

IN YOUR VIEW

**Increase in illegal ORV/
ATV in Teanaway forest**

To the Editor:

Friends of the Teanaway is a local nonprofit established in 2009. We focus on management and planning issues in the Teanaway Valley and see the Teanaway Community Forest (TCF) as an exciting new direction in the management of public lands. One of the more difficult and controversial management decisions being considered by the advisory committee is whether or not to allow motor-

ized travel on the TCF.

There are numerous places throughout the state where motorized travel, legal or otherwise, has clearly resulted in significant environmental damage. To avoid damage to the land and to help prevent forest fires, Boise Cascade and later American Forest Land Company, the previous owners of the TCF land, posted their property with signs prohibiting motorized access and attempted to enforce the closure with patrols.

In spite of their efforts, trail bikes, Jeeps and other wheeled

off-road vehicles caused considerable damage to roads, trails and off-road areas of the forest. When the TCF was established, DNR made it clear that while management planning was underway there would be no change in this policy of a complete ban on motorized travel. In spite of this continuing ban, there has been an alarming increase in illegal travel by ORV/ATV riders.

When the Washington state Legislature appropriated funds for the TCF purchase, they made very clear that the top

management goals must be watershed and habitat protection and restoration. Friends of the Teanaway takes the position that in order to meet these goals, no motorized travel should be allowed on the TCF. Allowing motorized travel on the TCF will most certainly result in unacceptable damage to the land.

*Pico Cantieni
secretary; Friends of the
Teanaway (www.friendsoftheteanaway.org), Cle Elum*