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First name: Gary

Last name: Braun

Organization:

Title:

Comments: To Patricia Garvey-Darda or to whom it may concern:

I am a hang glider pilot who has often flown Rampart Ridge and land near the Lake Keechelus south boat launching area. Pilots land near the road and generally stay on the main dirt road or in the paved parking area. The sport is quiet and we aspire to leave only footprints behind. Over the years I have seen ORV users abusing the dry lake bed and disrupting bull trout spawning habitats. In fact, I was not surprised access was gated last year to prevent this. I am writing to express my concern for the fragile dry lakebed, wildlife and fish habitat here. It should be kept off limits to the destruction and noise of ORV's and motorcycles when water level is low. I also want the Cle Elum Ranger District to know that hang gliding and paragliding could be a viable exception. One idea is to create a permit process for pilots to regulate the exception.

Sport pilots are frequent users of this area ONLY late fall when the lakebed level drops enough to allow ample area to land. We need a landing area about the size of a football field. I request that 1) an alternative route into/out of Gold Creek Valley be kept open that goes around the construction zone and 2) use of helicopters be eliminated or kept to specific morning hours which are communicated to the public.

Please consider letting sport pilots have access to the landing area near the south boat launching area. Ideally only from August 15 - October 15. The pilot group is flexible and open to ideas that allow our access and preserving the fragile dry lakebed. Thank you.

Best regards-

G a r y   B r a u n