

BLM DEIS response

As president of the Northwest Chapter of the Oregon-California Trails Association, past president of the Sons and Daughters of Oregon Pioneers, board member of the Clackamas County Historical Society, and instructor for Clackamas Community College with deep interest in the Oregon Trail, I find it necessary to respond to the draft environmental impact statement issued by BLM.

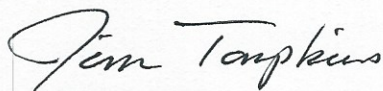
The Boardman to Hemingway transmission line crosses the Oregon Trail eleven times. The statement has been made that there are plenty of places to see the Oregon Trail elsewhere. The Oregon Trail does not regenerate. Any part lost is gone forever. I hope that by saving the trail in Oregon, if the day comes that those other places to see the trail are lost, I can say we saved the trail in our state.

BLM has been a friend of the Oregon Trail since its designation in 1976. BLM has marked the trail and worked with organizations such as mine to preserve the trail. It built the National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center at Flagstaff Hill, near Baker City, Oregon, and placed their own man, David Hunsaker, in charge. B2H is now proposing to put up towers, up to 200 feet tall, in plain view of the picture windows at Flagstaff Hill Interpretive Center that will completely alter the view and the viewers perception of the Oregon Trail. BLM has marked and provided access to a pristine segment of the Oregon Trail just below the Flagstaff Hill center. People walking the Oregon Trail, at the invitation of BLM, will be completely overshadowed by these towers and power lines and will not have the same experience they might have without the towers and lines. Are you allowing your own showplace to be degraded?

Idaho has fewer people than Oregon, yet is making itself dependent on Oregon power. Is this power really going to Idaho users or somewhere else like California or points east of Idaho? We already have power lines from Bonneville Power Authority dams at McNary and Bonneville to California. Why do we need new ones that ruin parts of the Oregon Trail or people's experience of the trail?

Boardman electricity producing plant is coal fired. Oregon has no coal. It is imported from Wyoming. The Boardman plant is scheduled to be closed at the same time that these new lines are built. Is this just an excuse for PGE to phony up the value of Boardman to keep it open? Or does Idaho Power have plans to replace Boardman power with BPA power out of McNary?

I can not think of good enough reasons to help destroy what is left of the Oregon Trail so Idaho Power can connect to Boardman.



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