

WDFW response to public comments received during public review of the Chelan Wildlife Area Management Plan draft under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) from March 30, 2018 until April 30, 2018.		
#	Comment	WDFW Response
1.	<p>I would like to bring to the attention of WDFW planning that 600 acres of Weyerhauser land is up for sale on Mud Creek Rd. both sides of the road from the private property boundaries in the valley bottom all the way up to the entrance to Bisping Canyon. This is prime mule deer winter range and would be best kept as public land. The ad and description in Redfin is as follows.</p> <p>https://www.redfin.com/WA/Entiat/10383-Mud-Creek-Rd-98822/home/145235374?utm_source=myredfin&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=recommendations_update&riftinfo=ZXY9ZW1haWwmbD0xMTkwNjcxNyZwPWxpc3RpbmdfdXBkYXRlc19yZWVbW1lbnRhdGlvbNmdHM9MTUyMjE5MjY3Mzc1MiZlPWNSaWNrJnM9cmVjb21tZW5kYXRpb25zJnQ9YWRkcmVzcyZlZWVpZD0xMTkwNjcxN18xNTlyMTkyNjczXzYmdXBkYXRlX3R5cGU9MTQmbGlsc19zY29yZT0wLjAwOSZsaXN0aW5nX2lkPTgxMTE5NDczJnByb3BlcnR5X2lkPTE0NTIzNTM3NCZwb3NpdGlvbI9udW1iZXI9Mw==</p> <p>I hope that WDFW can collaborate with other conservation buyers like the Chelan Douglas Land Trust to purchase this 600 acres. Thank you. Joe Kelly</p>	<p>WDFW has a formal annual land acquisition evaluation process called Lands 20/20. Using this process, potential acquisitions, such as this parcel, are evaluated, ranked, and are prioritized in each WDFW region. This is a competitive process and there are often only a few projects that receive project support through WDFW statewide. Priority for property acquisitions for the Chelan Wildlife Area will include inholdings and parcels adjacent to existing WDFW ownership.</p>
2.	<p>Thank you for the several mentions in the draft report of the upcoming work with trail groups like the Lake Chelan Trails Alliance. We look forward to this process.</p> <p>Rich - the BLM recently downloaded data from their counter on Elephant's Head. It provides the first annual snapshot of user numbers going up that trail. (see attached) I'm not sure if this data</p>	<p>Thanks for your comment. The data gathered by BLM will be useful during the evaluation process for external recreation development proposals. WDFW recommends that sponsors of recreational development proposals coordinate through the Wildlife Area Manager, who will gather relevant information about the potential compatibility of the development proposal and recommend modifications as needed. We then suggest that</p>

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	<p>would be relevant to include in an appendices of the Management Plan report, but it certainly informs the upcoming conversations about how to best achieve win-win-win with habitat and traditional / non-traditional user groups.</p> <p>Note - the counter divides total number of hits by 2 before recording this data (since it is assumed that travelers to Elephant's Head use same trail up and down). There are some users who just go one way (and so are just counted as a half-user), so if anything the data may be slightly conservative.</p> <p>Thanks again for the notice.</p> <p>Best,</p> <p>Guy Evans</p>	<p>the project sponsor present the development proposal to the Wildlife Area Advisory Committee (WAAC) as a first step in the public evaluation process. The next step would likely be a public meeting if the project sponsor chooses to continue. When you are ready, please work with the Wildlife Area Manager to arrange a date for a WAAC meeting to consider this proposal. These data will certainly be helpful in demonstrating the recreational value of Elephant Head at that time.</p>
3.	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to review each plan, great job of inclusion.</p> <p>I would like to add to the education portion, written information and pictures of class A and B designates and C selects weeds found or close to the wildlife boundary's plus phone numbers or smart phone App download information that could be used to report new noxious weeds to the State Noxious weed board and or the invasive species council. If pictures are taken of the plants we can identify them and take the proper action.</p> <p>You should include the aquatic noxious weeds found in the ponds at Roses Lake and the ponds at Beebe Springs. Eurasian Watermilfoil a class B designate and Curlyleaf pondweed a class C. also a message to boaters and watercraft to Clean Drain Dry a message the state has coined to encourage boater and watercraft to clean their equipment when pulling out of the water.</p>	<p>A goal and objective for developing educational materials suitable for posting at kiosks with information on weed identification and ways to report weed species locations has been added to the plan.</p> <p>Eurasian Watermilfoil and Curlyleaf pond weed are now included in the Weed Management Section and Appendix.</p> <p>Water Access Area staff will include signage at boat launches to increase watercraft users awareness of aquatic weeds and methods to reduce their spread.</p> <p>RCW17.10.140 was added to the Weed Management section.</p>

