

Comments on Dispersed Vehicle Camping CR162 Chaffee County CO

There have been several instances of dispersed vehicle camping already without approval and the Forest Service has not had the ability to control this, therefore we strongly urge the USFS to abandon this idea for the following reasons:

#1 FIRE - It is stated in the proposal that fires would not be permitted. Dispersed vehicle camping and fires are not permitted now, but that has not prohibited them. The users most likely will not have means to put out fires started should any spread. Even the fires in the rings in the campgrounds are a hazard. Sparks cause fires. Just ask homeowners insurance companies. Campers are not equipped with enough water, shovels, knowledge, etc. to control this. Dispersed camping will only increase this risk. Why endanger our public and private lands unnecessarily?

#2 TRAFFIC - This road becomes narrow in several places, campers not getting off the road completely (as already the ATV Trailers don't) will cause more traffic issues. As well as ATVs in areas not permitted. Foot traffic and risk of accident and or injury is imminent. This is a one road in and out of the canyon. Emergency vehicles could be impeded, and residents and visitors could incur issues trying to leave if an issue arises.

#3 POLLUTION - This says it all. Trash, human waste, camping near a water source. Bad idea.

#4 ECOLOGICAL IMPACT – Dispersed vehicle camping has the potential risk to disturb Mother Nature in her element. Everything has its purpose. As property owners near and along CR162, we know for a fact, there are areas that may appear ideal for this purpose, but are habitats for the resident wildlife. We need to preserve some of the public grounds for their use. If their grounds are invaded, where will they go? Into the local campgrounds and residential areas? I assume all kinds of demographics would chose to use this method, but if they are coming in from areas away from here, will they stop along the way and get a bundle of firewood because it's cheaper? Introducing issues there. Again, this is just a bad idea.

#5 ECONOMICAL IMPACT - The campgrounds have not always been full the last few years. Why would you take away their livelihood and support? If it is a peak time when the campgrounds are full, that only compounds all of these issues. Overcrowding becomes a problem. If the campgrounds are full, please schedule your trip for non-peak times, or find other lodging in the area. This canyon has quite developed for a lot of vacation rentals. People have heavily invested in this for various reasons. Some cannot afford the real estate now and have chosen to rent out homes to defray costs when the property is idle. How will policing this boondoggle be funded? From prior experience with the Forest Service they are already strapped for staffing. Again, this is just a bad idea.

#6 SECURITY – Introducing Dispersed Vehicle Camping into the area of mixed private and public land only increases risks of private property infringement. Confusion as to property lines will ensue unnecessarily. This is an issue already, why compound it?

In summation, this has not been given due attention and consideration. Please consider the undue burden to be put on the Chaffee County Road Department, and Fire Protection District as well as the risk to the residents of Chalk Creek Canyon area. There are several ways in place already to enjoy this area safely. Please withdraw this proposal from County Road 162.