

# **Blue Mountain Century Scenic Bikeway**

## **Marketing and Management Plan**



**Revised Oct. 2013**

**Plan Objective:**

1. Increase ridership and awareness of the Blue Mountain Century Bikeway
2. See an increase in bicycle related tourism in South Willow Creek Valley
3. Increase awareness and knowledge of Bicycle related tourism in the Heppner business community.

**Marketing Team:**

Heppner Chamber of Commerce, Sheryll Bates, Executive Director

Address: PO Box 1232 Heppner, OR 97836

Phone: 541-676-5536/cell 503-970-7226

Email: [heppnerchamber@centurytel.net](mailto:heppnerchamber@centurytel.net)

Jay Gibbs

Phone: 541-676-5446

Email: [rgibbs001@centurytel.net](mailto:rgibbs001@centurytel.net)

Debra Gutierrez

Phone: 541-676-5160

Email: [dsgootie@gmail.com](mailto:dsgootie@gmail.com)

## **Ride Description:**

### **Blue Mountain Century Scenic Bikeway**

In the middle 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Blue Mountains were a formidable obstacle on the Oregon Trail and were often the last mountain range American pioneers had to cross before reaching southeast Washington or passing down the Columbia River Gorge to the end of the Oregon Trail in the Willamette Valley. The range is located in the high, dry, and much less traveled country of northeast Oregon stretching east and southeast of Pendleton, Oregon.

While pioneers traversed this formidable challenge on horseback, cyclists today can take on the challenge of the Oregon Trail on their metal and carbon steeds. Besides the breathtaking views of the Blue Mountains, the well-maintained roads, with barely any noticeable vehicle traffic, make this bikeway a cycling paradise.

The 108-mile Blue Mountain Century Bikeway is a scenic loop starting and ending in Heppner, Oregon, a full service community with secure places to leave your vehicle while you take this amazing ride. The route is rich in history (Heppner itself was founded by Irish immigrants in 1887), and initially follows the Blue Mountain Scenic Byway east through the Umatilla National Forest to Highway 395, near Ukiah, Oregon. It then travels north from forest to rangeland before heading west along Highway 74 through more of Eastern Oregon's rolling hills back to Heppner. The route offers plenty of climbing — the top of the Umatilla National Forest section is more than 3,000 feet above Heppner. But take your time and enjoy the ride, because you'll have plenty to look at.

This ride can be accomplished in one day by the more advanced, energetic cyclist – or in two days for those who like to stop and smell the sagebrush, with nice camping options in or near Ukiah.

Much of the economy in the Blue Mountains is agricultural related, mostly wheat, with interest in historical tourism increasing in popularity. The climate of Eastern Oregon is much drier, with much greater seasonal variations in temperature than in the cooler, moist west side of the Cascades. The area receives a significant amount of snow in the winter, making the bikeway inaccessible from late December through May, sometimes earlier depending on the season.

The rolling hills match the green Irish spirit of the small town of Heppner in the spring and ripen to a golden glow throughout the late summer months. Mountain prairies offer a wide array of wildflowers, while the forest is augmented with color in the late summer as the Western Larch trees turn a golden yellow.

