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First name: Marc

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: 4/1/20

Kerry Arneson

NEPA Planner

IPNF, Coeur d'Alene River Ranger District

2502 E. Sherman Ave

Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814

Dear Kerry,

I write today to express my overall support for the Honey Badger Project. I am fully supportive of the forest health measures including all burning, thinning, and seeding. I believe these prescriptions are long overdue and the forest health has suffered because of it. These prescriptions will decrease undergrowth and diseased trees which increase the danger and intensity of wildfires. I am happy to see the Forest taking these actions.

I am mostly supportive of the recreational trail additions and modifications with just a few caveats.

*The proposed trail that would spur off trail #234, Hells Canyon, is a good addition. I would propose that this trail should still meet #234 at the proposed location, however an additional section should continue to the Northwest and intersect with road number #437. The intent of the proposed trail is to reduce use on #234 and disperse riders, which would ensure resource protection. Having the trail share the bottom half with #234 only intensifies the use on that shared portion of trail. By adding an additional portion and essentially creating an "X" on the map the Forest increases options for the riders, which increases dispersal of the riders. Dispersing riders decreases use on a single trail and decreases tread impacts. This is a sure-fire way to protect resources and increase looping opportunities and rider's satisfaction.

*During pre-scoping a proposal was submitted to have the Forest Service adopt and update the "Straight Creek" Trail. This is a historical trail that provided access to the mine on Chilco Mountain. The ID Team did not support this proposal because the trail would provide access to the powerlines in the area, and the proposed junction to 437 was at a narrow spot in the road. These items do not seem to provide adequate justification for not adopting the trail. The powerline in question is already accessed by Trail #802, Trail #69, Road #437, Road #406, and many more with little issue. The trail would not greatly increase the access to the powerlines, and in fact would share some intersection points with existing roads. The intersection of the trail with Road #437 was purely hypothetical and could be placed at a more secure location that would not lead to traffic safety concerns. This would require some on the ground reconnaissance which I would be happy to provide. I would strongly encourage the team to reconsider adding this trail to the system. This trail would increase looping opportunities in the drainage and further disperse riders which in turn lessens use on #234 and reduces impacts to that trail. Ultimately the addition of this trail would serve to protect natural and recreational resources in the area. Because of the steep canyons and elk security mandates in this drainage it is extremely difficult to find locations where trails are feasible. Please take advantage of this trail that is mostly existing and does not infringe on wildlife security.

*Proposed reroutes and new single-track trails on Canfield Mountain should not be placed on existing roadbeds in the area. This idea has been floated by Forest Service staff on several occasions. Roadbeds are undesirable for trail use as they have large tread watersheds and are not designed with recreation in mind. Steps can be taken by winding back and forth, above and below the roadbed to make the experience more enjoyable, however it will still be difficult to control the waterflow in the wide established corridor. Purpose built trails designed and constructed in a more natural setting that include grade reversals are the most effective way to keep water from eroding the trail. Creating a grade reversal in an existing roadbed can be difficult, which in turn requires the agency to add water bars to the road/trail. These are man made structures that require more maintenance and are more prone to failure than grade reversals. Purpose built trails in a natural environment will provide a higher

quality user experience and will provide better resource protection than a road to trail conversion.
Thank you very much for your consideration of these comments.