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First name: Glenn

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Mr. Turner:

I am writing in support of the Lemon Gulch trail network in the Ochoco National Forest. I am one of the top volunteers for COTA having put in over 1000 volunteer hours in the last three years. Some of the projects I have supported are the construction of the Tumalo Creek Bridge and the South Fork Puncheon. I assisted the DCFP and Sisters Ranger District on the Garrison survey. I have also supported leading youth corps work events in several locations. I will likely be a volunteer for construction and maintenance of the Lemon Gulch trail system if approved.

While doing trail maintenance on our current system, I frequently get comments about having more technical trails with more descent and skills test features. The terrain and environment of the Bend area does not really support this kind of trail. Lemon Gulch provides an area that is relatively close to the major population centers of Central Oregon for mountain biking that would take pressure of the high traffic Bend trail system.

I urge the Forest Service to adopt Alternative 2 - the full 51.3-mile network - because it offers the most attractive range of riding styles for mountain bikers and as concluded in the draft EA, it poses no significant environmental impact.

I normally would not have much to travel to Crook County and Prineville for but if the Lemon Gulch trail system is built, I would likely travel there several times a year to ride and maintain the systems. In 2022 we had set up a trail workday with Facebook employees. The rapid transition from conditions too dry to work to snow prevented us from having this event. We intend to have a work party next year. During a trip to the area, it is most likely that I would go to a Prineville restaurant or Pub afterwards to meet and talk with friends and co-workers. I know there has been a campaign opposing the development of Lemon Gulch that appeals to the fears that such a system would make "Prineville like Bend", but I believe it will operate more like Oakridge than Bend.

I appreciate all the effort that has gone into developing this proposal and hope that we can come up with a solution that is acceptable for a large number of the stakeholders.

Thank you for your consideration.

Glenn Tomchik