

O P I N I O N



Letters to the Editor...

The Nugget welcomes contributions from its readers, which must include the writer's name, address and phone number. Letters to the Editor is an open forum for the community and contains unsolicited opinions not necessarily shared by the Editor. The Nugget reserves the right to edit, omit, respond or ask for a response to letters submitted to the Editor. Letters should be no longer than 300 words. Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned. The deadline for all letters is noon Monday.

To the Editor:

Just a few quick words about traffic in Sisters: If you like sitting and waiting in summer gridlock, by all means install a few traffic lights; it will get a lot worse. If you like smooth-flowing traffic and no gridlock, you might consider a traffic circle.

I have seen traffic circles function well all over the world, large and small, even for the big trucks, they just have to slow down a little, and isn't that a positive?

I know we all like what we know, but sometimes if you try something new that is proven to work, you might just be surprised.

Susanne Redfield



To the Editor:

Roundabouts work on smaller side streets and routes such as the ones in Bend, but to put one on a main highway is frankly rather nuts.

You don't see roundabouts on Highway 97 in Bend, and there's a good reason for that.

I live in Sisters and hear trucks barrel too fast through town late at night on a regular basis. If a roundabout is installed I can guarantee some unaware trucker sooner or later is going to plow straight through the middle of it on some dark night and make a mess of things along with his rig. Additionally, when the seasonal summer traffic is in full swing it will not be easy for trucks, RVs, and people pulling trailers to navigate.

Despite the so-called mock-up experiment at the Deschutes County Fairgrounds I don't know of any trucker or hauler who thinks this is a good idea. I'm actually sort of incredulous that the Oregon Department of Transportation hasn't nixed the idea a long time ago. When the traffic light was temporarily installed

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Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

| Wednesday             | Thursday       | Friday         | Saturday       | Sunday         | Monday         |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Mostly sunny<br>53/25 | Sunny<br>66/33 | Sunny<br>71/34 | Sunny<br>64/30 | Sunny<br>67/32 | Sunny<br>68/na |

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Support a paved path

By Wendie and Mike Vermillion  
 Guest Columnists

As Sisters residents, we feel compelled to add our voices to the proposed-trail controversy, rather than have others assume to speak for us. It seems necessary to remind folks of all that the Forest Service has accomplished and will continue to pursue in order to care for the land, the trees and the needs of the public. With the help of countless volunteers through the decades, the Forest Service has planned, carved out and maintained hundreds of miles of trails for all sorts of recreational use and camping, for hikers, bikers and equestrians.

These very features have helped build a reliable economic base for our region, which is heavily dependent on tourism, precisely because of our wondrous outdoor offerings. Because we, like so many others, have mingled muscle, sweat and dirt with supervised FS and STA crews, both building and maintaining trails, we can speak credibly of the care, integrity and extremely hard work that Forest Service personnel bring to every project.

Since the Forest Service is mandated by the federal government to not only protect our public lands, but to make them accessible to everyone in a manner that preserves them for future generations, great care is taken to fulfill this obligation. Organizations like the Sisters Trails Alliance have sprung up all over America to offer support for all such endeavors the FS pursues. People in such groups love the land, the trees, and the streams passionately enough to give money and time, all for the benefit of others, many of whom can not or choose not to volunteer.

A recent letter lamenting the loss of trees in building this trail invited people to "take a walk with your children in the woods" to make a point. The author failed to grasp that building a paved trail is an attempt to discourage people from making even more random trails by striking out wherever they wish! A paved trail would allow that walking or riding

pleasure without doing even more damage to our forests.

One complaint argued that our taxes would increase. Perhaps this person is unaware that the federal government has already allocated grant funds for exactly this purpose, so our local taxes would not change unless we voted for a bond proposal at some point, which has not been mentioned at all.

To imply that the Forest Service and the Sisters Trails Alliance are somehow conspiring against any part of our community seems ludicrous, when everything they have done to date has been undertaken with the goal of serving the greater need in the least harmful way. Perhaps some consideration could be given the width of the trail. Perhaps some replanting of trees could be part of the ultimate plan. These are negotiable factors, which the FS seems very willing to consider.

As for individual fears of a mass invasion of hikers or bikers in Black Butte Ranch, we would remind folks that 16 miles is a substantial ride for many, except for avid riders, who are usually riding for mileage, time and distance, and would not be inclined to browse around the living areas any more than bikers do currently. Families would welcome a safe ride or walk for a few miles, as would electric wheel chairs, from either end of the trail. But people would be in our beautiful woods, off the dangerous highway, not making random trails just anywhere, and oh, the animals? Anyone who has hiked will note that the animals also love the path of least resistance, and would likely use that trail as well, after hours!

We need to keep focused on the big picture for today and tomorrow, making sure of our facts and offering positive ideas. We have not heard of any community, so far, with regrets for adding such a trail. We implore folks to trust those who have served us so well for so long, our Forest Service, which is comprised of human beings doing their best.

*Opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the writer and are not necessarily shared by the Editor or The Nugget Newspaper.*