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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am strongly opposed to the Lemon Gulch trail system.

I have many reasons to oppose this mountain bike trail system ranging from personal to environmental to the Forest Service's lack of involvement with the community. The Lemon Gulch area is a known and posted winter wildlife habitat area, but that doesn't seem to matter to the USFS. There has already been at least one Freudian slip by Greg Jeckels that this is a "sacrificial wildlife area" meaning that it's not that big of deal. I would have to think that slip up wasn't meant for the public to hear.

The Forest Service did not involve the public when they began this process. Although many reports state that the public was involved, the majority of Prineville and the locals that live on or near Mill Creek were not notified of the intended plan by the Forest Service from the beginning of planning process. The project is also inconsistent with the Winter Range and General Forest Winter Range plan. There is no coordination with the County with affected infrastructure such as is specified in the Forest Plan.

There is insufficient data and science in the analysis of this plan. The "Need" portion of the additional trails on the Ochoco National Forest calls for additional trails, it does not call for high speed, downhill technical trails that will and can only be used by high-speed bicycles. After walking the majority of the trail system in the proposed area, I can assure you that the majority of the downhill areas can and will only be used by exactly that. As well as the trails only being intended for one way traffic, although that point hasn't been brought up by the USFS or any of the bicycle trail groups. The intent feels more and more to make the Lemon Gulch area an exclusive trail system for bicycles only, as opposed to an inclusive trail as was relayed throughout much of public interaction.

There are far too many connected actions (Mill Creek Dry Creek Forest Restoration for example) and far too many Forest Plan inconsistencies which would call for an Environmental Impact Statement that would and should include comprehensive, organized and meaningful public involvement-all of which have been asked for repeatedly but to no avail.

The Ochoco Forest Service appears to take the stance of entertaining public comment only to let all comments and concerns fall on deaf ears. The people for the project just "want it" and feel they should get their way. The entire plan needs to be started over from scratch and all information needs to be on the table for ALL people to have input on from the beginning. The only appropriate action is option 1-NO ACTION