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First name: Erika

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Slater Turner and the Ochoco National Forest,

I am writing in support of the Lemon Gulch trail network in the Ochoco National Forest. As a mountain biker I am very excited to see a proposal like this in Central Oregon. I think the Lemon Gulch trail system will improve the quality of life for the Prineville community and for the residents of the greater Central Oregon area.

In addition to being a mountain biker, I am also employed as a mountain bike skills instructor. I had the unique opportunity to give mountain instruction to participants in a Parks and Recreation program in Prineville concurrent to the opening of the Prineville Bike Park. I gave instruction to elementary and middle school children as well as adults; all of these participants were Prineville residents. This mountain bike program was well received and well attended. The popularity of this mountain bike offering through the Parks and Rec showed the strong demand for new mountain bike opportunities in Prineville.

The type of trail network proposed in Lemon Gulch provides a modern, desirable riding experience that fills a need that is severely lacking in Central Oregon. I believe this trail network has a high likelihood of reducing user conflict on other trails in the Ochocos. Alternative 2 provides the highest volume and range of trail experiences, and therefore will have the most impact in drawing mountain bikers away from other trails. I understand that compromise is required when accounting for other factors such as ecological and resource impacts; of the other alternatives presented, alternative 6 offers a reasonable range of trail styles and mitigates a large amount of concerns raised with alternative 2.

Forest Service Public lands are meant to serve the public. While livestock grazing is a legitimate use of lands, it directly only benefits a small group of people. Allowing trails to be built in Lemon Gulch will provide tremendous recreation opportunities to many for generations.

Thank you,
Erika Schmid