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Comments: RE: Lemon Gulch/Ochoco National Forest trails:

I am writing to voice my strong support for the Lemon Gulch trail proposal. The Environmental Assessment contains a clear, reasonable plan for a mountain bike trail network. The Ochoco Forest Management Plan specifies a need for 468 miles of non-motorized trails, including mountain bike trails. Currently there are only 157 miles in the Ochocos, none of which are primarily designated for mountain biking. Those trails are even more remote and a further journey from the proposed Lemon Gulch area. It is high time for USFS to begin fulfilling the 34 year old Ochoco Forest plan, by moving forward with Lemon Gulch.

As a mountain biker and native central Oregonian, it is clear to me that the Lemon Gulch network would meet the other objectives outlined in the EA, such as downhill-oriented trails, which are severely lacking at other central Oregon trailheads. By providing this type of experience, in a range of difficulties, it will reduce pressure on other trail areas in the Ochocos, resulting in less crowding and user conflict as recreation use increases in the future.

Alternative 2 offers the most miles of trails, as well as greatest variety of riding, and therefore best achieves all of the goals outlined in the EA. I would strongly encourage the USFS to proceed with Alternative 2.

The benefits of mountain biking to small communities cannot be overstated. Studies have shown that in Oregon alone, mountain biking saves \$26 million annually in health care costs. Local businesses also stand to reap huge rewards from mountain bike tourism. For example, in Oakridge, Oregon, mountain bikers spend \$2.3-\$4.9 million every year. Prineville and the Ochocos stand to benefit from the diversity of users, and this will have a positive impact on the community.

Thank you for your consideration.