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Rico-Dolores DEIS Comments

Hi Debbie:

Please find my comments below regarding the recently released Rico-West Dolores DEIS.

I am a single-track motorcycle rider and support the San Juan Trail Riders' position on Alternative C (Modified). Of particular importance to me are:

1. The restoration of the Morrison Trail easement down to Highway 145. Without this critical addition, we are left with only ONE TRAIL (Gold Creek) up and down from the Bear Creek drainage to Haycamp Mesa. This not only places additional usage on Gold Creek, but ignores "Best Practices" in trail management by not providing a trail-based loop opportunity from the town of Rico to Haycamp Mesa. The SJTRs suggest a logical option for a new alignment to minimize potential objections from landowners in the valley.

2. Ryman Creek. Here again, this trail provides a critical segment needed to complete a great loop. This trail is quite steep, and therefore is not likely to be a trail favored by hikers. Despite its relatively steep grades, the trail has withstood the test of time supporting motorized use and there's no evidence that it can't continue to do so.

I likewise support the SJTR's position on Wildcat & Burnette Creeks, Bear/Little Bear (connecting to Grindstone) and the overriding importance of "no net loss of single track motorized trail." The RWD area truly represents one of the last super-alpine trail experiences for trailbike riders. The amount of Wilderness now designated in Colorado (and much of the west) has gone far beyond the point of balancing the needs of all forest users. The scales have tipped much too far in favor of one narrow segment (non-motorized) at the great expense of all other trail users. In addition, I believe that one private landowner in particular (Henckel) in the West Dolores drainage has received special treatment, likely due to his proclivity for litigation and his ability to spend huge sums of money doing so. From my vantage point as a non-resident who drives thousands of miles to and from Rico every year to ride, it looks as though one individual has "bought" the Forest. The thought of this makes me very sad indeed.

I know you and the rest of the team are in a difficult situation and I respect the challenge you face in accommodating so many varied uses on the RWD. It is truly a special place and represents a real opportunity to showcase the Forest Service's original charter of "multiple use and sustained yield." Here's hoping the greater good wins-out in this fight.

Best Regards,

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Sent from my iPad