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First name: Kaitlin

Last name: Greene

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. I have been a resident of Central Oregon for 10 years, I work in public health, and am an advocate for transportation systems and recreational opportunities that prioritize walking and biking. In the last ten years I have not only enjoyed the outdoor recreational opportunities throughout the region but have also witnessed marked population growth. I believe the project plans for Lemon Gulch balances the concerns of longtime residents and landowners with the need for increased outdoor recreational activities for the growing population. Importantly, the Lemon Gulch project offers economic stimulus for Prineville and Crook County and the trail complex's proximity to the city of Prineville will provide welcome and needed opportunities for physical activity for people of all ages and abilities. There are many local efforts to increase access to inexpensive health promoting activities; the region's best natural resource for this is our public lands.

I recommend alternative #6 as the best option that considers environmental concerns, potential user conflicts, and an acceptable recreational trail system for residents and visitors alike. I am encouraged by the efforts Ochoco Trails has made to receive input from local community members and leadership. Central Oregon must do what it can to prepare for population growth and increases in outdoor recreators. The Lemon Gulch project's seasonal closures and boundaries within alternative #6 prioritize minimal disruption to wildlife habitat and development of land that is already used by people for various purposes. This plan is mindful of inviting visitors to the forest while concentrating recreational use to previously inhabited land to maintain wild spaces elsewhere. From an equity, health, and economic perspective, the Lemon Gulch project will foster stewardship of public land, offer increased opportunities for health promoting activities, and has the potential to become an asset to the local community.

Thank you for your consideration.