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First name: Molly

Last name: Wilson

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Slater Turner and the Ochoco National Forest,

I am writing to voice my support for the Lemon Gulch trail network in the Ochoco National Forest. As a mountain biker and hiker, I am excited to see this potential new trail network that will both vary in difficulty from the predominant existing trails in Central Oregon, as well as offer an area where families and friends of different abilities will be able to recreate together. I appreciate its proximity to Prineville.

I currently spend some time riding my mountain bike on other trails in the Ochocos, such as Lookout Mountain. I understand that there is growing conflict between equestrians and mountain bikers on this and similar trails, and so feel it is a big advantage to add mountain bike specific trails elsewhere in the Ochocos. I especially appreciate alternative #2 which has the most miles of trails. This makes it possible to ride different trails on different days and make this area more of a destination for out-of-the-area riders.

Much like the situation in Oakridge, this would bring an influx of money into the Prineville area. I lived in Eugene for many years and witnessed firsthand the changes in Oakridge when mountain biking grew there in popularity. I have never encountered any negative interactions or conflicts between mountain bikers and locals there. In fact, I know that the locals appreciate what mountain biking has brought to their community and economy in terms of restaurants, gas and food purchases, and vacation rentals and motels. Many locals are mountain bikers and the existence of trails there offers wonderfully healthy ways for people and families to appreciate and recreate in the outdoors.

If it is felt that alternative #6 has too great of an impact on wildlife and other resources, then I think that alternative #2 would be a great second choice.

Thank you for both your time and consideration.