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	<p>To be added to the Weed Management Section: RCW 17.10.140 Owner's duty to control spread of noxious weeds. (1) Except as is provided under subsection (2) of this section, every owner shall perform or cause to be performed those acts as may be necessary to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) Eradicate all class A noxious weeds;(b) Control and prevent the spread of all class B noxious weeds designated for control in that region within and from the owner's property; and(c) Control and prevent the spread of all class B and class C noxious weeds listed on the county weed list as locally mandated control priorities within and from the owner's property. <p>If you would like some educational materials please contact our office we have many good publications that would be helpful and easy to put on your Kiosk's and many hand out for your employees hand out give to the public.</p> <p>Respectfully</p> <p>Mike Mackey Chelan County Noxious Weed Manager</p>	
4.	<p>It has come to my attention that a proposal for development of a mountain biking trail within the Chelan Wildlife Area has been created. I would like to voice my concern for any further development of the area. The Chelan Butte provides critical habitat for California bighorn sheep, as well as many other wildlife species. The state is lacking in good sheep habitat, while areas for trail riding are not. There are many other areas in close proximity to the Chelan Butte that offer excellent mountain biking</p>	<p>Thank you for expressing your concerns and support for conservation. WDFW received a proposal from a trails advocacy group in December 2016 for a trail development on Chelan Butte. Vetting of the proposal will occur during a public process involving the Wildlife Area Advisory Committee and likely a Public Meeting where the project sponsor will be invited to present their proposal. Your comment and comments received during these events will be included in the evaluation process for this</p>

	<p>opportunities without conflicting with incredibly important bighorn sheep habitat. Please reject any current and future proposals for further development occurring within the Chelan Wildlife Area. The potential negative impacts of further recreation on the sheep, mule deer in their winter range, upland bird habitat and ecosystem functions are too great. Shane Vander Giessen</p>	<p>proposal and you will receive an invitation to these meetings which are likely to occur in Fall 2018. Balancing conservation and recreation is becoming increasingly challenging for managers. Public input is a critical driver in our decision making process and your comment is appreciated.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>The population of doves on both Chelan Butte and Swakane Canyon have drastically declined over the past few years. There needs to be an emphasis in both areas in recovering the dove population through feed plots and or other means of providing food for them during the summer months. Ronald Balzer</p>	<p>WDFW has the value that wildlife populations be maintained on native habitat, and to that end, a focus on the Chelan Wildlife Area is the restoration of agricultural fields to a grassland or shrub-steppe community. The decline of mourning doves is primarily a result of this ongoing restoration effort. Without grain production and associated annual weeds, dove populations will likely never be has high as in the past. On Chelan Butte, there is potential for developing small annual grain food plots to benefit mourning dove; however, necessary funding and equipment is currently lacking.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>There should be plans for protecting and enhancing the numerous birds of prey such as eagles, ospreys, turkey vultures, red tail hawks, and great horned owls and the song birds such as mountain blue birds, lazuli buntings, rufous towhees, flickers, and meadow larks that inhabit both Chelan Butte and Swakane Canyon. Ronald Balzer</p>	<p>All of the species mentioned are currently protected by State and Federal laws. Objectives in the plan speak to protection of these species. Habitat enhancement for these species is ongoing with restoration of agricultural fields to establish native grassland or shrub-steppe habitat. Ongoing and future riparian plantings, especially in Swakane Canyon, along with fence removal, will also enhance habitat for these species.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>I was told that in the 1950s and 1960s there was a large population of sage grouse on Chelan Butte. Today, there are no known sage grouse. Reintroducing them should be a priority item. Ronald Balzer</p>	<p>There is no doubt that a small population of sage grouse existed in the past in the area around Chelan Butte. It is also very likely that sharp-tailed grouse and dusky grouse were the most abundant grouse species in the area due to the steepness of the terrain and grass dominated plant communities. Sage grouse regularly travel across the Columbia River from Douglas County to the Colville Reservation and the vicinity of Pateros in Okanogan County. If suitable habitat exists, now or in the future, on Chelan Butte, sage grouse have demonstrated the ability to disperse to the area.</p>

