Re: Lemon Gulch Trail System

Attention: Slater Turner, FS Supervisor

 In my humble opinion the Lemon Gulch Project has zero benefit to the environment or the community of Crook County, and here are my reasons why. First I’m not real sure that livestock and mountain bikes are going to mix. I have been hunting all over Oregon and Texas. When I have been hunting and run into livestock either on public land or a private ranch I try to give them a wide berth to keep from startling them down the mountain or possibly through a fence. If this project is allowed to proceed who will be responsible for the cattle being in the wrong place, say a riparian area or completely out of the allotment. The ranchers who lease this land would need to be up on the lease more frequently to be sure they weren’t missing cattle and make sure the livestock is where they are supposed to be. In some cases they may incur more cost to hire day workers to check those cows daily.

 As far as the environmental impacts, you are going to go in and construct all these miles of trails disturbing the wildlife? Not to mention the possibility of the erosion that could occur once these trails are open and the cyclists start making their own trails between switch backs and or different trails. Probably what bothers me the most is there is very little financial benefit to the federal government besides the parking permits that I assume will be required to park at these trail heads. The USFS used to be the only self-sustaining branch of government and between the spotted owl and regulation you are lucky to have a timber sale that is 6000 board feet to the acre but the USFS is going to put time and money into researching and putting in a mountain bike trail system. Why not open up the Lookout Mt trail system to more “single track” trails. I don’t really understand the need for a whole new trail system for that matter why would an off road vehicle need a trail anyhow it’s an off road vehicle. When I go hunting or snowmobiling I don’t prefer to follow the beaten path you can take the same trail or path and never see anything new, so how long until the newness wears off and the parking lots are not full and this economic boom I read about in the papers and online is over for this county and we are stuck with over 50 miles of trails and 3 parking lots and possibly a fair bit of erosion.

I have learned over the years on the family ranch that it’s not the 90% of people who do the right thing it’s the 10% that ruin it for everyone else.

If my wording is not clear I am opposed the trail system at “Lemon Gulch Trails Project/ Lemon Gulch Watershed” the forest service should choose the “No Action Alternative”

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Jered W Rhoden

Rancher, Realtor, Livestock Relocation Specialist

Rachel Rhoden

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