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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. In reading the environmental assessment, I appreciate the breadth of issues that the USFS assessed and the thoroughness with which this project has been approached.

The draft Environmental Assessment clearly states there is a significant need for additional non-motorized trails in the Ochoco National Forest, as outlined in the forest management plan created in 1989. The Lemon Gulch proposal is well planned and thought out, and will help meet the current and future needs of recreation in the Ochocos. The trail network will provide a desirable riding experience for many skill levels and fill a need that is lacking in Central Oregon. In addition, by creating a network more attractive to mountain bikers, use will be drawn away from other trail areas in the Ochocos, such as Lookout Mountain, thereby reducing user conflict and crowding.

The Ochoco National Forest is public land and as such it is open to the public. With the exception of wilderness areas, mountain biking is a legitimate recreation activity on our public lands. Recreation use will continue to grow and the Forest Service proposal will expand these opportunities for all citizens to enjoy the Ochoco National Forest. Crook County and Prineville will also benefit greatly, from both economic and health perspectives. An investment in outdoor activities and exercise is one of the most important investments that can be made for our community. Having a trail network closer to town will provide easier access for local families to a tremendous recreational opportunity.

Thank you for your consideration.