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Vancouver, WA 98668

21 March 2008

Ms. Claire Lavendel  
Forest Supervisor  
Gifford Pinchot National Forest  
10600 N.E. 51st Circle  
Vancouver, WA 98682

Dear Ms. Lavendel,

On 3 Dec 2007, Eric Kangas, Dan Coughlin and Joe McLaughlin of the Jones Creek Trail Riders Association (JCTRA) had the opportunity to speak with you at a Gifford Pinchot National Forest open house. We talked about motorized recreation opportunities in the GPNF. This is a follow up to that conversation.

At that time you indicated that you did not yet have a plan to develop a GPNF travel management plan. We discussed current issues and challenges with OHV use. We also had the opportunity to discuss the family benefits and opportunities for routes that combined OHV travel on trails and forest roads to create loops.

What we heard from you was not to expect forest roads to be generally open to OHV's. We also heard you could envision 3 to 4 hardened OHV areas. You were open to the possibility of including some designated forest roads in those OHV areas and would be willing to look at a JCTRA proposal that included forest roads.

First, we would like to request that the GPNF use the travel management planning process to identify GPNF motorized travel opportunities and solicit public input. The USDA Final Travel Management Rule Communication Plan 2 Nov 2005, Program Message 5 states:

The final rule requires public participation in the designation process. All interested parties will have the opportunity to participate.

Route and area designation decisions will be made by the forest supervisors and district rangers, working closely with local communities.

We strongly believe that utilizing the travel management planning process will provide a good solution.

If it is decided that the GPNF can meet the intent of the travel management planning process by updating and publishing the current motorized trail plan per the 1990 Forest plan, we are requesting that the GPNF honor the 1990 Forest Plan.

The 1990 Forest Plan stipulates that for every mile of motorized trail that would be closed, a replacement mile of motorized trail would be opened. The intent was the replacement trail miles would be a like experience to the miles being closed. To date, about 75 miles of trails have been closed to motorized access and about 24 replacement miles have been opened. This has resulted in 51 less miles of motorized trail access in the GPNF. The JCTRA requests that the GPNF not close any more trails to motorized access until this deficit of motorized trail miles is addressed.

There are concerns about the conditions of motorized trails. JCTRA has been an active steward and partner in maintaining trails in the GPNF. A number of our club members have performed many hours of volunteer trail maintenance work on motorized trails in the GPNF. JCTRA wants to continue to work with the GPNF and be a good steward by maintaining OHV trails in good condition and supporting responsible use of the trails. JCTRA is very willing to work with the GPNF to support responsible use and enforcement as we have done with the DNR and local law enforcement on state lands.

JCTRA is also interested in opening forest roads in compliance with Washington chapter 46.09 RCW, which permits OHV use on nonhighway roads in areas serving designated off-road vehicle areas if the state, federal, local, or private authority responsible for the management of the nonhighway road authorizes the use of off-road vehicles.

Opening designated nonhighway roads to OHV use provides key benefits to the Forest users and also helps improve trail stewardship. The key user benefit is that loops can be created by linking OHV trails with nonhighway roads. Forest users prefer loop experiences. The Forest stewardship benefit is that most users will travel in the most favorable direction on the trail since they can complete a loop instead of doing an out and back trail ride which results in traveling in both the preferred and un-preferred direction. Overall, it is expected that most users will spend less total miles on trails.

We are specifically requesting the following limited set of roads be open to mixed use, including OHV's: 29, 2904, 5601, 5603, 5603017, 2326, portion of 23

connecting 2328 to 5601 and 2334, 2329 and 2334. OHV access on these roads will provide the opportunity to evaluate the benefits of loop opportunities. JCTRA expects the outcome to be positive, allowing the future opportunity to open more roads to OHV use.

Since we are requesting mixed use of currently open roads in compliance with RCW 46.09, we believe that this request can be directly approved by the Forest Supervisor,

The Jones Creek Trail Riders Association is comprised of many hard working, contributing members of society who devote a lot of our time to promoting safe, responsible off-road riding and to the access and maintenance of motorized trails on public lands. We really enjoy the epic motorized trail recreation opportunities within the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. Many of us enjoy these opportunities with our children, who are our future. JCTRA looks forward to collaboratively working with the GPNF to promote safe and effective OHV use.

Sincerely,

Eric Kangas  
Gifford Pinchot Liaison  
Jones Creek Trail Riders Association

cc:

Lynn Burditt  
Ron Freeman  
Robin Rose