



## PARKS & OPEN SPACE

Janet Kask, Director

March 31, 2025

Ms. Krystina Smith  
USFS Norwood Ranger District  
P.O. Box 388  
1150 Forest Street  
Norwood, CO 81423

RE: Support for Trail Expansion (#65616) in the Telluride  
Region – San Miguel County Parks & Open Space Dept.

Dear Ms. Smith,

On behalf of the San Miguel County Parks & Open Space department, I am writing to express our strong support for the proposed trails outlined in the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Telluride Mountain Club's Trails Proposal.

We support the expansion of all new trails that the Telluride Mountain Club has proposed within the Telluride region, and the greater San Miguel County. You have already received letters of support from the San Miguel County Open Space Commission, the San Miguel County Historical Commission and the Board of County Commissioners.

The County, along with our regional partners, recognize the importance of enhancing recreational trail opportunities within our region and we applaud the Telluride Mountain Club's trails proposal, which will create and increase new trail options for the local community and visitors alike.

The Telluride Mountain Club identified necessary trail connectors along with new trails when they surveyed the local community and prepared their Trails Sustainability Plan. Improving trail connectivity and increasing trail options will provide more recreational opportunities for our region. This is vital for our community, which highly values outdoor recreation and depends on recreational tourism.

New trails would also alleviate the burden on overcrowded trails in our area. Expanding our trail system is crucial to address the escalating popularity of outdoor recreation in the County. The Bridal Veil Trail, which is our most popular trail, has seen rapidly increasing trail usage since 2020 and is the most heavily-used County trail. Our trail counters have captured in excess of 70K trail users per season. This has resulted in significant impacts including the creation of rogue social trails within the conservation easement, litter, human/pet waste, high vehicular traffic and overcrowded parking areas.

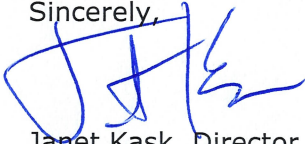
The proposed South Side Perimeter Trail would provide alternative access for trail users aiming to reach and connect with Bridal Veil Falls from town. The South Side Perimeter Trail will also provide an alternative route to the County's Idarado Legacy Trail, which is also heavily used and has been impacted by mudslides. The South Side Perimeter Trail will provide a natural, rugged and scenic alternative hiking route.

Our department is also very supportive and excited for the proposed Ilium Flume Trail, as this is a passion trail project for our County's Historical Commission, whereas much of the historic flume structure still remains. To create a new trail parallel to this structure will spark the interest of numerous history buffs looking to experience the path and route of this historic flume.

The County's Parks & Open Space department has capable and dedicated staff who are committed to performing the ongoing trail maintenance required for proposed alignments within County property boundaries and easements.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment and your time and consideration. Thanks also for your dedication to preserving and enhancing our outdoor recreational opportunities.

Sincerely,



Janet Kask, Director  
San Miguel County  
Parks & Open Space Department