

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/13/2020 5:07:35 PM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hi,

My name is Erik and I'm a passionate mountain biker who lives full-time and recreates daily in the wonderful Methow Valley.

Over the past couple of years, I've seen first-hand the positive impacts that mountain biking as a whole has had on our community. From boosting the local economy to providing a positive outlet for youth and adults alike, mountain biking has become a staple activity in our area. And to put it simply, none of this would be possible without the Sun Mountain trail system outlined below.

The trails at Sun Mountain are unequivocally and decidedly unique to the area. First, it is literally the only riding spot where multiple trail options exist that cater to all ability levels. From beginner and family-friendly options like Magpie and Woodpecker to expert trails like Thompson Ridge and Wild Turkey, the Sun Mountain trails have it all. Secondly, it is one of the few-if not only-areas that can support large volumes of mountain bikers. The Chickadee trailhead is easily able to accommodate groups of 20+ vehicles, and the sprawling trail network quickly and safely disperses groups and lessens the environmental impacts on the trails overall. Finally, and eluded to above, the Sun Mountain trails network is the only "comprehensive" trail system in the Methow Valley. Meaning, there is more than simply one trail to ride from one trailhead-there are easily over 40 miles of trail!

It's hard for me to put into words the importance of these trails to our local riding community, but simply put, it is my opinion that the future of mountain biking in the Methow Valley hinges on the preservation of the Sun Mountain trail network.

The Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance-Methow Chapter (EMBA-MC) supports the goals and objectives of the Twisp River Restoration Project (TRRP). We believe in healthy forests and support the Methow Valley Ranger District (MVRD) in their goals of the project. While recreation is certainly a focus of ours, we believe in putting the environment first!

Over the past three years, the Chickadee Trail System has seen a tremendous amount of growth with the Chickadee Multi-use Trail Expansion Project. In that time, I have seen how important trail development and access are to this community. I am hoping that the MVRD will work with the EMBA- MC to make sure that both new and existing trail infrastructure is protected and replaced if needed during TRRP in the following ways:

I request that:

During overstory and understory vegetation management and other forest improvements/logging operations, trails will be disturbed as little as possible. When trails need to be crossed, they will be done so at select locations and perpendicular to the trail to limit the impact to trails as much as possible, especially when crossed by heavy machinery and vehicles.

Maps of new trail infrastructure will be provided to all groups working near or around trails and a plan to limit trail impacts will be in place prior to work being done.

If certain trails are impacted or destroyed, contractors and the MVRD will work directly with the EMBA-MC to rebuild impacted trails and trails will be replaced to the standard they were originally built.

Here is a list of current trail inventory at Sun Mountain that are important to Mountain Bikers and should be protected by the above requests.

Yellowjacket
Overland/CrissCross
Dave's Dive
Black Bear
Climb-it Change (Upper and Lower)
Pete's Dragon
Wild Turkey
Rader Creed descending trail (Built but yet to be named)
Thompson Ridge Trail
Coal Creek Trail
Coal Creek Connector
Woodpecker
Magpie
All other FS System trails in the area.

Thank you for promoting the health and well-being of the forests we enjoy and your support in helping enhance recreational opportunities in the Methow Valley and beyond.

Thanks!
Erik Nilson