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Comments:

My concerns are, briefly, these rule changes will disincentivize non-local riders such as the several business owners in my group from the Front Range who travel to different areas of Colorado and the Rocky Mtn west several times each summer for motorized trail riding. We are all members of several riding organizations, such as the TPA and Cohvco, and have spent countless hours and money supporting the maintenance and preservation on our trails. Additionally, we are respectful stewards of those same areas. I've spent hundreds of hours in areas like Rico and to the best of my memory, have never seen another non-motorized group helping with trail maintenance etc.

Specifically regarding Rico. When we travel to an area, as we have to RWD, we stay at the local hotels, buy dinners and breakfasts in the area restaurants and often buy other items, either personal, or gifts for family members to take back. Special areas, such as Rico, are so memorable that we frequently return with our entire family for long visits.

Two major items I'll address, keeping it short since others have very much more eloquently described them. Trail access, and the ability to create riding loops and access the town of Rico are severely diminished. Safety is a concern when summer thunderstorms arrive and you need to bail off the top of the mountain. Nearly every proposed trail change needs to be revised for these reasons. Secondly, the proposed season is much too short. It takes a month to clear many of those trails, I know this personally. The prime riding season is often immediately during or after the proposed closing date. Any conflict with hunters (of which I'm one, both bow and rifle) are overstated. No hunter worth his or her salt should be hunting anywhere near a public trail if they expect to have reasonable success. As a bow hunter, I often appreciate the motorized activity, for if (as this is a big if) they do affect game, they often move it to my benefit.

Finally, I'll add that I fully understand and support the need for non-motorized areas. I enjoy these as well both on my mtn bike, or as a hiker in the wilderness ones. But we already have extensive, non motorized and non-mechanized areas throughout Colorado, including many areas immediately near RWD. If a person wants to enjoy such an activity, they are fully free to do so in countless areas. But our motorized areas are being cut every day, to the point that there are very few left of a riding quality similar to RWD, and within those areas riders are being crowded to the point riding conditions are unsafe and trail maintenance is untenable. In short, we do not have similar unlimited options, yet we each pay the same "fee" to use these forests.

Assuming these changes are finalized it is unlikely we, and many others, will continue to come to Rico to the detriment of the local businesses (and frankly the many trails which will not longer receive the maintenance and clearing the do now).

Respectfully submitted,

Jon Snider, M.D.

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