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Comments: Amy Dillon, Forest Plan Revision Team

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Dear Amy and the Forest Management Plan Revision team,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Forest Plans that affect the Kettle Crest area. I have been mountain biking on the Kettle Crest trails for over ten year, and the outcome of the plan is very important to me.

I have been riding mountain bikes all over the PNW and Canada for 10+ years, and the Kettle Crest experience is equivalent or superior to many well know world class trail systems, even "IMBA Epics". I've ridden Sun Valley area, Revelstoke, McCall, Rossland, the Cascades, and the Kettle Crest trails offer riding that cannot be duplicated anywhere. I hope that the mountain biking experience of these trails can be preserved for future riders and visitors.

The miles of trails in the Kettle Crest make an amazing destination for multi day camping and mountain biking trips. As a local destination it can't be beat, and the area has great potential for destination riding. I routinely come up from Spokane for riding, and I have Canadian friend that cross the border specially to ride these trails. It is a unique place to ride with access to alpine and forest experiences for many low impact users. There is huge potential for the local economy in supporting access to these trails and encouraging visitors. Maintaining access for mountain bikers and other users is vitally important.

I know how hard the team has worked on this plan, and appreciate the time and effort put into coming up with the plan and alternatives. Alternative P is a good solution for both motorized and non-motorized access, maintaining ecological stability, and helping the region's economy. However, two highly valued mountain bike trail systems would be lost due to proposed wilderness designations in Alternative P. For this reason, I strongly encourage you to make the following two changes to the plan:

*The proposed Bald/Snow/White wilderness designation eliminates connectivity to trails in the Kettle Crest as well as connections to Thirteen Mile Trail. Bald/Snow/White should be included in the SIA. This would put all of the Kettle Crest under one management designation and preserves the unique north-south Crest riding experience, as well as offering 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 incorporated, I fully endorse Alternative P. It facilitates trail maintenance needs with chainsaws, which prevents the trails from "going away" due to lack of maintenance and removal of deadfall, a huge problem once an area is designated to any Wilderness type designation. It also allows the Kettle Crest to be designated as a single management designation, in turn making it easier to promote and market it as a MUST VISIT contiguous geological, ecological, and recreational destination!

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

Sincerely,

Penny Schwyn

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