## **Talking Points:**

### Blue Mountain Century Scenic Bikeway

- The 108-mile loop Blue Mountain Century Bikeway follows a portion of the Blue Mountain Scenic Byway east through the Umatilla National Forest to Highway 395.
- Heppner, the “Gateway to the Blues”, is the starting point which leads to many paved, quiet back roads for an exceptional riding experience and plenty of rest stops.
- Minimal traffic on well-maintained quiet back roads and seldom traveled state highways.
- Take on the challenge of the Oregon Trail on your metal and carbon steeds.
- The route offers plenty of climbing — the top of the Umatilla National Forest section is more than 3,000 feet above Heppner.
- Spectacular and expansive views of grasslands – range and wheat country –contrasting with lush forested landscapes.
- One day ride for the more advanced; two day ride for those who like to stop and smell the sagebrush.
- This very remote ride is for those who want to get away from it all. This ride is for the hardy! Carry extra water – your next stop could be 40 miles away.
- The two friendly communities within the 108-mile loop route provide food, water and lodging. However, since food options in Ukiah can be sparse, stocking up in Heppner is definitely a good idea.
- Since there is no shortage of wind in the South Willow Creek Valley, riders who can’t resist a nice tailwind may want to check their wind gauges before considering a clockwise or counter clock direction.
- Rich in history – 1903 Heppner Flood; Morrow County Agricultural and Heritage Museums; Morrow County Courthouse (most photographed building in Oregon); Willow Creek Reservoir is the site of the first roller compacted concrete dam constructed in the country; Battle Mountain State Park.
- There are many alternatives for shorter rides within the 108-mile loop.

## Blue Mountain Century Scenic Bikeway Cue Sheet

Total Miles	Description	Distance to Turn
.0	Depart Heppner on SR-207 [SR-74] (South)	
0.1	Road name changes to SR-206 [SR-207]	65 yds
1.0	Turn LEFT (East) on to Willow Creek Rd. #678	.9 mi
21.2	Road name changes to Coalmine Hill Rd. #603	20.2 mi
23.5	Road name changes to NFS Rd. 53	2.3 mi
45	Road name changes to SR-244 [Ukiah-Hilgard Hwy].  Here cyclists have the option of continuing STRAIGHT (East) to Ukiah (1.3 mi) or turning LEFT (North) on to US-395	21.5 mi
55	At Battle Mountain State Park, stay on US-395	10 mi
71	At Nye Junction turn LEFT (West) on to SR-74 [Heppner Hwy]	16 mi
78	At Vinson, Stay LEFT on SR-74 [Heppner Hwy]	7 mi
108	Turn RIGHT (north) on to SR-207 [SR-74] – Back to Heppner	30.9 mi

