



Lemon Gulch Trails Project

Fact Sheet and Frequently Asked Questions

Project Update

The Ochoco National Forest has issued the final Environmental Assessment and Response to Comments for the Lemon Gulch Trails Project. Effective immediately, the District Ranger is removing the project from consideration and will not be issuing a Decision. This action indefinitely suspends the planning process for the proposed mountain bike trail system east of Prineville and the Forest has no immediate plans to issue a Decision on the final Environmental Assessment.

What does it mean to “remove a project from consideration?”

The project has been on our Schedule of Proposed Action (SOPA) since March 2021. The SOPA contains a list of proposed actions that will soon begin or are currently undergoing environmental analysis and documentation. We have removed it from the SOPA and will not allocate any additional staff time to the project until and unless there is a desire to resume the planning process following a broader community conversation about non-motorized trail use on the Forest.

Why did the Forest decide to remove the Lemon Gulch Trails Project from consideration?

The decision to remove the Project from consideration was not taken lightly. A lot of work, time and collaboration went into the analysis, the identification of a Preferred Alternative and the final Environmental Assessment. We are taking this action because of the divisions we have seen in the community as a result of this planning process. We are hopeful that removing

this project from consideration can offer an opportunity for us to have a broader conversation with our communities around non-motorized trails in the Ochoco National Forest.

What happens to the Lemon Gulch Trails Project now?

We are very proud of the analysis that was done by the Forest Interdisciplinary Team and are hopeful that as we move past this moment, we can look for opportunities to be a part of—or even convene—a broader community conversation around non-motorized trail use on the Forest and Grassland. This Environmental Assessment will be a useful tool to inform those conversations.

When will the “broader community conversation” happen?

We have no plans for those conversations. While we remain open for opportunities in the future, we are focusing instead on other priority work at this time.

Can you issue a Decision from this final Environmental Assessment in the future?

Yes we can. However, we feel a community discussion is necessary before proceeding. Following that, we can issue a draft Decision Notice and enter an objection period.

A draft EA for the Lemon Gulch was released on November 21, 2022 that analyzed and compared five action alternatives ranging from 19-52 miles of trail and included a “no action” alternative. The final EA, including the Preferred Alternative, can be viewed here: <https://tinyurl.com/2awnv5jd>