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8.	<p>There is no mention of the historic wooden barn on Chelan Butte that is the only complete building existing there from the early pioneers. Along with the Lucas home, it should also be listed on the National Register of Historical Places.</p> <p>Ronald Balzer</p>	<p>The plan will include a Cultural Resources Appendix at some point in the future, which will provide context for preservation of historical and prehistoric resources on the Chelan Wildlife Area.</p>
9.	<p>Target shooting in Swakane Canyon should be constrained to the first canyon on the right. Random target shooting farther up Swakane is extremely dangerous. People hike, horseback ride, and hunt beyond the first canyon. These activities occur in both the valley and on the hill sides. Constraining the target shooting to the first canyon should be an <u>immediate priority</u> and not something to be achieved in five years.</p> <p>Ronald Balzer</p>	<p>WDFW is currently assessing existing areas where target shooting occurs, such as the one described here. To improve safety and reduce conflicts between users, agency staff is reviewing the statewide target shooting rule and considering changes that could be implemented where both concentrated sites and dispersed shooting currently exists.</p>
10.	<p>I am whole heartedly against putting a mountain bike trail on Chelan Butte. Time to leave this spot alone.</p> <p>Keith Peter</p>	<p>Thank you for expressing your concerns and support for conservation. WDFW received a proposal from a trails advocacy group in December 2016 for a trail development on Chelan Butte. Vetting of the proposal will occur during a public process involving the Wildlife Area Advisory Committee and likely a Public Meeting where the project sponsor will be invited to present their proposal. Your comment and comments received during these events will be included in the evaluation process for this proposal and you will receive an invitation to these meetings which are likely to occur in Fall 2018. Balancing conservation and recreation is becoming increasingly challenging for managers. Public input is a critical driver in our decision making process and your comment is appreciated.</p>
11.	<p>It has come to my attention that a proposal for development of a mountain biking trail within the Chelan Wildlife Area has been created. I would like to voice my concern for any further development of the area. The Chelan Butte provides critical habitat for California bighorn sheep, as well as many other wildlife species. This state is lacking in good sheep habitat, while areas for trail riding are not in low availability.</p>	<p>Thank you for expressing your concerns and support for conservation. WDFW received a proposal from a trails advocacy group in December 2016 for a trail development on Chelan Butte. Vetting of the proposal will occur during a public process involving the Wildlife Area Advisory Committee and likely a Public Meeting where the project sponsor will be invited to present their proposal. Your comment and comments received during these events will be included in the evaluation process for this</p>

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	<p>There are many other areas in close proximity to the Chelan Butte that offer excellent mountain biking opportunities without conflicting with incredibly important bighorn sheep habitat. Please reject any current and future proposals for further development occurring within the Chelan Wildlife Area. The potential negative impacts of further recreation on the sheep, mule deer in their winter range, upland bird habitat and ecosystem functions are too great. The wildlife of Washington state is truly a gift and one worthy of protection. Loss of habitat will result in further damage to our dwindling populations already struggling with predation, disease, and encroachment by development in other critical areas.</p> <p>Respectfully, Chris Martin</p>	<p>proposal and you will receive an invitation to these meetings which are likely to occur in Fall 2018. Balancing conservation and recreation is becoming increasingly challenging for managers. Public input is a critical driver in our decision making process and your comment is appreciated.</p>
12.	<p>I write to you today to comment on the Chelan Wildlife Area Management Plan.</p> <p>As a Sportswoman, avid outdoors-woman, and contributor to the preservation of wildlife area's in Washington, I would like to express my feelings with preserving the Chelan Wildlife Area. As a tax payer, and purchaser of hunting and fishing licenses (which include a Discover Pass) I strongly appose any development in the Chelan Wildlife Area. Any development such as a mountain bike trail interferes with the goals and objectives of the mission statement of WDFW. I adamantly appose any development that infringes on the habitat of the California Bighorn Sheep which live in the Chelan Wildlife Area. The California Bighorn Sheep is a very sensitive species, and allowing any development that interferes with the propagation of this herd is doing a disservice to the species and all of the hard work to re-establish this herd.</p> <p>Thank you for taking the time to accept public input on this matter.</p>	<p>Thank you for expressing your concerns and support for conservation. WDFW received a proposal from a trails advocacy group in December 2016 for a trail development on Chelan Butte. Vetting of the proposal will occur during a public process involving the Wildlife Area Advisory Committee and likely a Public Meeting where the project sponsor will be invited to present their proposal. Your comment and comments received during these events will be included in the evaluation process for this proposal and you will receive an invitation to these meetings which are likely to occur in Fall 2018. Balancing conservation and recreation is becoming increasingly challenging for managers. Public input is a critical driver in our decision making process and your comment is appreciated.</p>

