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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Increase trail access in Colville National Forest

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Dear Colville National Forest Plan Revision Team,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the revised Colville National Forest Plan.

As a hiker, I believe this plan will be very important to creating a sustainable future for outdoor recreation in Northeastern Washington.

My fiancée is from Spokane, though we now live outside Olympia, and we go back to the East side of the mountains often. I love the Colville National Forest and we have spent a lot of important time there. As a whole, we would like to see increased protection for wilderness areas, and more non-motorized trails. We like to hike and camp, as well as mountain bike and cross country ski. Motorized vehicles degrade the trails we love and often pose a safety risk to unmotorized users.

We have also spent a fair amount of time in Europe, where there are few if any undeveloped wilderness areas, and it has a dramatic effect on the health of the land and of the people there. I think it is of utmost importance for us to set a different path while we still can, one that shows our unique values as a country, of wilderness and the freedom that it nurtures.

In general, I support the Forest's Preferred Alternative (Alternative P) because of its goals to protect the area's ecological health while balancing recreation needs. However, I believe it falls short in providing enough recreation resources.

Hikers like me would like to see more areas that include nonmotorized trails and that these trails, as well as the roads that lead to them, are well maintained.

I would like the final plan to include increased recommendations for wilderness designation. The areas that should be considered for wilderness protection include Bald Snow, Abercrombie Hook and the Salmo Priest Adjacent Inventoried Roadless Areas as well as Thirteenmile & Cougar Mountain, Grassy Top, Hall Mountain and Quartzrite Inventoried Roadless Areas.

With Gratitude,

John DeLacy