

July 5, 2016

Amy Dillon, Forest Plan Revision Team
Colville National Forest, Colville Supervisor's Office
765 South Main
Colville, Washington 99114

Dear Amy and the Forest Management Plan Revision team,

RE: Colville National Forest Management Plan Revision

As regular visitors to the Kettle Crest area of north eastern Washington, we would like to comment on the Colville National Forest Management Plan Revision. We are long-time mountain bikers from British Columbia, Canada, and greatly value the opportunity we've had—and hope to continue to have—to mountain bike the beautiful Kettle Crest trails in addition to the trails on and surrounding Abercrombie Peak.

We have mountain biked in many areas of Washington but what keeps us coming back to the Colville National Forest is the extent of the trail network and the surrounding friendly communities. When we first visited the area in 2011, we couldn't believe how big the trail system was and the mile-after-mile of beautiful rolling singletrack with many scenic viewpoints to enjoy the beauty of the area.

Having such an extensive trail network in the Colville National Forest is key to being a 'riding destination', offering the opportunity for multi-day riding, i.e. set up a base camp for several days and ride each day in a different part of the trail network. Having close access to towns such as Republic, Kettle Falls, Northport and Colville is also a big plus to obtain services and stock up on food, supplies, gas, etc.

There are very few places in the Pacific Northwest that can call themselves a riding destination - the Colville National Forest with its surrounding communities is just such a place. We greatly value the many multi-day riding experiences we've enjoyed in this area and to give back, we have participated in trail maintenance days in the Kettle Crest under the direction of the Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance through their annual Kettle Fest event in July (we will be attending again this year). In addition, in May 2015, we drove all the way from Metro Vancouver to Abercrombie Mountain to spend a long-weekend with two long-time resident back country horse-riders we befriended to clear blowdown from the trails leading to the peak - an international team effort to give back to the trails both our user groups love to ride.

My husband and I hope that access to the trails of the Colville National Forest can be preserved to provide the opportunity for future riders and visitors to enjoy. It is important to us that mountain bike access is maintained and improved throughout the implementation timeframe of the next Forest Management Plan.

We appreciate the thoughtful approach and thoroughness of the draft plan and preferred alternative. Alternative P is a good solution for both motorized and non-motorized recreational access, ecological integrity, and regional economic resiliency; however, it would mean the loss of two highly valued mountain bike trails systems. For this reason, we strongly encourage you to implement the following two changes to the plan:

- The proposed Bald/Snow/White wilderness designation eliminates a contiguous Kettles Crest riding experience, as well as connection to Thirteen Mile Trail. Bald/Snow/White should be included in the SIA. This unifies all of the Kettle Crest under one management designation and preserves the unique north-south Crest riding experience, as well as un-interrupted access to the Pacific Northwest Trail. This can be accomplished by changing the Coyote Mountain/Hoodoo roadless area to backcountry or wilderness.
- The Abercrombie Mountain and Silver Creek trails should be removed from recommended wilderness, and instead designated as backcountry, or another SIA. The Abercrombie and Silver Creek loop should be preserved for mountain bikers as this high alpine riding experience cannot be replicated elsewhere in WA.

With the above changes made to the plan, we would endorse Alternative P. It facilitates trail maintenance needs with chainsaws; allows the Kettle Crest to be designated as one uniform management designation; and makes it easier to promote and market the area as a 'must visit' contiguous geological, ecological, and recreational destination!

We hope we will be able to continue to mountain bike in the Colville National Forest and encourage both our Canadian and American friends to explore the riding in this beautiful part of Washington.

Thank you for your hard work and opportunity to voice our support for maintained mountain bike access to the awe-inspiring trails of the Colville National Forest.

Sincerely,

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