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Comments: I am writing to formally object to the Draft Decision and Final Environmental Assessment (EA) for the CARLA Project. This objection is on behalf of the Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) recreation community.

Evans Creek is the only designated OHV area in the forest. It is a valuable and irreplaceable place for OHV riders. The CARLA Project would change 13.17 miles of OHV trails into Level 1 administrative roads, which means the public would no longer be allowed to use them. These changes would greatly reduce access for OHV users and may cause permanent trail loss.

1. Permanent Loss of OHV Trail Mileage

The Draft Decision says that about 65% of Evans Creek's OHV trails would be turned into Level 1 roads, which are closed to the public. This means a major loss of riding opportunities for the OHV community. These trails are being removed, not just maintained. The EA makes this seem minor by calling it "custodial care," but it really removes access. This also goes against the Northwest Forest Plan, which requires a range of recreation options. This change lowers the area's recreation value from "semi-primitive motorized" to a more developed, less challenging type.

These trails should stay open for OHV use or be replaced with new ones nearby.

2. Misleading Description of Recreation Impacts

The EA does not clearly explain how OHV riding will change under the project. Turning trails into roads takes away the variety and challenge that riders enjoy. Saying that OHV access is "maintained" is misleading-it will be reduced and permanently changed.

The EA needs to be updated to clearly explain the recreation impacts at Evans Creek, especially the loss of challenging terrain and semi-primitive riding conditions.

3. Conversion of Trails Without Public Notice

Important changes were added to the project after the comment period ended. These changes include turning OHV trails into closed administrative roads. OHV users were not directly informed about these major changes. Because of this, they didn't have a real chance to give input. This fails to meet basic standards of transparency and fair public process.

The Forest Service should re-open public comments specifically for these new trail-to-road changes.

4. Incomplete Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan

The Monitoring Plan in the Draft Decision is too vague, especially for a project that will last 30 years. There needs to be a clear way to track lost trail miles, changes in recreation access, and user experience over time. The Forest Service should be ready to reopen trails or create new ones if conditions for OHV riders get worse.

A detailed monitoring plan needs to be created with specific actions to protect OHV access long-term.

5. Lack of Stakeholder Engagement

The EA says it meets forest-wide recreation goals but doesn't show that OHV users were truly included in the planning process. Local OHV groups have asked many times to be involved. It's not fair or effective to involve the public only after decisions have been made.

OHV user groups need to be included in all future planning, trail work, and monitoring at Evans Creek.

Conclusion and Formal Requests

The CARLA Project's process was not transparent and that the environmental analysis did not fully show how much the OHV community would be affected. Evans Creek is a one-of-a-kind riding area. Losing more than 13 miles of trail would be a permanent and serious loss that cannot be replaced elsewhere in the forest.

Evans Creek OHV trails need to stay open for OHV use after any timber hauling, and not be reclassified as Level 1 administrative roads.

The EA and Draft Decision needs to be updated to accurately reflect the long-term effects on motorized recreation.

OHV user groups need to be formally included in future planning, monitoring, and decisions related to Evans Creek.

Thank you for considering my objection.

Sincerely,
Noni Jones