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Thomas Helmer
Executive Director
Central Idaho Mountain Bike Association
PO Box 744
McCall, ID 83638

January 5, 2026

Matthew Davis
Forest Supervisor
Payette National Forest
500 N Mission St
McCall, ID 83638

Subject: Granite Goose Project – Formal Objection Submitted by Central Idaho Mountain Bike Association

Dear Supervisor Davis

On behalf of the Central Idaho Mountain Bike Association (CIMBA), I am submitting this formal objection to specific elements of the Granite Goose Plan. This objection addresses two primary concerns:

- Proposed logging and thinning activities that would directly and indirectly affect the Brundage-to-Bear Basin Trail, and
- The omission of recommended trails from the Bear Basin Trail System that were submitted during the planning process by CIMBA, but not included in the final decision.

Objection 1: Impacts to the Brundage-to-Bear Basin Trail from Proposed Logging and Thinning Activities

The Brundage-to-Bear Basin Trail is widely regarded as one of the premier mountain bike trails in central Idaho and, by many accounts, one of the highest-quality mountain bike trails in the state. The trail was professionally designed and constructed and runs approximately six miles



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from Brundage Mountain Ski Resort to the Bear Basin trail system. It receives extraordinarily high use from local residents as well as visitors who travel to the region specifically to ride this trail during the riding season. The trail's design, character, and setting are fundamental to its recreational value.

The Granite Goose Plan identifies two thinning units that occur on or immediately adjacent to the Brundage-to-Bear Basin Trail. One of these locations is where Forest Service Road 1090 crosses the trail at approximately 44.96446, -116.14701. South of this crossing, CIMBA understands that the proposed thinning activities are likely to be commercial in nature. Based on plan documents and field review, it appears that access to this thinning unit would utilize the existing Brundage-to-Bear Basin Trail, which in this area closely follows an old roadbed.

CIMBA formally objects to any use of the Brundage-to-Bear Basin Trail as an access route for logging or thinning operations. Use of the trail for access would result in closure of the trail for an undetermined period of time and would fundamentally alter or destroy the existing tread, character, and riding experience. While post-operation rehabilitation may be required of the logging contractor, the current quality of the trail is the result of intentional, professional design and construction. We do not believe that post-harvest rehabilitation would restore the trail to its existing condition or character.

CIMBA is formally requesting that all access to thinning units in this area be rerouted to alternative locations that do not utilize or cross the Brundage-to-Bear Basin Trail.

In addition, a second non-commercial thinning unit is proposed just northeast of this same location and runs parallel to the trail on FS Road 1090. CIMBA requests clear assurance that this operation will not cross the trail, utilize the trail for access, or otherwise damage the trail corridor or its setting. Preservation of the trail's character and uninterrupted access during operations is critical.

The Granite Goose Plan also includes multiple thinning units accessed from or adjacent to Forest Service Roads 451 and 488. While thinning operations are not proposed on areas of these roads that directly intersect the Brundage-to-Bear Basin Trail, the roads are frequently used by recreationalists as loop routes and access points to the upper portions of the trail.



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These road routes are commonly used as safer alternatives to uphill travel on the Brundage-to-Bear Basin Trail itself.

If Forest Service Roads 451 and 488 are closed to recreational use during logging operations, potentially for extended periods over the next five years, recreational access and experience in the area will be significantly diminished. Active logging traffic on these roads also increases safety risks for recreational users who may encounter logging vehicles traveling at high speeds. Closure of these roads may push more users onto the Brundage-to-Bear Basin Trail for uphill travel. While uphill travel is allowed on the trail, it is not recommended due to high downhill bicycle speeds and frequent use, creating serious safety concerns.

CIMBA strongly believes that alternative access solutions must be identified to maintain recreational access and user safety during periods of active logging. Without such solutions, the proposed activities would result in substantial negative impacts to recreation, user safety, and one of the region's most important trail assets.

Objection 2: Omission of Recommended Trails from the Granite Goose Plan

The draft Granite Goose decision includes approximately seven miles of new trail construction within the Bear Basin Trail System, including flow, cross-country, and connector trails to be constructed in the coming years. CIMBA greatly appreciates the inclusion of these trails and recognizes that they reflect a portion of the trail system recommendations submitted by CIMBA during the planning process.

However, CIMBA formally objects to the omission of several additional trails that were recommended but not included in the Granite Goose Plan. While we understand that not every proposed trail can be included in a single planning effort, the exclusion of certain key trails represents a missed opportunity to better meet demonstrated recreational demand and to create a more complete and balanced trail system in Bear Basin.

