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Comments: Public Comment on Colville National Forest Plan Revision #45826

by Ryan Harris

Resident of North Bend, WA

I plan on visiting the Kettles Crest this summer when my wife is doing a multi-day backpack on the nearby Boundary Trail.

In the future, if the proposed forest plan is enacted this would be impossible and illegal to explore by the amazing two-wheeled human powered transport system, i.e., the mountain bike, because of the proposed wilderness designation of the trail.

I think the sections of trail listed below would still be well protected for the future of all species with the SPECIAL INTEREST AREA (SIA) designation.

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.

If these changes were implemented to Alternative P, I would then fully endorse it.

Anyone who has tried to do effective trail maintenance with a limited human crew (many times with volunteer hours or on "work parties" understand the time limitations without the use of a chainsaw. With the SIA designation the whole trail could be cared for under a uniform management strategy which makes sure that it actually happens despite the many bureaucratic hoops.

Thanks so much for considering this minor but important change that would continue to allow mountain bike access to the Kettles Crest.

Sincerely,

Ryan Harris

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