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Comments:

These issues will most certainly continue through time. I am an offroad motorcycle enthusiast that only got into the sport in the last few years. I am also an avid mountain biker and backpacker and have been utilizing the backcountry via those modes of transport for over 20 years. First of all, the trail riding community is one of the most responsible groups I have been affiliated with and there is no desire by anyone to damage the trails. The group is the only "pay to play" group providing funding for trail maintenance and also does a lot of trail maintenance on their own time. I understand why people like the quiet aspect while out in the mountains, but these people must realize that they are not the only ones that want to be in the mountains. I've ridden past herds of elk that just watch as you ride by. They don't seem startled at all. Then they just go back to grazing. Why can't the quiet use groups just model themselves after the wildlife and do the same? We all have a right to be here. I like trail riding because it is a fun way to get out and cover long distances seeing wildlife and landscapes in a day that would take me multiple days on a mountain bike. It's a shame we seem to live in a society that have so many close minded people that team up to take away rights of others so they can have it their way. I respect other people's lifestyle choices and actually enjoy the diversity that we find because of them. I like seeing other people out enjoying nature regardless of how they do it. If some trails need to be rerouted or closed to motorized because of fragile habitat, I can understand that, but not if it is only because of some people's opinions and desires. We are in SW Colorado and have enormous amounts of land put aside as Wilderness. That should be plenty of "quiet use" area if people don't want to hear a motor.

As a side note, if trails are closed due to noise concerns, what about if we ride electric bikes? The technology keeps getting better and it should not be long before they become more capable and prevalent.

Trail damage is another subject. As mentioned, fragile areas are fragile and I can understand not wanting bikes in wet, marshy areas. This should actually go for mountain bikes, horses and cows as well. Routing trails on steep areas to prevent erosion is also obviously a good idea. I've seen the trail impacts of mtn bikes, horses, cows and motorcycles and really don't believe that motorcycles do much worse. In order of impact from least to most in fact, I say mtn bikes, motorcycles, horses, cows. Motorcycles can help buff back out the trail impacts from the horses and cows and also the narrow ruts created by the mtn bikes. We do need to educate some riders so that they are not spinning their wheels, but that is a surmountable issue and they are a small fraction of the riders out there riding trails. I think we can all work together to help maintain these trails and keep them open to all who want to enjoy our beautiful San Juans.

Respectfully,
Scott