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April 13, 2025

Adam Bianchi
District Ranger, Dillon Ranger District
c/o Samuel Massman
via email: samuel.massman@usda.gov

Regarding: Comments on Town of Frisco Backyard Fuels and Recreation Project

Dear Mr. Bianchi:

As a local resident who is fortunate to live about a ¼ mile from the Frisco Backyard Project, and one of the founding members of the Friends of Dillon Ranger District, I am submitting these comments to the proposed logging and recreational trails management project. Thank you, your staff and the Town of Frisco staff who were so helpful at the open house on April 9 to explain the goals of the project and very knowledgeably respond to our questions. The maps and general proposal are so much better than what could have been presented after the initial scoping and environmental assessment. Sam Massman and Tyler from the Dillon Ranger District and Dustin (sp?) from the BLM interagency fire service were particularly helpful.

Recreation.

As an avid backcountry skier, the planned trail improvements are quite exciting. The groomed loop trail is interesting and I suppose can help reduce the conflicts between fat tire bikers and skiers. But the proposal to allow winter biking on all trails will definitely interfere with the superb skiing, especially on the steeper and narrow single track trails. Shared use of the groomed and wider trails like Miner's Creek Road and the bike path is clearly not a problem and perhaps winter bikes could be limited to these areas and no higher. But fat tire bikers definitely can make single track and steeper trails more difficult for skiing. Any accommodations to preserve some of the best winter backcountry skiing available from a town would be appreciated. Perhaps like near Breckenridge some trail condition guidance could be posted at trail heads perhaps with volunteer assistance. I would be interested in helping with such a project, whether in summer or winter.

The effort to redesign existing trails along with fuel projects is commendable. One prescription on the north face of Ophir, I think it was area 63, could benefit from removal of more than dead trees to remove an unhealthy small lodgepole desert and create some excellent ski glades. The aspect and pitch are generally quite favorable, and glades can be narrow or cut where appropriate to minimize avalanche potential.

The 3rd Avenue/Zach's Stop Trailhead improvements look great and yet it has at times been too small for cars overflowing into town streets. One suggestion is to use the west Frisco exit as an alternative trailhead and promote the existing trail which connects to the Mount Royal Trail.

Biodiversity.

It's extremely good news that the huge clear cuts for the east face of Ophir and the summit of Gold Hill will be avoided. It seems that wetland corridors will be largely maintained, and I hope every effort will be made preserve wildlife habitat.

Thank you, the Town of Frisco and your staff for your excellent work to try to preserve our Frisco Backyard, make it recreation more available and provide some protection for Frisco from wildfire.

Sincerely,



Mark Richmond

Copy: Pete Swenson
Katie Kent