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First name: Javon

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Forest Management Plan Revision team,

As an outdoor enthusiast and avid mountain biker, I am writing to request continued access to some of the most beautiful high alpine backcountry mountain bike trails in our state. The Colville National Forest is the chosen destination for my first bike/camping trip of the 2016 summer, primarily because of the unique and high-quality mountain bike trails.

I truly appreciate your work to balance habitat protection, natural resources, and recreational opportunities that help create economic drivers for the surrounding communities. A modified version of Alternative P (Preferred Alternative) would allow for continued mountain bike use in this amazing trail network and protect our most sensitive areas.

The biking trails in the Colville National Forest simply cannot be replaced elsewhere. The region as a whole has great potential to become a national riding destination, which promises low-impact non-motorized trail use and significant economic benefit for communities in Northeast Washington. The ecological and trail resources make this Forest a unique place to ride, and it is of utmost importance to me that mountain bike access is maintained and improved throughout the implementation timeframe of the next Forest Management Plan.

Alternative P is a good 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 cannot be replicated elsewhere in WA.

With the above changes incorporated, I fully endorse 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 contiguous geological, ecological, and recreational destination!

Thank you again for your hard work and opportunity to voice my strong support for maintained mountain bike access to the awe-inspiring trails of the Colville National Forest.

Sincerely,

Javon Smith

Bellingham, WA