# Sign Location map for Blue Mountain Century Scenic Bikeway

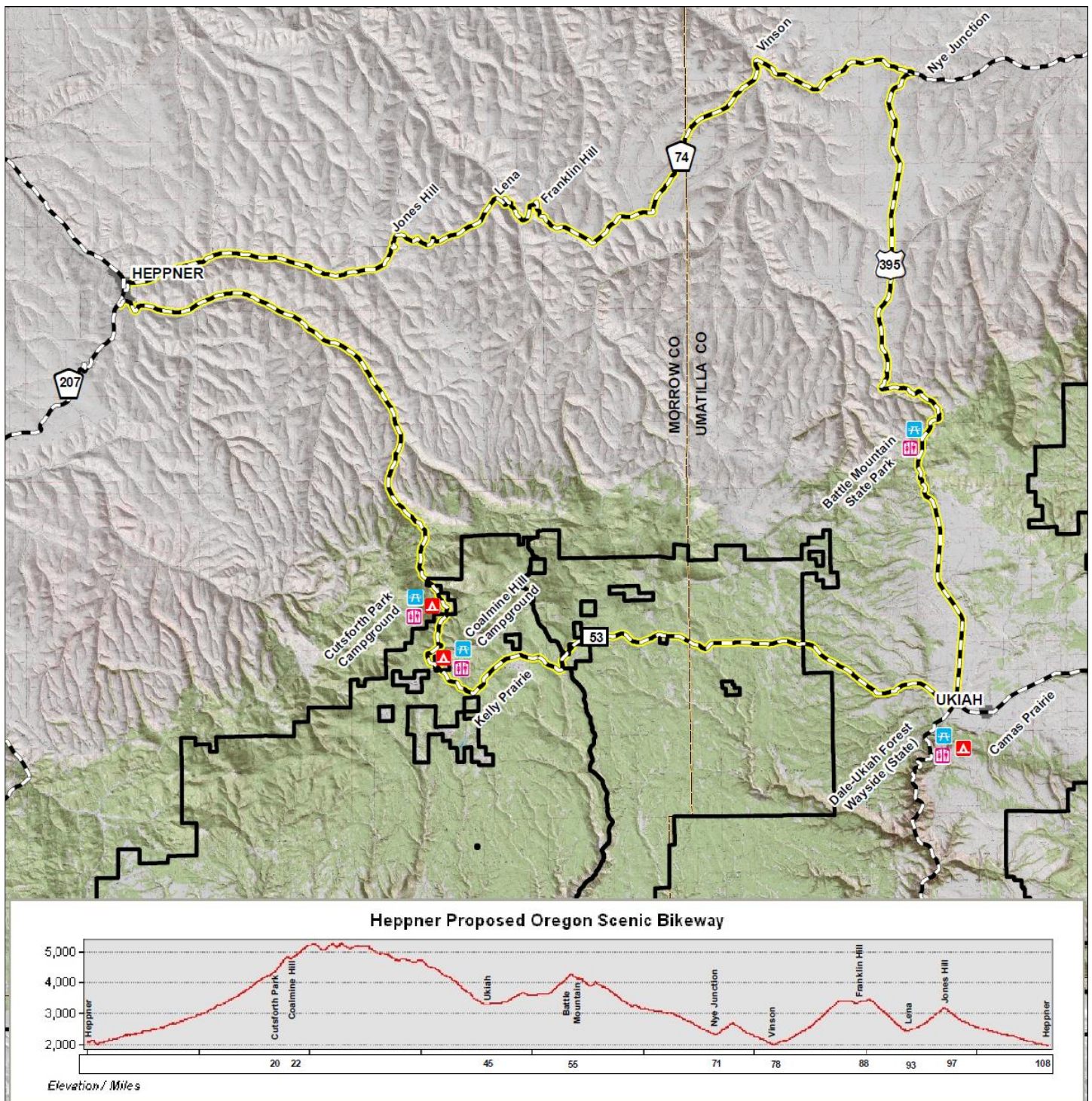
Total number of signs: 11

Route Road	Route turn	Counter-clockwise	Clockwise	Suggestion for placement	Road Jurisdiction (i.e.: ODOT district 12, Morrow/ Umatilla county)	Contact name
May St.	Hwy 207 (Hwy 206)	Left		Jct. of May St. and Hwy 207 (206)	ODOT District 12	Marilyn Holt 541-276-1241
Hwy 207 (Hwy 206)	Willow Creek Rd.	Left	Right	Jct. of Hwy 207 (206) and Willow Creek Rd.	ODOT District 12	Marilyn Holt 541-276-1241
FS Rd. 53	Hwy 395	Left	Right	Jct. of Hwy 395, Hwy 244, and FS Rd. 53	ODOT District 12	Marilyn Holt 541-276-1241
Hwy 395	Hwy 74	Left	Right	Jct. of Hwy 395 and Hwy 74	ODOT District 12	Marilyn Holt 541-276-1241
Morrow County Rd. 603 – Top of Coalmine Hill	None	Straight	Straight	Jct. of Morrow County Rd. 603 and FS Rd. 21	Morrow County	Burk O’Brien 541-989-8317
FS Rd. 53	None	Straight	Straight	Jct. of FS Rd. 53 and FS Rd. 5311 and FS Rd. 5312	USFS Umatilla NF	Lonnie Ruchert 541-278-3779



**FORMAL MAP:** Returned paper copy of map with information to OPRD map department.

**Route Elevation Map:**



## **Target Market(s) and Action Items:**

**Cyclists:** Target audience for the Blue Mountain Century Scenic Bikeway is primarily “Adventure road cyclists”. This is primarily due to the remoteness and lack of amenities over a large portion of the route. This is a “niche” market, but is also an emerging market.

