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First name: Angel

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I Support Motorized Use in the New Perce-Clearwater NF

Dear North Fork Ranger District USFS,

I enjoy accessing and recreating on public lands. I am writing today regarding the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest OHV and Travel Planning. I believe motorized use needs to be a priority especially keeping Fish Lake Trail open to motorized users. This trail provides the only motorized access to Fish Lake and has a long history of use.

I am opposed to any designations of areas which would allow the closure and reclamation of routes. Those routes exist because there is a purpose and need for them and a history of use. Any environmental damage identified due to recreation should be first addressed with management solutions such as signage, and education materials. Closure is not management. Through different management strategies and proper education, negative impacts can be properly mitigated without closures and restrictions.

The USFS should be looking at ways to provide reasonable access that will sustain the growing numbers of visitation. Often agencies try to address increased use through closures, restrictions, and reservation systems. Each of these approaches is inferior since they create a scarcity of access, which concentrates use in remaining areas. USFS should plan for opening more areas, routes, and amenities to accommodate increased public demand to utilize public lands. Furthermore, recent studies are starting to emerge that show that reservation systems are discriminatory.

The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis showed that in 2021 the outdoor recreation industry generates \$821 billion nationwide in economic activity. By limiting access to the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests or decommissioning trails the USFS could be harming the local economy and robbing them of potential income. The Purpose and Need of the DEIS recognizes the economic importance of recreation and access.

It is important to note that routes also provide access for dispersed camping. This plan needs to recognize the importance and value of this recreational experience. This Fish Lake Trail, specifically has a history of use and needs to continue to provide access.

It is important to recognize that discrimination towards American with disabilities within federal land management agencies is deeply rooted and hidden in plain sight. Recreation, primarily motorized recreation has taken a backseat to conservation and protection. Motorized recreation is often the only way those with mobility impairment disabilities are able to access public lands. Class I and class III ebikes should be permitted for all trails that permit a human powered bicycle for this reason. The USFS should be adopting this position for each of these trails as they don't cause any greater impact than human powered bikes.

I don't want to see the Forest Service give preferential treatment to any user group over another. I believe USFS can manage for all types of recreation within this area. Motorized and non-motorized users can co-exist and one should not be restricted to accommodate another.

Sincerely,

Angel Cushing

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