



June 1, 2015

To Alan Unger, Deschutes County Commissioner, copied to Tammy Baney and Tony DeBone.

We believe the proposed Black Butte Trail is consistent with our mission of promoting non-motorized transportation. As you know, Commute Options, promote choices that reduce the impact of driving alone.

We are aware of the public controversy about this trail, mounted by several residents in Black Butte Ranch and Tollgate. At the same time, official polls show that residents of those two developments favor the trail by a margin of over two to one. Other evidence suggests it is strongly supported by a large number of other individuals and businesses, even if they are less vocal than opponents. We think the trail has clear community support.

Paved trails are an incredible pedestrian and bicycling amenity in any community. Their positive effects are well documented in studies across the US, including here in Central Oregon. They encourage healthy exercise for everyone – from little kids to old folks, they support local economic development by helping attract tourists to visit and to prolong their stay, and – most importantly from our perspective -- they offer an environmentally sound option for active commuting and transportation. There is currently no suitable trail linking Black Butte Ranch to Sisters or Tollgate – leaving residents and workers virtually no option but to drive.

The great advantage of a paved trail is that it can be used by everyone – from the healthy to the handicapped, from the very young to the very old, from solitary users to family outings.

For these reasons, Commute Options endorses this proposal, and fully supports all efforts to resubmit it to the Forest Service for a 2<sup>nd</sup> Environmental Assessment with careful and thorough public scoping. We think this is a project that is important to the citizens of our county and urge the Commission to be as proactive as possible in helping it move forward and be constructed.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Monson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jeff Monson  
Executive Director

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