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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Amy Dillon, Forest Plan Revision Team

Colville National Forest, Colville Supervisor's Office

765 South Main. Colville, Washington 99114

Dear Amy:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft Forest Management Plan. It is clear you've put considerable thought and effort into the proposal. As a long time hiker and backpacker as well as nature/conservation advocate, I appreciate the chance to review the proposal.

Although it has been several years since I've enjoyed your back country trails, your proposal to create Wilderness areas in the NE corner of our state is most appreciated and timely. My opinion is that you have chosen the boundaries well, balancing the various recreation needs with a balance for sustainable natural areas in perpetuity. The inclusion of the Abercrombie Mtn and Silver Creek Trails in the wilderness areas is excellent.

I was, however, concerned with the indication of mechanical means of accessing wilderness areas. Perhaps it was a typo? With this phrase, Congress will immediately reject wilderness areas proposed, which would be a pity.

There appear to be a large number of comments following a very similar format from the mountain biking community. Having had my quiet hiking solitude disrupted from the mechanical noises of mountain bikes miles away, and having had to leap from trails due to speeding bikers, I appreciate the opportunity to have trails in wilderness areas with non-mechanical access. It is clear that animals are disturbed by bike presence and trails with moisture are often heavily rutted from bike tracks. Damage to alpine meadow takes decades if not centuries to recover, and can currently be seen. Not all trails need mountain bike access, hence my concern with the "mechanical" included in the wilderness description.

I appreciate you taking my comments into consideration as you finalize the plan.

Sincerely,

Jeanette Leach