

I wanted to express my dismay at the decision to drop motorized from the planning process. The committee has worked hard and done due diligence to identify areas where motorized recreation COULD occur and by caving to the loudest voices in the room (though these concerns are valid) the chance of determining if these areas truly would sustain this form of recreation is no longer possible. My faith has been in carrying this process forward so we can settle the motorized issue through environmental, water quality and travel and access studies based on science and research. What we are left with is continued illegal use of these areas with no mitigation for environmental damage and impacts. I am also disappointed in the DNR's response, or lack of response, to the County Council who were baffled by the lack of DNR presence at the Council meeting and lack of response to their queries to provide a complete plan. Perhaps someone familiar with the process should have done the presentation and could have answered the Council's questions. It feels like the committee has been thrown under the bus, especially the motorized reps, and public calls for the committee to be disbanded is disheartening and marginalizes the work and time the committee members have invested. I hope you can reconsider this decision despite the opposition, perhaps getting some representatives of the local community involved through a subcommittee or similar.

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The tragedy of the Baker to Bellingham process is the great damage that has been done to DNR's reputation in the South Fork, Foothills and East County areas.

This damage has resulted from a process that, from the very beginning, seemed determined to appease the interests of the ORV community. At every turn, from the creation of the "advisory" committee, to the reliance on a disreputable "survey", to the creation of concept plans DNR has demonstrated a disturbing bias in favor of motorized "recreation". Jean Fike, Glen Glover, Dana Levitt and Tim Stapleton, among others, can be singled out for their shameless support for ORV interests. This support, which seems to favor out-of-county voices over those of our own local residents, is unprofessional and deeply disturbing. Never mind the failure to do due-diligence and investigate the blatant pillage of DNR land by some of their own committee members.

In short, DNR seems not to represent me or the interests of my community, a sad outcome. Clearly it seems determined to pursue an effort at cross purposes with its own mission statement. I trust that Hilary Franz will, at some point, make it clear to these individuals that DNR serves a higher purpose and has the ability to work with the vast majority of residents who seek the responsible use of Whatcom County DNR lands.

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It does not surprise me at all that the motorcycle riders and the off road community are being excluded once again. Whatcom County is happy to charge me fees and take money for registration fees for off road vehicle use every year while at the same time refusing to allow off-road use on public lands in Whatcom County.

What a joke. DNR can log an area and it looks like a bomb went off when they are done, but as soon as you ask for one single track trail for people to ride motorcycles on public land and we are the problem? I feel bad for all those who volunteered their own time thinking the process would be legitimate while clearly it is not.

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I'm writing in support of using the Middle Fork route in Section 7. This would be better for long-term protection of the Trail & remove some road walking for hikers.