Specifically, CIMBA is formally requesting that two additional flow trails, identified as F2 and F3 in our submitted trail proposal, be added to the Granite Goose Plan. As shown in the submitted maps, CIMBA's formal request identified proposed trails using the designations "XC" for cross-country trails and "F" for flow trails. Trails F2 and F3 are located within the core Bear



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Basin trail area and are consistent with the terrain, character, and recreational focus of the existing and proposed trail system.

These proposed flow trails would generally run parallel to existing and already-approved flow trails and would expand trail diversity without introducing new or incompatible uses. From our understanding, these trail alignments do not present known environmental or heritage resource conflicts and would fit squarely within the scope and intent of the Granite Goose Plan.

There is significant demand from the recreation community in central Idaho and across the state for additional purpose-built flow trails in Bear Basin. Including Trails F2 and F3 would improve user distribution, reduce congestion on existing trails, and provide a broader range of riding options for mountain bike users of varying skill levels.

CIMBA is also formally requesting that these trails be designated as downhill-only mountain bike trails with no horse use. This designation is consistent with existing flow trail management in Bear Basin and is important for maintaining rider safety, trail sustainability, and the intended trail experience.

For these reasons, CIMBA respectfully requests that Trails F2 and F3 be incorporated into the Granite Goose Plan as part of the final decision.

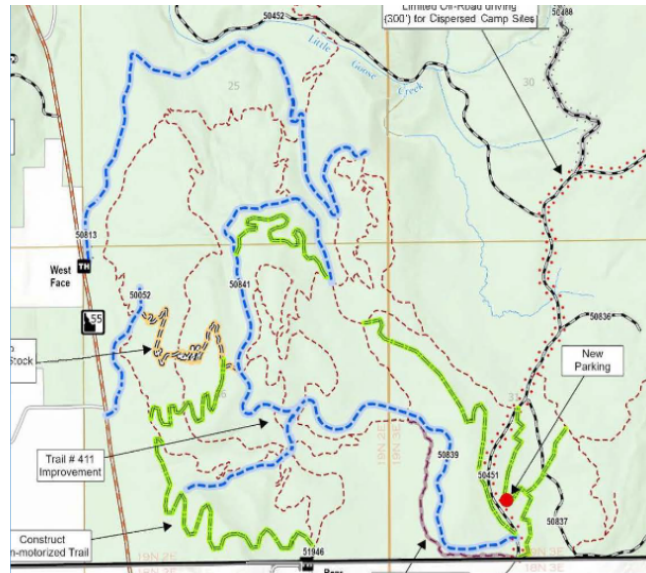
Thank you for the opportunity to provide formal comment. We appreciate your consideration and look forward to continued dialogue on how best to balance forest management objectives with the protection of high-value recreational resources.

Sincerely,

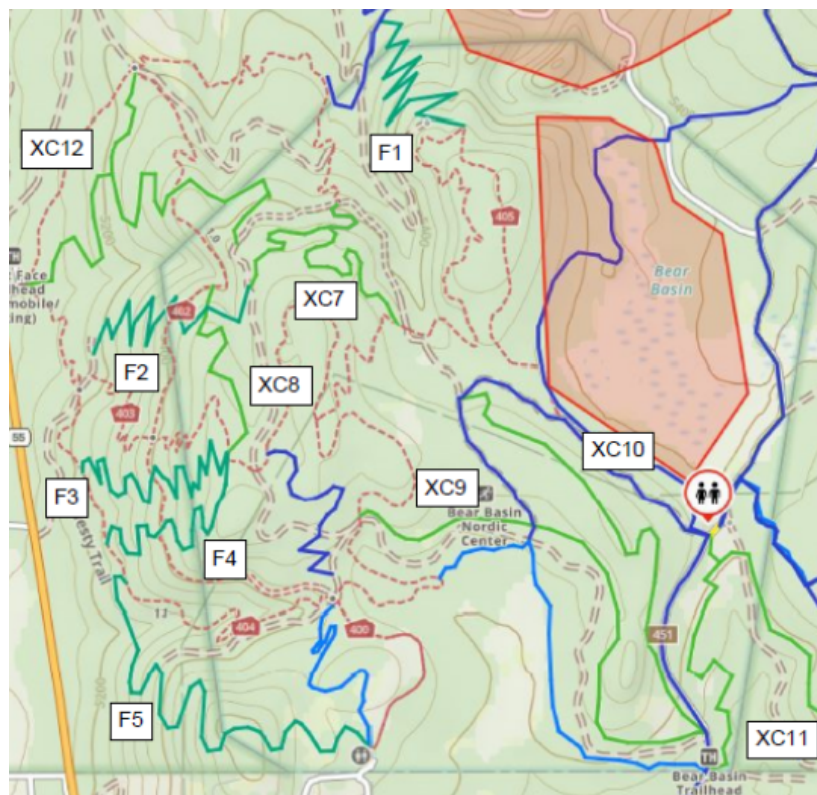
Tom Helmer
Executive Director
Central Idaho Mountain Bike Association (CIMBA)
tom@cimbarides.org
802.380.1213



