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First name: Brandon

Last name: Payne

Organization: wnuuay

Title:

Comments: Dear Forest Plan Revision Team,

Thank you for valuing reviews and comments on the Proposed Action. My name is Brandon Payne and I am an avid mountain biker.

The Lionhead region is of specific interest to myself and other bikers. It is home to a unique collection of trails that offer an experience unattainable in many other areas. The opportunity to ride pristine single-track in such a beautiful alpine setting is rare. People who value adventure and solitude have been responsibly riding these trails for a long time.

I am concerned with the current Recommended Wilderness Area ("RWA") designation for polygon number HENRYS_39. The Proposed Action states that "recommended wilderness areas are not suitable for motorized or mechanized recreation." FW-SUIT-RWA-04, Proposed Action at 93. Where the Forest Service considers bicycles a form of mechanized recreation, the Proposed Action would eliminate this existing use.

Let me be clear that I am not a person who believes everything should be open to bicycles. Certainly, wilderness areas limited to foot and horse traffic provide their own unique and intimate experience and I enjoy those areas when backpacking with my partner and friends. That being said, in my opinion those areas are plenty, and additionally, it seems as though areas such as the Lionhead attract a different type of cycling enthusiast than say, the trails in the immediate Bozeman area. Just as committed powder hounds journey further into the backcountry and diehard dry fly fisherman hike farther for more willing fish, so to do adventure cyclists go to greater lengths to experience remoteness on two wheels. Typically, these devotees are very aware of their impact on the land, and also other users. Additionally, I'd like to include that based on personal experience, cycling results in far less trail degradation than motorized recreation, and even horses (I'm including e-bikes in the 'motorized' category as I think they should be classified as such due to the torque created while climbing).

Certainly, all forms of recreation leave their trace, and it is ultimately up to the user to do whatever they choose to do responsibly. It is my belief that firm, concise guidance at trailheads without too much foofoo pc verbage can encourage responsibility by planting the seeds of proper etiquette and cooperation between all users.

This closure would be a devastating loss of recreational opportunity for a means of recreation that I see as quite in harmony with the environment. As a solution, I am recommending that you please remove HENRYS_39 from potential RWA designation in the final draft of the Forest Plan Revision.

Sincerely,

Brandon Payne