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First name: Melissa

Last name: Hendrickson

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Please consider the attached comment letter. Thank you.

Melissa Hendrickson

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,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Forest Management Plan Revision. As a mountain biker, this plan is of high importance to me as it will determine mountain bike access for the next 15 years or more.

The riding experience in the Colville National Forest is one that cannot be replaced elsewhere. I first started riding in this area 3 years ago and make it a goal to return each summer to ride. I take time off from working at my job on the Idaho Panhandle National Forest to come and volunteer for trail work coordinated by Evergreen East on the Kettle Crest Trail for the Colville NF. I live in Northern Idaho and the Colville is a very close weekend visit, but the riding experience is so different and unique compared to the Coeur d'Alene's. I hope to preserve this opportunity for future riders and visitors.

The trail network in the Kettle Crest area offers a mountain biking experience not found elsewhere in this region. Every year, I hear more mountain bikers, from farther afield plan trips to the Kettle Crest trail, or add it to their trail bucket list. Mountain biking is a low impact non-motorized trail use that brings economic benefit to the communities on either side of Sherman Pass. The Kettle Crest trail is as amazing as it is because of the dedication that Evergreen East has put in over the years to clear, maintain, and improve the trails in this area. It is of utmost importance to me that mountain bike access is maintained and improved throughout the implementation timeframe of the next Forest Management Plan.

I commend you for your 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, 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 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 incorporated, I fully endorse Alternative P. It facilitates trail maintenance needs with chainsaws, allows the Kettle Crest to be designated as one uniform 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,

Melissa Hendrickson  
503 W. Summit Ave

Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814  
melissahendrickson@gmail.com