court of Grant County

Scott W. Myers, County Judge
Chris B. Labhart, Commissioner
Boyd Britton, Commissioner

June 4, 2014

Congressman Greg Walden
U.S. House of Representatives
1210 Longworth H.O.B.
Washington DC 20515

Dear Congressman Walden,

The Grant County Court enthusiastically supports Representative Walden's H.R. 4272 legislation, also known as "the Forest Access in Rural Communities Act".

For too long the Forest Service has arbitrarily and capriciously closed roads without public notice or consultation. We in Grant County would argue that by doing so they, "the agency" have violated the National Environment Policy Act (NEPA). Like many rural communities, we in Grant County have an aging population, which a lack of motorized access has a profound detrimental effect on their lives, whether it involves hunting, camping or a leisurely drive through our beautiful National Forest. Another activity that these proposed closures would drastically reduce would be the ability of all our citizens to cut and gather firewood which is a large source of heat for our citizens.

Our local community, like many others across the nation, has an in-depth historical knowledge of the roads in our county, noting that 64% of our county is managed by the Federal Government. With that being said, the transitory nature of personnel on our National Forest prevents a comprehensive or cohesive view of the access issues that many of our life-long citizens have.

The court feels that H.R. 4272 would assure that the agencies would be obligated to have local input on their actions concerning access travel management. Grant County has made its position quite clear by Ordinance 2013-01 adopted on 5/22/2013 (attached).

The Grant County Court would encourage the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America to adopt H.R. 4272.

Sincerely,

Scott W. Myers
County Judge

Boyd Britton
County Commissioner

Chris B. Labhart
County Commissioner

Attachment: Ordinance 2013-01

Copy: Kirby Garrett, Field Representative, Eastern Oregon Office, 1211 Washington Ave, La Grande OR 97850

IN THE COUNTY COURT OF THE STATE OF OREGON
FOR THE COUNTY OF GRANT

AN ORDINANCE PERTAINING TO PUBLIC ROAD CLOSURES } ORDINANCE
WITHIN GRANT COUNTY, OREGON } 2013-01

THIS BEING the 22nd day of May, 2013, and a day set aside for a regular meeting of the Grant County Court; and there being present County Judge Scott W. Myers, and County Commissioner's Chris B. Labhart and Boyd Britton.

WHEREAS, the safety and well-being of Grant County citizens and the custom and culture of Grant County are closely tied to the public lands within the boundary of Grant County; and

WHEREAS, the roads, trails, stock driveways, and by-ways over and across these public lands have customarily been utilized unrestricted by Grant County residents for search and rescue, fire protection, firewood gathering, access for hunting and fishing, livestock management, logging activities, mining, recreational uses and general welfare.

THEREFORE, be it hereby ordained that for the safety and well-being of Grant County citizens all roads, trails, stock driveways, and by-ways over and across public lands within the boundary of Grant County, Oregon shall remain open as historically and customarily utilized consistent with the Grant County plans and policies, unless otherwise authorized for closure by the Grant County Court and the Grant County Sheriff.

THIS ORDINANCE is adopted this 22nd day of May, 2013

GRANT COUNTY COURT

Scott W. Myers

Scott W. Myers, County Judge

Chris B. Labhart

Chris B. Labhart, Commissioner

Boyd Britton

Boyd Britton, Commissioner

GRANT COUNTY SHERIFF

Glenn E. Palmer

Glenn E. Palmer, Sheriff

ATTEST:

Mary K. Ferrioli

Mary K. Ferrioli, Court Secretary