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First name: Gabriel

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Organization: Orogenesis Collective

Title: Executive Director

Comments: Dear Slater Turner and the Ochoco National Forest,

Thank you for providing the opportunity for public feedback on the Lemon Gulch Trail System #58831. I am strongly in favor of the project, specifically Alternative #2.

I have worked professionally with land managers and other stakeholders on projects like this for several years, so I understand your role is a difficult one. The reality of the matter is that mountain biking has existed on public lands since the forest service was created over 100 years ago. In the past two decades however, the number of people who like to ride their bikes on offroad trails has skyrocketed. The most recent SCORP report found that 15% of Oregonians cycle offroad, and that number is close to 30% in neighboring Deschutes County. As a land management agency, it's difficult to respond quickly to changes in how people use our public lands, so I applaud your efforts on this project.

As someone who advocates for increased offroad cycling opportunities as a career, I've watched the Ochoco Trails coalition grow and even used it as an example of how recreation groups can come together and collaboratively develop solutions to problems like potential user conflicts. Unfortunately despite this coalition's best efforts to develop solutions, a vocal minority has sprouted. Some of their concerns may be valid as the region experiences rapid growth, but their targeting of the Lemon Gulch project is misguided at best.

More mountain bike trails will:

- Provide residents and visitors alike with healthy recreation opportunities, improving quality of life for Crook County residents-mountain biking saves Oregon \$26 million in health care costs.
- Grow and diversify the region's economy-outdoor recreation is a \$15.6 billion industry in Oregon. Oakridge, a small town known for its offroad cycling, sees \$2.3-4.9 million dollars from visiting offroad cyclists every year.
- Introduce public lands and the myriad of recreation opportunities to more Americans from all walks of life.

I'm attaching a PDF that describes even more benefits of offroad cycling.

In closing, I think the Lemon Gulch project is one to be proud of-for all of the recreation stakeholders who have invested years up to this point, for you as land managers with the tricky job of balancing conflicting interests, and for the community of Prineville and Crook County who will reap the rewards of having increased recreation opportunities in their backyard.

Thank you for your efforts, and I look forward to riding the Lemon Gulch trail system someday soon!