

Date submitted (UTC): 6/11/2016 4:11:12 PM  
First name: Gordon  
Last name: Rodda  
Organization:  
Title:  
Official Representative/Member Indicator:  
Address1:  
Address2:  
City:  
State:  
Province/Region:  
Zip/Postal Code:  
Country:  
Email: gordon.rodde@gmail.com  
Phone:  
Comments:  
Rico West Dolores Roads and Trails #44918

I am writing to urge the San Juan National Forest to protect the Rico/West Dolores (RWD) area from excessive motorized trail use by selecting Alternative E in their Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). It is imperative we safeguard the 245,000 acres of the Dolores River watershed for wildlife habitat, watershed health and quiet-use recreation activities including hiking, biking, horseback riding, fishing, foraging, hunting and more.

One area that seems particularly worthy of additional restrictions on motorized use is the Calico Trail south of the Lizard Head road (535). The erosional damage to wetlands in that area is severe and the degradation is increasing by virtue of channeling water down the motorized ruts. If there is insufficient money for rebuilding that trail along dryland alignments, it should be closed entirely to wheeled vehicles and available funds used to stabilize erosion. As an avid mountain-biker I accept that resource protection sometimes trumps continued use, and I expect motorized users to accept the same restriction.

The majority of trails in the area should be designated for quiet use only. Non-motorized users have been increasingly displaced from the single-track trails in the RWD area by motorized dirt bikers - it's accurate to note that user conflicts exist! Motorcycles are inappropriate on our public use trails in backcountry roadless areas with alpine tundra, wetlands, meadows, streams and other pristine features. While dirtbikers are a small percentage of trail users, their negative impacts are disproportionately greater including the displacement of quiet trail users, harm to wildlife habitat, the elimination of potential for wildlife viewing, trail erosion, and the fouling of streams and wetlands. Motorized users have access to plenty of trails elsewhere in the Dolores District and quiet users deserve an area reserved primarily for their use.

Motorized use should be open from July 1 to September 8 at a maximum to protect elk and deer in the early summer. Secure and ample wildlife habitat is imperative for an array of species in the area and also important to me as a forest visitor with an interest in wildlife viewing, sightseeing, hunting and quietly enjoying our forested public lands. Volumes of research indicate that motorized use of trails is harmful to wildlife habitat and inhibits wildlife viewing as well as hunting experiences. Hunters are the largest user group in the RWD area and they deserve a quiet hunt annually from September 9 onward. As well, elk and deer would welcome a quiet spring season for rearing their young.

Please implement Alternative E, as it is the only option for protecting quiet users and wildlife from the noise, smell and hazards of motorized trail traffic.

Gordon Rodda  
404 Adobe Dr.  
Hesperus, CO 81326