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USFS Draft Decision Map



CIMBA Proposed Trails, Submitted in 2023

www.cimbarides.org
PO Box 744, McCall, ID 83638



March 9, 2023

Forest Supervisor
Payette National Forest
500 Mission St Building 2
McCall, ID 83638

To Whom It May Concern:

The Central Idaho Mountain Bike Association (CIMBA), a national chapter of International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA), represents 183 members in Valley County and West Central Idaho. Our mission is to protect, enhance and create quality trail experiences for the mountain bike community in Central Idaho.

The pillars of our organization are:

- Provide a diverse range of trails and experiences for beginners through advanced riders.
- Build trails to current, sustainable design and construction techniques to endure extreme weather with minimal maintenance.
- Promote collaboration between different user groups, land managers, businesses, donors and public agencies.
- Establish a cohesive community of trail users and advocates to imagine, build and care for trails.
- Ensure trails incorporate and showcase our region's unique qualities.

Given the alignment of this proposal to our organizational pillars, CIMBA fully supports the Granite Goose Landscape Restoration Project and the extent of its scope. We appreciate the thought and input put in by the various stakeholders and user groups to arrive at the current proposal.

With respect to the Recreation Management section of this proposal, CIMBA would like to take the opportunity to provide comments and enhancements that align with the pillars stated above. Our annual member surveys continually ask for us to advocate for and build more trails in the Greater Bear Basin area and in close proximity to the city of McCall. We have extensively looked at the project area and identified areas for potential new trails and repairs/improvements

to old trails while being mindful of wildlife corridors and no-build zones previously identified by the USFS.

Mountain bike trails on public lands can generally be broken into two trail types: flow trails and cross country (XC) trails. Flow trails are defined as trails that utilize existing terrain and slope to build and maintain momentum with minimal pedaling required. They often have berms and some technical features to create a roller coaster experience similar to the Upper and Lower Drain Trails. Cross country trails unlike flow trails follow existing terrain, have less gradient, and feature rolling and twisting singletrack. These trails are better suited to all user types, but may also include features like berms and rolling contour changes to add enjoyment for wheeled users. These more modern trails are referred to as “bike optimized trails”. Most of the existing trails in Bear Basin are XC trails, but were built without extra features. In addition to our proposed new trails, we feel it is important to repair and improve existing trails within the Bear Basin trail network and incorporate some of these bike optimized features.

With this request you will find a corresponding PDF attachment that better defines our proposal. Our specific recommendations are:

1. Add the Backside Moto trail into the project and address the unsustainable sections of this trail, close access to UTV users on this trail but maintain it as a motorized single track. Work with IDPR, IDL, and CITRA to improve this route and allow it to remain in place as the only motorized connection in this area.
2. Remove the unsustainable lower portion of the Rim Trail where it connects to the FS 837 Rd and allow a more sustainable alignment as shown in our proposal. This will allow connectivity to trails on the IDL ground and also provide a better experience for all users.
3. Allow new trails to be built using modern trail building techniques including multi-use trails that are bike optimized on both X/C and Flow style trails. Ensure new trails are true singletrack trails versus utilizing abandoned or existing roads. Establish directional trail management practices on some of the flow trails including the Upper and Lower Drain Trails.
4. Allow CIMBA to repair and improve existing trails for an improved user experience.
5. Adopt the CIMBA proposal as a long term vision for a better and more connected trail system in the Greater Bear Basin area.

We believe these comments and proposals are in line with several other trail networks in Forest Service managed areas including trails near Galena Pass, the Wood River Valley and Teton Pass, all of which are administered by the USFS with support from local non-profit trail associations. Additionally we reached out to the Deschutes National Forest Recreation staff to obtain information regarding management of the Phil's trail network in Bend, OR. This trail system is enjoyed by similar user groups, and has developed trail management strategies for a multi-use, non-motorized trail system similar to what we are proposing. It is managed by the Deschutes National Forest with new trails and maintenance being completed via a partnership with the Central Oregon Trail Alliance (COTA).