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	<p>In closing, I oppose any development such as a mountain biking trail in the Chelan Wildlife Area that has a negative impact on native plants and wildlife species such as the California Bighorn Sheep.</p> <p>Sincerely, Washington Wild Sheep Advocate, Cecelia Grant</p>	
13.	<p>I write to you today to comment on the Chelan Wildlife Area Management Plan.</p> <p>As a Sportswoman, avid outdoors-woman, and contributor to the preservation of wildlife area's in Washington, I would like to express my feelings with preserving the Chelan Wildlife Area.</p> <p>As a tax payer, and purchaser of hunting and fishing licences (which include a Discover Pass) I strongly appose any development in the Chelan Wildlife Area. Any development such as a mountain bike trail interferes with the goals and objectives of the mission statement of WDFW. I adamantly appose any development that infringes on the habitat of the California Bighorn Sheep which live in the Chelan Wildlife Area. The California Bighorn Sheep is a very sensitive species, and allowing any development that interferes with the propagation of this herd is doing a disservice to the species and all of the hard work to re-establish this herd.</p> <p>Thank you for taking the time to accept public input on this matter.</p> <p>In closing, I oppose any development such as a mountain biking trail in the Chelan Wildlife Area that has a negative impact on native plants and wildlife species such as the California Bighorn Sheep.</p> <p>Sincerely, Bethany Grant</p>	<p>Thank you for expressing your concerns and support for conservation. WDFW received a proposal from a trails advocacy group in December 2016 for a trail development on Chelan Butte. Vetting of the proposal will occur during a public process involving the Wildlife Area Advisory Committee and likely a Public Meeting where the project sponsor will be invited to present their proposal. Your comment and comments received during these events will be included in the evaluation process for this proposal and you will receive an invitation to these meetings which are likely to occur in Fall 2018. Balancing conservation and recreation is becoming increasingly challenging for managers. Public input is a critical driver in our decision making process and your comment is appreciated.</p>

<p>14.</p>	<p>It has come to my attention that a proposal for development of a mountain biking trail within the Chelan Wildlife Area has been created. I would like to voice my concern for any further development of the area. The Chelan Butte provides critical habitat for California bighorn sheep, as well as many other wildlife species. This state is lacking in good sheep habitat, while areas for trail riding are not.</p> <p>There are many other areas in close proximity to the Chelan Butte that offer excellent mountain biking opportunities without conflicting with incredibly important bighorn sheep habitat. Please reject any current and future proposals for further development occurring within the Chelan Wildlife Area. The potential negative impacts of further recreation on the sheep, mule deer in their winter range, upland bird habitat and ecosystem functions are too great.</p> <p>Respectfully,</p> <p>Matt Pierce</p>	<p>Thank you for expressing your concerns and support for conservation. WDFW received a proposal from a trails advocacy group in December 2016 for a trail development on Chelan Butte. Vetting of the proposal will occur during a public process involving the Wildlife Area Advisory Committee and likely a Public Meeting where the project sponsor will be invited to present their proposal. Your comment and comments received during these events will be included in the evaluation process for this proposal and you will receive an invitation to these meetings which are likely to occur in Fall 2018. Balancing conservation and recreation is becoming increasingly challenging for managers. Public input is a critical driver in our decision making process and your comment is appreciated.</p>
<p>15.</p>	<p>I just wanted to submit a brief comment on the Chelan Wildlife Area draft plan.</p> <p>I know that the plan seems to place an emphasis on maintaining wildlife, however, I have also heard that there may be plans to try to develop a mountain biking trail in the Chelan Butte area. This area is known for its bighorn sheep population (as mentioned in the Draft), and given that bighorn habitat in the state is so limited, I feel like there must be better places for mountain bike trails. The plan also mentions that old roads already provide mountain biking access in the Chelan Butte area, so it's not clear that further development of a trail is necessary. If such a trail is needed, I would strongly support placing the trail in an area that is not inhabited by bighorn sheep. The area's primary concern should be conservation of wildlife.</p>	<p>Thank you for expressing your concerns and support for conservation. WDFW received a proposal from a trails advocacy group in December 2016 for a trail development on Chelan Butte. Vetting of the proposal will occur during a public process involving the Wildlife Area Advisory Committee and likely a Public Meeting where the project sponsor will be invited to present their proposal. Your comment and comments received during these events will be included in the evaluation process for this proposal and you will receive an invitation to these meetings which are likely to occur in Fall 2018. Balancing conservation and recreation is becoming increasingly challenging for managers. Public input is a critical driver in our decision making process and your comment is appreciated.</p>

