

2625.1

Arthur and Margaret Ekerson
2404 W. Hillside Dr.
Central Point, Or. 97502

RECEIVED
JAN 11 2008

January 9, 2008
Bureau of Land Management
Western Plan Revisions
P.O. Box 2965
Portland, Or. 97208

Dear BLM,

We have lived below the John's Peak area in Jackson County for 35 years. We have witnessed the destruction of the natural environment that off road vehicles have inflicted on this area. We have lived with the increasing noise. We have family members that use off road vehicles responsibly. This area is not consistent with that use. It is too steep and too fragile. Tire ruts from wagon trains still exist in the west, and the excessive ruts of off road use will not heal in our lifetimes. The ruts have turned into hard packed water drains and bare land exists where there used to be beautiful natural woods. Where we used to hike or ride horses, we are confronted with destroyed wilderness and unsafe conditions for any use but off road vehicles.

We have traveled areas in California that are permanently scarred by off road use. We cannot imagine that BLM is considering that scenario for the lovely woods in the northwest.

PLEASE reconsider adding large areas to off road recreational use. We agree completely Commissioner Dave Gilmour's assessments of the situation. He knows the areas and local usage. East Howard with Lily Glen is the best natural equestrian site in Southern Oregon. Horses and Off Road vehicles are an incompatible and dangerous combination. John's Peak is fragile, steep, and surrounds multiple privately owned parcels that face increased fire danger. Lake Creek is critical wildlife and environmental area with fish bearing streams and incompatible recreational uses.

Recommended areas: Salt Creek, Elderberry Flat, Ferris Gulch
If we must throw some land into ugly ditches, ruts, and barren land, we recommend that it be these areas.

I think our bottom line complaints are: the long term destruction of the natural environment by Off Road Vehicles and the fact that Off Road Areas are incompatible with any other public use.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Art Ekerson
Margaret Ekerson