

December 14, 2020

Dear Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation Grant Committee,

The Selkirk Association of REALTORS® strongly supports expansion of the recreational infrastructure within our community. We have a very high percentage of residents who enjoy outdoor activities, and this demographic is growing. The recent increase of outdoor-focused, younger families relocating here has already begun to strain our existing recreational resources. Expanding access to trails within our community will enhance quality of life, make Sandpoint a more attractive place for people to relocate, and have a positive impact on property values for those lucky enough to live within the outdoor playground that is Bonner County.

The improvements as described in Pend Oreille Pedalers' Lower Basin Buildout project would be a great addition to our community. The safety concerns and difficulty on the existing trails, overused as they are, make the current network unfriendly to beginner and intermediate bikers, hikers, and families with children. Adding a separate, uphill-friendly trail, as described for Phase 1, is imperative to make the trail network appealing to families who might be attracted to Sandpoint for its recreational amenities. Additionally, spreading bikers out over more downhill-dedicated routes will for the first time make the Lower Basin an attractive destination for hikers, huckleberry pickers, dog walkers, and runners, who at present avoid the trails due to the lack of safe uphill routes.

On behalf of members of the Selkirk Association of REALTORS®, we support and commend the Pend Oreille Pedalers' efforts to expand access to trails close to Sandpoint. More trails make Sandpoint a desirable place for people to live, which directly benefits the local economy. Additionally, employers looking for places to open their businesses are attracted to towns with more recreational opportunities on their doorsteps, and Pend Oreille Pedalers are making great strides toward expanding outdoor recreation for the communities of Sandpoint and Dover. For these reasons, we at Selkirk Association of REALTORS® encourage you to fund Pend Oreille Pedalers' Lower Basin Buildout project.

Sincerely,



Tia Eagle  
2020 President, Selkirk Association of Realtors