

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 12/10/2022 4:21:01 PM

First name: Emily

Last name: Coonrod

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. The draft Environmental Assessment clearly states there is a significant need for additional non-motorized trails in the Ochoco National Forest, and that the impacts to the forest environment including wildlife and grazing have been studied in detail and concluded that impact would be minimal.

The Lemon Gulch network is a well-planned and thought out proposal and would help the USFS make progress towards those objectives. As an avid mountain biker in my mid-40's, I am excited by the Lemon Gulch project and agree that the proposal as outlined in the EA achieves the following goals:

\*The terrain and style of riding in Lemon Gulch is desirable for mountain bikers and is not found in other regions

\*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 significantly reducing user conflict and crowding.

\*The Lemon Gulch trail network shows a wide variety of trails suitable for all levels of riders. The inclusion of trails that meet design standards for adaptive MTBs also adds an element of accessibility that does not exist in the Ochocos and is difficult to find throughout Central Oregon.

I am a resident of Sisters, OR and I enjoy mountain biking in the Ochoco National Forest. However, current mountain biking options are limited and the Lookout Mountain and Round Mountain Trails are wonderful but quite strenuous. I would recreate in the Ochoco National Forest more regularly if additional trail options were available. I also make it a point to respect the land on which I am recreating, never leave garbage, and spend money in the local communities on gas, food, or other items as I pass through town. As such, I agree with the assessment that Crook County and Prineville would also benefit enormously, from an economic perspective. Mountain biking has also shown repeatedly in small towns around the country to add a significant boost to the economy. In Oakridge, Oregon mountain bikers spend \$2.3-\$4.9 million every year. I have been mountain biking in Oakridge, Oregon for over fifteen years and can attest to the financial impact that mountain bikers have on this small, rural community. Prineville is in a perfect position to gain these advantages as well.

In reading the environmental assessment I truly appreciate the breadth of issues that the USFS assessed and the thoroughness with which this project has been approached. I fully support this project and believe it will be of great benefit to the local community and to the mountain bike community that lives, works, and recreates in this region.

Thank you for your consideration.