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First name: Christopher

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Slater Turner and the Ochoco National Forest,

I am writing in excited support of the Lemon Gulch trail network in the Ochoco National Forest. As a mountain biker I am super excited to see a proposal like this in Central Oregon. I believe Alternative 2 is the best option. In particular, as a resident of Bend, and someone who rides mountain bikes, typically 4-6 days per week, I see this as a truly key trail system to be added to our region. Specifically, the reasons I think it's so important are:

- supports the community and economy of Prineville and general area, and makes folks in Bend and so on more aware of the opportunity there. Mountain bike tourism and economy stimulation is not small - we're seeing more and more towns stimulated by it, and I think even in ski towns, it's helping given the ski industry is not what it used to be (plus this really helps year round visits).

- adds a *modern* trail system! While I love the trails in Bend, the #1 complaint of my own, but also of a lot of current riders is the lack of better (steeper, more interesting, more challenging) descending and general riding. Bend still sees plenty of tourism, but honestly, the interest from the mountain bike community, in my view, no longer puts Bend/central Oregon as a prime destination - the Northwest in general (everything from the Seattle & Snoqualmie trail systems, up through British Columbia) are FAR more appealing to nearly everyone I know traveling to ride. With this system, we would get trails that appealed to a more current and large audience of riders, and it would spread usage out a bit more. When I talk about trips or places to ride with friends, it usually diverts away from this area, but I think having this trail system here would change that narrative.

- I completely understand the ecological impacts, and deeply respect that. My hope is that the area under proposal (and of option 2) is small enough and well enough designed to make this impact low, especially when considered as a trade off to the benefits it brings to the area.

Thank you for considering this - I am truly excited for the possibility this may come to fruition!

Sincerely,

Chris Bailey