	<p>Thank you! Allan Scruggs</p>	
<p>16.</p>	<p>Comments from Department of Ecology, Gwen Clear, April 25, 2018, see attached letter.</p>	<p>Thank you for clarifying the requirement of having a water right permit for water used for dust control. Every effort will be made to adhere to Chapter 90.03 RCW Surface Water Code and Chapter 90.44 RCW Regulation of Public Ground Waters.</p>
<p>17.</p>	<p>I am writing to comment on the Chelan Wildlife Area Management Plan. I would like to compliment WDFW on the WAMP process, it is much improved over the past 15-20 years.</p> <p>I have particular concerns for habitat preservation and enhancement for California bighorn sheep, <i>Ovis canadensis nelsoni</i>. Although classified as a big game animal, this formerly extirpated species must be managed more like a threatened or endangered species to avoid re-extirpation. There are only a handful of mostly isolated herds that have been reintroduced in Washington, and they are still very vulnerable to a multitude of threats, some of which are unique to the species. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nonmigratory residents of low elevation foothills habitat; there is no season without potential conflicts with population viability • vulnerability to epizootic events caused by a single individual having contact with domestic sheep and goats • parturition dates as early as March make the species vulnerable to recruitment loss months before other ungulate species • diurnal activity limits them compared to other ungulates in avoiding human disturbances • environmental resistance greatly limits natural genetic flow between relatively isolated populations 	<p>Thank you for expressing your concerns and support for conservation. WDFW received a proposal from a trails advocacy group in December 2016 for a trail development on Chelan Butte. Vetting of the proposal will occur during a public process involving the Wildlife Area Advisory Committee and likely a Public Meeting where the project sponsor will be invited to present their proposal. Your comment and comments received during these events will be included in the evaluation process for this proposal and you will receive an invitation to these meetings which are likely to occur in Fall 2018. Balancing conservation and recreation is becoming increasingly challenging for managers. Public input is a critical driver in our decision making process and your comment is appreciated.</p>

- documented population level declines from human disturbance even when limited to nonmotorized recreation

Bighorns occur primarily in the Swakane and Chelan Butte units. Swakane bighorns are more secure for a variety of reasons, so I am primarily commenting on the Chelan Butte unit, however, the same concerns and considerations may apply there also. A statewide evaluation 2001-2003 identified very limited additional potential reintroduction sites, of which Chelan Butte presented the greatest opportunity to establish a new California bighorn herd. In 2004, the Butte was repopulated with transplanted bighorns from Region 3. Since then, the herd has flourished, however reintroduced bighorn herds often go through an initial pulse of productivity that is not maintained long-term. The current good status of this population should not assumed to indicate they will be robust in the future.

