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Organization:

Title:

Comments: My name is Tim Coleman, I live north of Republic, I have a few comments specifically regarding the special interest area that's being proposed for the Kettle Crest. I participated in the Forest Summit Process that was led by the Colville National Forest from March 2006 through January 2007. I made every meeting, and, in fact, I have a cup to show that I had a hundred percent attendance, and which was you had to have a hundred percent attendance to get a cup.

But, in any case, during that process there was general consensus that everybody wanted the wilderness characteristics of the roadless areas in the Colville National Forest, like the Kettle Crest where there are no roads, just trails, they wanted those protected, they wanted the wilderness characteristics protected, but there were definitely differences of opinion in whether they wanted it designated wilderness, okay, or call it wilderness, couldn't you call it something else? So, Rick Brazell, who was the Forest Supervisor at the time suggested, "Well, what about if we call it back country area?" Or, "What if we call it like a special interest area?" And, you know, those two titles did not garner support from all of the participants. There was no consensus about that.

In fact, there was a voting process where between two-thirds, 85 percent of the votes were supporting wilderness designation, and what we have in Alternative P. So, in other words, there was no consensus on special interest area, although, there was support for the smaller areas called special interest that had been around for a long time and that were in the Proposed Action in 2011. So I think the expansion as proposed in Alternative P is outside the bounds of what the agreements that came out of the Summit Process, and certainly there's no consensus about that.

I also would say that Alternative P allows chain saws -- and I'm almost done -- and mountain bikes, the continued use, so it really preserves what there was a consensus about in that Summit Process, which is, "Don't designate it wilderness, but manage it to protect its wilderness characteristics." So those are my comments. Thanks.

I continue along the same vein of that special interest area designation. I think there's an excellent opportunity to use that designation to support small businesses in this economy, especially of Republic, by establishing a special interest area from Republic down south to the Reservation and include Swan Ferry Lakes, and the idea behind that is it creates a special place on the map, but it establishes support for a series of motorized, non-motorized trails, a variety of uses, it protects the cultural heritage of the Colville Tribe, and it's right here, right, you know, part of our, essentially, the Greater Republic Area, and part of Ferry County. And I think that, you know, the same opportunity is being looked at by Pend Oreille County and Stevens County Commissioners for the area from 49 Degrees North to Tiger Pass, and so I think this has the potential, it has some legs to support a variety of interests in the group, whether it be motorized, non-motorized, equestrian, a cultural interest, and that sort of thing. So I would encourage us to maybe start that dialog after this is over, or to support that in your comments to the Forest Service.