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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 by selecting Alternative E in their Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The Dolores River watershed must be protected for wildlife habitat, watershed health and quiet-use recreation activities including hiking, biking, horseback riding, fishing, foraging, hunting and more.

Motorcycles are inappropriate in backcountry roadless areas with alpine tundra, wetlands, meadows, streams and other pristine features. Their negative impacts include harm to wildlife habitat, the elimination of potential for wildlife viewing, trail erosion, and the fouling of streams and wetlands.

Specifically, the following trails should be designated as non-motorized: the East Fork Trail; the Northern Calico Trail (the trail is already damaged by too much motorcycle use, it goes above timberline where the ground is easily damaged); and the Bear Creek Trail and all the trails going into that drainage (a very pristine, roadless area).

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.

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