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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Slater Turner and the Ochoco National Forest,

I am writing this comment to provide my full support for Alternative 2 in the Environmental Assessment (EA) of the Lemon Gulch mountain bike trail proposal. Although I am not a mountain biker, I believe in the thoughtful and sustainable shared use of our public lands, and Alternative 2 best addresses the need for non-motorized recreation in the Ochoco National Forest (ONF).

Dedicated trails decrease social trails that are not built with best practices and can damage sensitive habitats and watershed. By providing a rich and wide spectrum of mountain bike trails, Alternative 2 best disincentivizes social trail creation by mountain bike users. In addition, the full build is the most likely to diminish user conflict elsewhere in the ONF, especially on Round and Lookout Mountain Trails, which is Objective 3 of the EA.

Alternatives 3-6 all compromise in some significant way, from decreased potential for adaptive mountain bike use to funneling trail users to roadways. Alternative 2 best addresses the need for mountain bike trails in the ONF, and as laid out in the EA, it does so with minimal impact on the environment, grazing, and (with seasonal closures) mule deer winter range.

Alternative 2 will have the greatest positive economic benefit, with the full build option most likely to generate the benefits from mountain biking seen in the community of Oakridge, Oregon.

The Forest Service originally selected Lemon Gulch from other options presented by the Ochoco Trails Coalition to maximize benefit while minimizing harm. Good trail design combined with seasonal closures will minimize impact on local flora and fauna. The 1989 ONF Land and Resource Management Plan identified the need for more trails, and choosing Alternatives 1 or 3-6 implies the need for mountain bike trail development elsewhere in the ONF, although ONF already identified Lemon Gulch as the best location for mountain bike trails.

Please choose Alternative 2 from the Lemon Gulch EA.

Thank you,

Eve Harburg