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First name: Peter

Last name: Dahl

Organization:

Title:

Comments: 03/28/2022

Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest

Naches Ranger District

To Whom It May Concern,

I'm writing to submit my comment for the Little Naches Upland Restoration (#58517), draft Environmental Assessment, dated February 2022.

The Little Naches area is a unique area that provides exceptional recreation experiences for both motorized and non-motorized recreationists. I have spent a significant amount of time enjoying both the roads and trails in the project area and look forward to sharing that with future generations of my family.

I do not agree with the 1906 road being decommissioned. The decommissioning of this road, or making it inaccessible to motorized singletrack users, would close off a loop opportunity for the Middle Fork Trail #945. Loop opportunities provide high quality recreation experiences, but also serve as a safety net for all users. Motorized access can also be beneficial should firefighters ever need to access the area in the event of a wildfire. Even motorized singletrack has served firefighters well as a firebreak in many areas in Washington state. I would propose that if the 1906 must be decommissioned to passenger vehicles, that it become a multi-user motorized singletrack trail.

I do not support the decommissioning of all of the roads and unauthorized routes in this project proposal. While unauthorized routes are not permitted, they have become well-known options that provide for dispersed camping, solitude, and the ability to connect with nature. These roads also provide great access for disabled hunters - getting them away from main roads (which improves safety) and a better chance at wildlife encounters. I would ask that the Forest Service look at adding these to the road system. I would support any maintenance efforts made to keep these roads and routes open including: culvert replacement, road repair, and road/route realignment/adjustment. Please see the list below for the roads and unauthorized routes I wish to stay open and added to the road system:

*I don't want to see a year-long physical barrier placed at milepost 15.8 on the 1900 road. I also don't want to see any portion of the 1900 decommissioned.

*I don't want to see any section of the 1961 decommissioned, including: 1961-869, 1961-876, 1961-877.

*I don't want to see any of the unauthorized routes decommissioned, and would like to see them added to the road system: UA 214, UA 353, UA 354, UA 355, UA 356, UA 249.

*I support the addition of "Unauthorized Road UA 249" being added to the road system as a ML2.

*I support roads remaining open as groomed snowmobile routes.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project. I hope that the Naches Ranger District will work on a collaborative solution that balances the needs of motorized recreation with the needs of conserving the lands and watershed.

Respectfully,

Peter Dahl