## **Action Items:**

- **Hold a Public Meeting to accommodate questions and community discussion:**
  - A public meeting was held on Monday, July 11<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-6:30 p.m. Local Bikeways Committee members were present to address questions. Articles were placed in the local paper (Heppner Gazette), East Oregonian and an email sent to all Chamber Members
  - Minutes: There were 2 community members present. We showed the DVD which reviewed the route, handed out copies of the ride description, talking points, cue sheet, route elevation sheet. There were no questions but positive comments about this great opportunity and how it can be used to build a healthier community.
- **Develop a Brochure or Handout for people to take home:**
  - Drop off materials at local businesses and inform local cycling community:
    - Scott’s Cycle and Sports (Hermiston & Kennewick)
      - At store
      - Red to Red ride
    - Pendleton on Wheels (POW) Cycling Club
      - At meeting
      - Website links
      - Century Ride of Century (CROC)
    - Tri-City Wheelman
      - Website links
      - Annual Fall Century Ride

Assign to: <b>Bikeway Committee</b>
Progress Update by (date): <b>October 2011</b>
Estimated Completion Date: <b>Dec. 2013 and ongoing</b>   Costs <b>TBD</b>
Potential Partners: <b>OPRD, Morrow County</b>
Potential Funding Sources: <b>OPRD, Morrow County</b>



**Action Items, continued:**

- **Apply for Grants and Funding to produce promotional items** (Brochures, Posters, Promotional items, e.g. jersey to be distributed to riders for a nominal fee after completion of Bikeway ride and develop a Bicycle Friendly Business sign for businesses
  - Jersey to say “Blue Mountain Century Bikeway – Heppner, Oregon
  - Planning on applying for Oregon Tourism Commission 2010-11 Matching Grants Program (Travel Oregon)
  - Ask for funding from local businesses, Wildhorse Resort & Casino

Assign to: <b>Bikeway Committee</b>
Progress Update by (date): <b>Grant deadline requirements (August, 2011)</b>
Estimated Completion Date: <b>Nov. 2016</b>   <b>Costs TBD</b>
Potential Partners: <b>OPRD, Morrow County</b>
Potential Funding Sources: <b>Travel Oregon, Wildhorse Resort &amp; Casino and local businesses</b>

- **When route is up on OPRD Website:**
  - Engage and insure a presence on a variety of Social Media venues
    - Monitor and post comments to Ride Oregon Ride, check for accuracy of map, respond to comments and questions
    - Blogs, Ride Oregon Ride, Facebook, Rider Testimony
    - Links to and from local sites
      - Morrow County, Heppner

Assign to: <b>Bikeway Committee</b>
Progress Update by (date): <b>December 2011</b>
Estimated Completion Date: <b>Ongoing</b>   <b>Costs TBD</b>
Potential Partners: <b>OPRD, Morrow County</b>
Potential Funding Sources:

**Action Items, continued:**

- **Continue to support presentation of Bikeway at Heppner Chamber of Commerce Meeting:**

- Handouts, Cue Sheet, Maps and DVD packaged for all participants
- Follow up with individual businesses one on one
- Want to insure that local business employees are familiar with Bikeway and Cyclists
- Check and feedback session at Chamber
- Annually in Spring, prior to “season”
  - To gather feedback and perspective from businesses experiences
  - Hand out any new materials
  - Share any testimonials from previous year
- Develop materials for businesses to have on hand
  - Distribute materials (map, cue sheet, talking points, ride description, brochure) to local businesses and nearby communities, including City of Ukiah, to help “promote” **approved Destination Bikeway ride**
- Visit key businesses at least once during summer to see how it’s going

Assign to: <b>Bikeway Committee</b>
Progress Update by (date): <b>September 2011</b>
Estimated Completion Date: <b>Ongoing</b>   Costs: TBD
Potential Partners: Other Chambers
Potential Funding Sources:

**Action Items, continued:**

**Businesses:** Heppner is a fairly small business community; all businesses will be included initially, follow up will be catered to interested parties.

