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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 respond on the Forest Management Plan Revision. As an avid mountain biker, this plan is of concern to me as it will determine mountain bike access for the next 15 years or more.

The mountain biking experience in the Colville National Forest is one that is one of the most intense and beautiful that I have ever experienced. I have only been to this area once to ride but often find myself dreaming of riding there more and more in my future riding adventures. I have often pontificated to my many riding friends that do not live in this area that they MUST join me in a riding trip there to engage in a total riding experience. I am extremely concerned that we could possibly lose access to this magnificent riding area and I can't fully explain the loss that this would be.

If one looks at the trails in the Colville National Forest, one sees the wide-ranging trail system in the Colville National Forest offers some of the best ingredients essential for a multi-day mountain bike riding experience in the United States. This region as a whole has unlimited potential to become a national riding destination for mountain bikers. The influx of riders has potential low-impact non-motorized trail use and massive economic benefit for communities in Northeast Washington. The ecological and trail resources make this Forest a unique place to ride, and it is of extreme 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 respectable 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 is not replicated elsewhere in WA.

With the above changes incorporated, I completely recommend 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 mountain biking destination!

Thank you again for the work you do and the chance to relay my support for mountain bike access to the trails of the Colville National Forest.

Sincerely,

Timothy Kovac