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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Slater Turner and the Ochoco National Forest,

I would like to voice my support for the Lemon Gulch trail proposal. The Ochoco Forest Management Plan specifies a need for 468 miles of non-motorized trails, including those primarily built for mountain biking, and Lemon Gulch represents a well-planned addition to the existing 156.5 miles of trail - none of which have mountain biking as a primary purpose. This proposal represents an ideal opportunity for the USFS to begin meeting the need for recreational opportunities in the Ochocos as specified in the 1989 Forest plan.

As a mountain biker who has frequently visited Oregon to ride, it is clear to me that the Lemon Gulch network aligns well with the goals outlined in the Environmental Assessment. The available terrain offered, and one-way design is something that is severely lacking in Central Oregon. By providing this type of experience, in a range of difficulties, Lemon Gulch can help reduce user crowding and conflict in the region as recreation use increases in the future.

Alternative 2 offers the most miles of trails, as well as largest 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 cuts \$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. In Vermont, where I live, expanded recreational opportunities in the Green Mountain National Forest have resulted in improved lives and livelihoods throughout the state, reduced environmental impact through well-planned user experiences, and helped establish our State as a model for effective public lands management.

Thank you for your consideration.