Opportunities for genetic flow are greatly limited as the herd is largely bounded by Lake Chelan and the Columbia River; bighorns rarely disperse across large water bodies. Between Lake Chelan Dam and the Columbia River limited dispersal occurs and there is likely some interchange with the Chelan north herd, however, this linkage is jeopardized by the continued development from Chelan east to highway 97. To the west, limited dispersal opportunities exist for sheep that cross Highways 97A and 971, and there is likely very little interchange with the Swakane herd. For these reasons, it is imperative that the Chelan Butte Unit be managed to the greatest extent possible to provide all bighorn life history needs within the Chelan Butte unit.

Chelan Butte is often targeted for recreation development. Shortly after the bighorns were reintroduced, the WDFW Wenatchee District Team rejected a proposal to develop a system of mountain biking trails as an incompatible use with bighorn sheep conservation. That incompatibility remains, and for this reason any

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<p>new and additional trail or other recreation development proposals on the Chelan Butte unit should be rejected. Further, bighorn sheep habitat should be the priority use of the Chelan Butte unit, given the species' extremely limited numbers and distribution in Washington, analogous to the shrubsteppe species' emphasis for which the Sagebrush Flats wildlife area units are managed. Like the pygmy rabbit, sage grouse, sharp-tailed grouse, Washington ground squirrel, white-tailed jackrabbit and other shrubsteppe obligates, California bighorns are similarly limited (and realistically of similar status) by range and demographic reductions, habitat fragmentation and degradation, introduced disease, and increasing environmental resistance as real and formidable barriers to the longterm viability and persistence of the species.</p> <p>If needed, I would be happy to provide numerous literature citations documenting population level impacts of recreation on bighorn herds, but I am confident your own bighorn specialists are well aware of these cases. One in the news just this week are the dual threats faced by the nonmigratory Teton bighorn herd in Wyoming, the decline of which is linked to backcountry skiing. Numerous studies document the impacts of human activity on bighorns, including chronically elevated heart rates, fecal corticoids, and reduced recruitment, and have been linked to population-level declines and in at least one case extirpation, even when motorized uses are restricted.</p> <p>I implore WDFW to be eternally vigilant against the impacts of what may be perceived as benign and apparently subtle impacts of additional human uses within WDFW lands occupied by bighorn sheep; these lands are critical to the continued existence of bighorns in Washington. It would be no less incongruous a use to develop mountain bike and hiking trails on the Chelan Butte unit, as it would be to locate those same uses on the Sagebrush Flat unit, and for the same reasons.</p>	
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	<p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Beau Patterson</p>	
18.	<p>I am writing to protest any type of mountain bike trail in the chelan Butte wildlife area. This is already has plenty of trails and other available for people. This is a wild life area that supports many types of wildlife including bighorn sheep. Please keep this a limited use area and deny access for the proposed bike trail.</p> <p>Brian Flintoff</p>	<p>Thank you for expressing your concerns and support for conservation. WDFW received a proposal from a trails advocacy group in December 2016 for a trail development on Chelan Butte. Vetting of the proposal will occur during a public process involving the Wildlife Area Advisory Committee and likely a Public Meeting where the project sponsor will be invited to present their proposal. Your comment and comments received during these events will be included in the evaluation process for this proposal and you will receive an invitation to these meetings which are likely to occur in Fall 2018. Balancing conservation and recreation is becoming increasingly challenging for managers. Public input is a critical driver in our decision making process and your comment is appreciated.</p>
19.	<p>There are enough areas for other recreators (bikers) throughout other areas of the state. Why must a recreation area be developed to allow for certain hobbies at the expense of our wildlife habitat? WDFW has proved time and again that managing wildlife is not a priority, instead you would rather spend time and money on building predator populatiins and on non-sportsmen that don't even pay into the wildlife budget. I'm asking that you don't make yet another grave mistake by allowing a recreation area to be developed and precious habitat removed from the wildlife.</p> <p>Regards, Clint Myers</p>	<p>Thank you for expressing your concerns and support for conservation. WDFW received a proposal from a trails advocacy group in December 2016 for a trail development on Chelan Butte. Vetting of the proposal will occur during a public process involving the Wildlife Area Advisory Committee and likely a Public Meeting where the project sponsor will be invited to present their proposal. Your comment and comments received during these events will be included in the evaluation process for this proposal and you will receive an invitation to these meetings which are likely to occur in Fall 2018. Balancing conservation and recreation is becoming increasingly challenging for managers. Public input is a critical driver in our decision making process and your comment is appreciated.</p>