CIMBA is a willing partner in the development of a comprehensive trail plan close to McCall. CIMBA has a proven track record of cooperation and partnership through project planning, development fundraising, and maintaining both new and existing trails on USFS and IDL ground in the McCall area, most recently with the completion of the Brundage to Bear Basin trail build. We appreciate your time and consideration of our proposal.

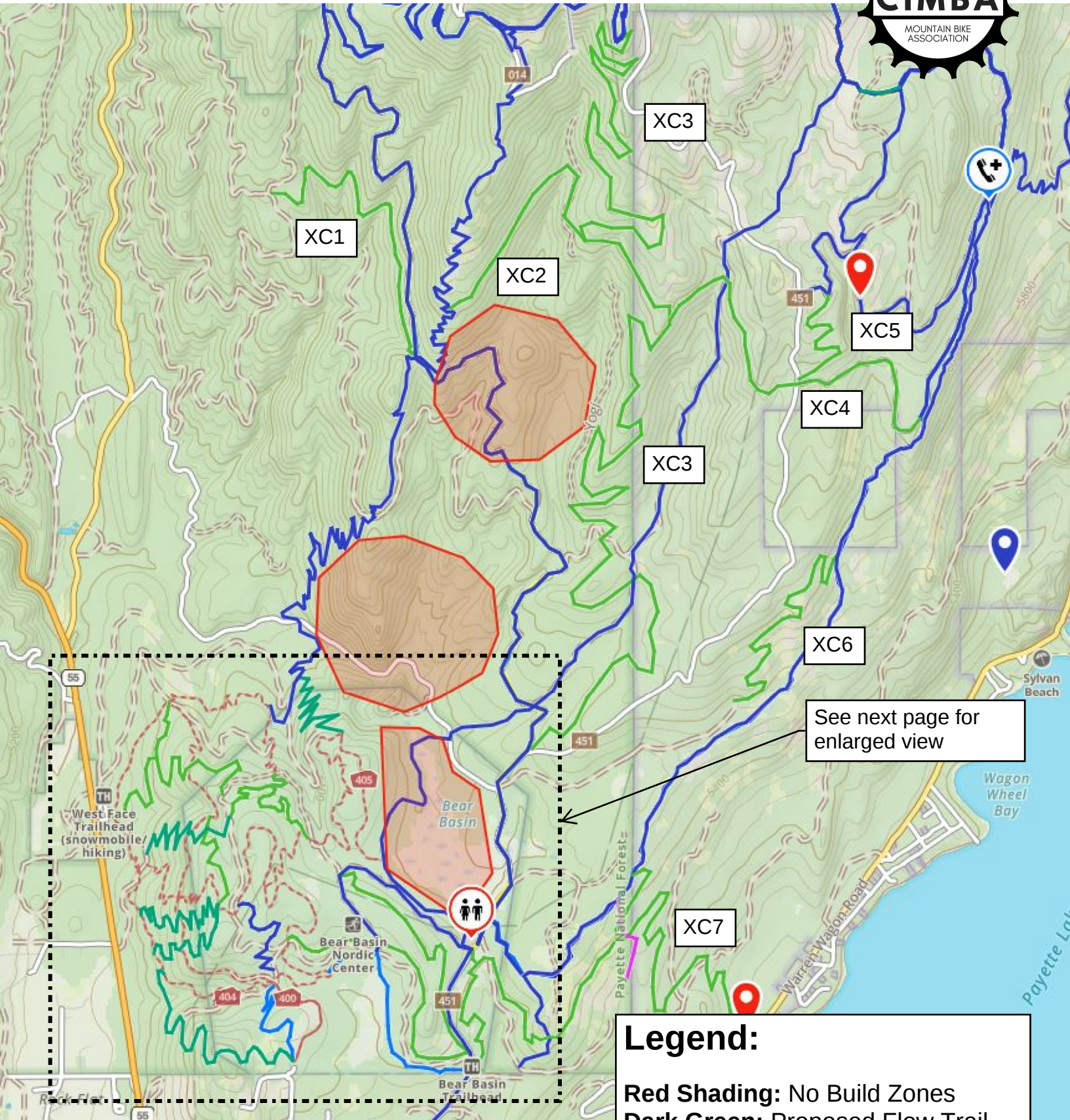
Sincerely,

Central Idaho Mountain Bike Association
Board of Directors
PO Box 744
McCall, ID 83638

Enclosures:

