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First name: Tim

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I Support Access and Active Management in the Northwest Forest Plan

Dear Northwest Forest Plan,

I appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback for the Northwest Forest Plan.

I am concerned with the management of the northwest forest. Access to the public through roads and motorized use is crucial for various reasons. I believe motorized routes should NOT BE CLOSED arbitrarily through restrictive designations and management decisions and the USFS should maximize the amount of routes available.

The economic benefit for local communities is a factor the USFS needs to consider. Recreation is a trillion dollar a year industry, and motorized use on public lands has grown tremendously in popularity over the past several years. The USFS should be looking for ways to help the local communities capitalize on these opportunities. Closing routes through forest designations will be irresponsible management as it will concentrate the growing number of users into smaller areas. Motorized routes not only accommodate motorized users but emergency response teams as well. These forests contribute to local economies through timber harvest, recreation, grazing, rock hounding and other contributions. All of these require public access throughout these forests.

It is also important to recognize that motorized recreation is often times the only way those with mobility impairment disabilities are able to access public lands. Current policies often discriminate against this group and I would like to see the travel plan help connect all users with public lands. Allowing e-bikes on non-motorized routes is one way to address this as they have the same impact as a human powered bike.

In order to prevent and avoid adverse resource impacts and user conflict, the USFS should be actively managing the area and routes. Through different management strategies and proper education, negative impacts can be properly mitigated without closures. As popularity for outdoor recreation grows, the USFS should be looking at ways to provide reasonable access that will sustain the growing numbers of visitation. Restricting and/or concentrating use will only increase land impacts.

I support dispersed camping on public land, and a robust network of designated routes is the best way to ensure abundant dispersed camping access, and believe it should continue to be allowed within the appropriate disturbance area alongside each route. Often pullouts and spur routes lead to high-value dispersed camping locations, and they should be recognized for this purpose and need.

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

As someone who grew up in a violent home, the few pleasant memories that I have of my childhood are of the times that we went motorcycle riding, camping and hiking with other families. It's the only time my father did not drink. Please do not close these lands "so future generations can enjoy them", when we still need them NOW. The government seems to always lean heavily and unilaterally toward closing and locking these lands away, which only means that no one ever enjoys or gets to escape into them, now or ever again.

Sincerely,

Tim Carmack

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