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Title: VP Public Lands/Chapter Public Lands Officer

Comments: I am submitting comments for the Central Oregon chapter of Oregon Equestrian Trails and the East Cascades chapter of Back Country Horsemen of Oregon. Our volunteers build and maintain trails and horse camps and advocate for recreational access to public lands. Both organizations were founding members of Ochoco Trails and helped develop the Ochoco National Forest trails plan. We appreciate all you do for recreational trails.

OET supports your efforts to improve the health and resiliency of the forest and restore it to a more historic state. We understand that these restoration efforts will result in trail and facility closures and noise at times. That's the short-term price for a healthier, more fire-resistant forest in the long run. We also appreciate your efforts to make it more difficult for motor vehicles to access the trails.

We have a few suggestions that, from an equestrian viewpoint, will enhance the project. We're pretty sure you're already planning these actions, but it never hurts to list them.

1. Please let us know in advance when horse camps, trailheads, or trails are to be closed. We will be happy to spread the word within the equestrian community.

2. If the contractor damages any trails, please repair them.

3. Avoid armoring the roads that comprise the new Donut Hole Loop trail with large-diameter gravel, as this creates a very uncomfortable tread for horses. If these roads must be armored, please leave at least a 24-inch ungraveled corridor beside the road so horses can comfortably travel along the road once it is open for use.

4. To enhance the user experience, please retain the large-diameter trees around the horse camp and in a corridor along the trails.

5. Directional fell trees away from trail tread and/or fences.

6. Place any mechanical or hand piles beyond the trail corridor.

7. Light under-burning from the trail tread if at all possible.

8. Remove trail markers from trees to be cut and replace them on the nearest leave tree beside the trail. Or contact us and we'll be happy to remove and replace them.

9. If there are any roads to be closed by ripping, please consider leaving a 24" unripped tread for horse travel on the outside edge.

10. Consider rocking Road 3370-200 to Dry Creek Horse Camp. The portion of the 200 Road above the culvert needs maintenance.

Thank you for your consideration as you move forward with this important project.

Regards,

Kim McCarrel

VP Public Lands, Oregon Equestrian Trails

Public Lands Officer, East Cascades Chapter, Back Country Horsemen of Oregon