<b>Business</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Amenities</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>
A & M's Kitchen	Nicole Gaspard	Restaurant	541-676-5053
Bucknum's Bar and Grill	Ryan/Sharon Miller	Bar, Restaurant	541-676-5274
Cornerstone Gallery & Gift Shop	Alvin Liu	Restaurant and gifts	541-676-8011
Devin Oil Shell Station		Gas, food	541-676-5062
Heppner Elks		Food, drinks	541-676-9181
Heppner Family Foods	Bert Houweling	Grocery store & Deli	541-676-9614
Howe's About Pizza	Ron/Bev Howe	Restaurant	541-676-5210
Murrays Drug Store	John/Ann Murray	RX, food/drink, gifts	541-676-9158
Northwestern Motel & RV Park	Alvin Liu	Motel	541-676-9167
Pettyjohn's Farm & Bldg Supply	John Wight	Bicycle supplies	541-676-9157
Sweet Productions	Jodi Segraves	Restaurant	541-676-8022
Willow Creek Diner & Bakery	John/Kathy Marick	Restaurant	541-676-5023

- **Check and feedback loop with local business community**

- Gather feedback and testimony from business as to their experiences with cycling community
- Hand out any new materials, updates, etc

Assign to: <b>Bikeway Committee</b>
Progress Update by (date): <b>September 2012</b>
Estimated Completion Date: <b>Ongoing</b>   Costs <b>TBD</b>
Potential Partners:
Potential Funding Sources:

## **Goals:**

### Short term (1-3 years)

- Install bike racks at the following locations
  - Heppner:
    - Work with local City to purchase bike racks and/or apply for grants or sponsorships
  - Ukiah
    - Work with local City to purchase bike racks and/or apply for grants or sponsorships
  - Cutsforth Park:
    - Work with Morrow County Parks to purchase bike racks and/or apply for grants or sponsorships
  - Battle Mountain State Park:
    - Work with OPRD Park Manager about installing bike racks and/or apply for grants or sponsorships
- Ensure a web presence for maps, testimony, photos and information about route
  - Identify applicable and relevant Websites, Blogs, etc
- Annually drive route early in season to insure access and safety
- Schedule annual bikeway ride for promotion of bikeway with local riding community and outside visitors in late summer/early fall

### Long term (3-5 years)

- Addition of 7 new bikeway signs would provide additional assurance to both cyclists and motorists.
  - One coming out of Ukiah at the stop sign before turning north onto Hwy 395. Need directional sign pointing to the right.
  - Just before Vinson, heading west. There's a paved county road that heads straight, but Hwy 74 actually bears left. A sign here that has a bearing left arrow might be a good idea to avoid any confusion of which road the route continues on. A sign also reminds motorists of potential cyclists on the highway.
  - At the bottom of Franklin grade, heading west on Hwy 74, a directional sign pointing to the right at the junction of Little Butter Creek Road and Hwy 74.
  - At the intersection of Butter Creek Road and Hwy 74, a direction sign pointing to the left.
  - Opposite direction of #2
  - Opposite direction of #3
  - Opposite direction of #4

### Long term (3-5 years Continued)

- Kiosk at Lena with historical snapshot and frost free water, portable restroom and rest station: One person from Management team will speak to Lena historian about possible content and placement of kiosk and basic idea for kiosk will be included in Travel Oregon grant or other future grant applications.
- Kiosk at Vinson with historical snapshot and water: One person from Management team will speak to Vinson historian about possible content and placement of kiosk and basic idea for kiosk will be included in Travel Oregon grant or other future grant applications.
- Build coalitions and linkages with other Scenic Bikeways in Northeast Oregon
  - Old West Scenic Bikeway in John Day
  - Grand Tour and Hells Canyon



**Letters of Support:** Letters to supporters during 2013 Annual Review:



Chamber of Commerce

P.O. Box 1232

Heppner, OR 97836

541-676-5536

E-mail: [heppnerchamber@centurytel.net](mailto:heppnerchamber@centurytel.net)

Website: [www.heppnerchamber.com](http://www.heppnerchamber.com)

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/Heppnerchamberofcommerce>

October 11, 2013

Clint Barber, Mayor

City of Ukiah

PO Box 265

Ukiah, OR 97880

Dear Clint:

In the past, all correspondence has gone to Carole Picard, the previous mayor. We wanted to thank the Ukiah Community for their support of the Blue Mountain Century Scenic Bikeway, a State Designated Scenic Bikeway. Your support was vital to the designation of the bikeway. We are excited about the progress and would like to provide you with an update.

