

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 4/20/2020 6:03:02 PM

First name: normj

Last name: singly

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Nez Perce-Clearwater Plan Revision Comment

Hello.

I am writing to strongly support continued Mountain Bike Recreation access in the Nez-Perce Clearwater forest plan, especially along the border of Montana and Idaho, in the area known as the Great Burn. I have ridden the entire State Line Trail from north to South, from Taft to Surveyor creek, and have done multiple overnights and loop rides in this area. The trails are challenging, which keeps speeds slow, user conflict to a minimum and the overall number of riders low. On the ride from Taft to Surveyor Creek, we encountered less than 10 other parties (hikers and equestrians) on the trail in four days.

Bikers have been using this landscape and these trails for decades and have been willing and generous stewards of the land. We do not know of any significant user conflict issues - in fact, every time I ride by bike in the Great Burn, I encounter enthusiastic hikers cheering me on.

The trails in the Great Burn are rugged, backcountry epic rides with incredible views and generate all the feelings of solitude, independence, camaraderie and reverence one longs for when visiting the backcountry.

Mountain biking in the great burn is compatible with all other uses and does not have an adverse impact on other user groups, wildlife or the trails. In fact, the mountain bike community near the Great Burn has organization, resources, tools and an army of willing volunteers who would be enthusiastic about increased volunteer opportunities for trail building and maintenance in the Great Burn. The state line trail, in particular is in sore need of reconstruction to comply to current standards for tread and erosion, and the MTB community would love to help with this endeavor.

It would also be ideal if a conservation designation could be reached that prohibits logging, road building and mechanized recreational use, but maintains the ability to ride bikes and also use power tools to maintain trail. This would go a long way to keep access to the area open and upgrade the trails to modern standards. I would like to see a National Monument designation, or simply a continued roadless designation for the great burn, rather than Wilderness, as that would preclude MTB access and the forest would lose an enthusiastic partner in continued collaboration in the area. The existing roadless rules currently preserve the wild and scenic character of the area - additional Wilderness designation is not necessary, especially when it has negative impacts to a dedicated user base and brings administrative difficulty.

In addition the State Line Trail, specifically south of Hoodoo pass needs to remain open to bikes so bikers can legally do the Hoodoo pass, Pearl and Heart Lakes loop. Loop rides like this are a perfect human powered use of the trails in the Great Burn.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Norman Singley
2119 S. 10th St. W.
Missoula, Mt. 59801
406 370 3739