- Bear Basin Trail Proposal
- Bear Basin Trail Proposal Enlarged

Bear Basin Trail Proposal

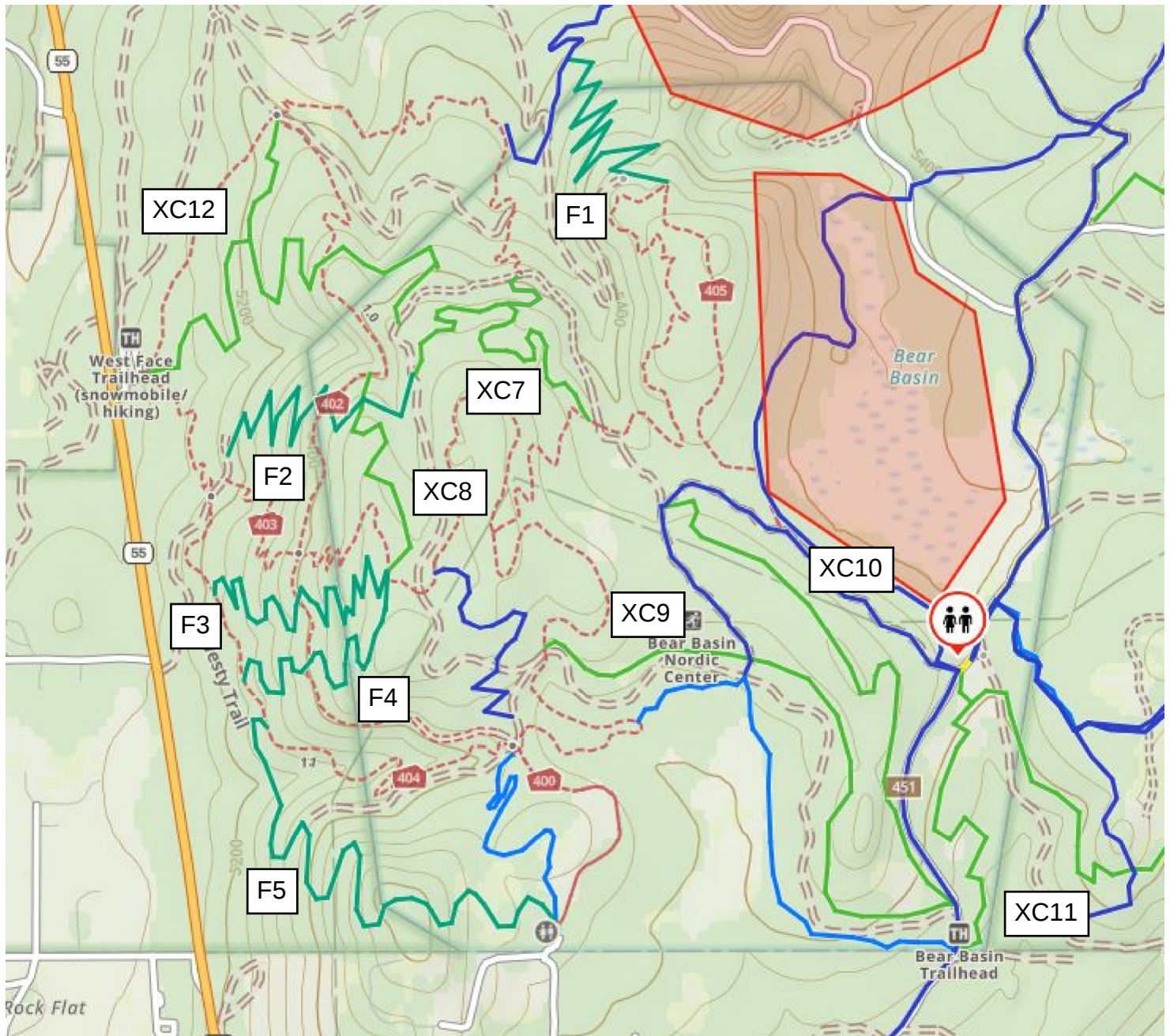


See next page for enlarged view

Legend:

- Red Shading:** No Build Zones
- Dark Green:** Proposed Flow Trail
- Light Green:** Proposed XC Trail
- Blue + Red Dashed:** Existing Trails
- Pink:** Lower Rim Reroute

Bear Basin Trail Proposal - Enlarged



Legend:

- Red Shading:** No Build Zones
- Dark Green:** Proposed Flow Trail
- Light Green:** Proposed XC Trail
- Blue + Red Dashed:** Existing Trails