Some of the successes of the bikeway this past year are:

- A professional video production/photography company took pictures of the bikeway; the photos are available at the following link: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/russroca/sets/72157634342106695>.
- We are confident that some of the local businesses in our communities have seen an increase in business due to more cycling tourists patronizing their business.
- Travel Oregon produced a short video of the ride for promotional purposes. The video not only highlights the best of the bikeway, but features the communities of Heppner and Ukiah. It can be viewed at: <http://rideoregonride.com/road-routes/blue-mountain-century-scenic-bikeway/>.
- We will be working as a bikeway committee to install bike racks in the communities and will be working with local landowners to develop a rest stop with water and a portable restroom in the Lena area.
- We successfully held our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual organized bikeway ride event in September, which attracted participants from around the state.

Thank you again for your continued support of the Blue Mountain Century Scenic Bikeway designation. If you have any questions or comments regarding the bikeway, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Sheryll Bates,

Executive Director

Heppner Chamber of Commerce



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Heppner, OR 97836  
541-676-5536  
E-mail: [heppnerchamber@centurytel.net](mailto:heppnerchamber@centurytel.net)  
Website: [www.heppnerchamber.com](http://www.heppnerchamber.com)  
Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/Heppnerchamberofcommerce>

October 11, 2013

Marilyn M. Holt  
Oregon Department of Transportation  
1327 SE 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Pendleton, OR 97801

Dear Marilyn:

Thank you for your support of the Blue Mountain Century Scenic Bikeway, a State Designated Scenic Bikeway. Your support was vital to the designation of the bikeway. We are excited about the progress and would like to provide you with an update.

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Sincerely,

Sheryll Bates,  
Executive Director  
Heppner Chamber of Commerce



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October 11, 2013

Kevin Martin

Forest Supervisor

Umatilla National Forest

2517 SW Hailey Avenue

Pendleton, OR 97801

Dear Kevin:

Thank you for your support of the Blue Mountain Century Scenic Bikeway, a State Designated Scenic Bikeway. Your support was vital to the designation of the bikeway. We are excited about the progress and would like to provide you with an update.

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Sincerely,

Sheryll Bates,

Executive Director

Heppner Chamber of Commerce



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October 11, 2013

Kim Cutsforth, City Manager

City of Heppner

PO Box 756

Heppner, OR 97836

Dear Kim:

Thank you for your support of the Blue Mountain Century Scenic Bikeway, a State Designated Scenic Bikeway. Your support was vital to the designation of the bikeway. We are excited about the progress and would like to provide you with an update.

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October 11, 2013

Terry Tallman, Judge

Ken Grieb, County Commissioner

Leann Rea, County Commissioner

Morrow County Court

PO Box 788

Heppner, OR 97836

Dear Terry, Ken, Leann:

Thank you for your support of the Blue Mountain Century Scenic Bikeway, a State Designated Scenic Bikeway. Your support was vital to the designation of the bikeway. We are excited about the progress and would like to provide you with an update.

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Sincerely,

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Executive Director

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October 11, 2013

Hulette Johnson

Umatilla County Economic Development Director

Umatilla County

216 SE 4<sup>th</sup> Street

Pendleton, OR 97801

Dear Hulette:

Thank you for your support of the Blue Mountain Century Scenic Bikeway, a State Designated Scenic Bikeway. Your support was vital to the designation of the bikeway. We are excited about the progress and would like to provide you with an update.

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