

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/24/2022 8:28:38 PM

First name: Nancy

Last name: Ostlie

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing in support of rerouting the Pacific Northwest Trail to a southern route to protect grizzlies as well as protecting hikers.

- 1) The northern route continues to pose an unacceptable threat to Yaak grizzly bears. According to USFWS, only three females-with-cubs remain in the entire valley. Bears always lose in conflicts with humans. Except in those cases where the hiker is killed, in which case the bear is often killed too.
- 2) Failure to amend the route to the south will lead to other unintended consequences such as the forced closure of roads currently open, once 20 parties per week use the PNT.
- 3) The agency must do a better job of monitoring all trail usage and closed road security.
- 4) The current northern route is water-limited for hikers and poses difficulty to search and rescue; the southern route has more high points, cell service, and water.
- 5) The southern route would provide economic benefit to the trail towns of Troy and Libby.