

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/26/2021 11:00:00 AM

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Title:

Comments: [Copied from Attachment]

One of the things that brings us serious pause anymore in regards to any Forest Management Plan anymore seems to be the loss of motorized vehicle and recreational motorized vehicle routes. Whether that be a high clearance four-wheel drive road and trail or a road and trail that is condemned for lack of use and then is taken off of the MVUM plan because nobody is using it or it is recategorized for a different use. Also, it would seem that the National Forest management plans are being drafted so that every user faction gets a piece of the National Forest for their own benefit. The mantra for years has always been share the trail for all users but that seems to not be the case anymore. This can be seen in every proposed draft document that is open for the public to review. The U.S. Forest system is not acquiring new lands to add to federal lands but what is happening is the loss of access due to lands within the Forest Service system being placed into a wilderness designation so that motorized vehicles cannot be used or categorized as a roadless area. I grew up hunting the Uncompaghe Plateau as a local with friends and family back in the 70s before it became a prize trophy hunting area in the 80s. I look at all of the restrictions just for the plateau and we wonder why would we keep adding more wilderness areas which are smaller in size which give a checker board effect. When wilderness areas use to be large tracts of lands that were set aside to keep the original state of the land. Which is not possible to do anymore because humans have intruded on every part of federal lands

Restricting any motor vehicle travel and not replacing what was restricted or taken away has a very bad effect because you put more users into areas that are smaller which causes more environmental damage. The fix from the Forest Service for when this happens is to shut the road or trail system down. We are sorry to see the Forest Service getting grants or donations for trail maintenance. The budget issued to every district ranger should have enough funding for road and trail maintenance without having to accept a donation or a grant. If a trail or road needs to be shut down for maintenance so be it but one of the things that is very irritating anymore is a lack of enforcement because there are not enough law enforcement personnel to stop the making of illegal mountain bike, UTV, ATV trails and cutting of illegal roads. We have permits to operate on federal lands for our rallies and our oversight of every participant is very stringent to make sure that they stay on the correct MVUM route and there is no cutting cross country. This came from years of being within a law enforcement agency which gave us the experience to become a promoter charter organizer for motorcycle rallies after retirement. If you look at the Uncompahgre plateau as an example it is troubling to see how the trail system and roads are getting smaller.

We are not for anymore new roadless areas or new wilderness areas, what we would like is more enforcement and oversight. We want more money from the federal government for trails and road maintenance when required. All trail users should be able to share the trail or road and not be restricted to a certain category of ROS. We would also like to see the growth of more road and trail systems instead of the reduction. The numbers are not going to go down for mountain bikers and the numbers are not going to go down for recreational motorized vehicle users but they all have the same characteristics they both cause damage to the environment if the proper oversight and maintenance is not done. We preach the Leave No Trace Principals for our operations on federal lands and we do not operate when the mud season is in effect or after a heavy rain due to soils damage that would occur. We would also like to see more logging operations preferably select logging operations instead of clear cutting and the use of helicopters for retrieval of timber. The droughts we have had for the last 15 years has played a major impact on standing timber especially with the pine beetle infestation.

If we do not log and wait for a fire to break out it causes extreme damage to the soils for regrowth of the forest due to the extreme heat generated by super fires which in turn effects the watershed for populated areas.

Looking back at the 70s from today and all of the changes on Bureau of Land Management lands and Forest Service lands on the Western Slope of Colorado and it is shocking to say the least because yes they are still federal lands for the public to enjoy but the manner of that enjoyment has been extremely over restricted.

If these are the only choices for the new management plan, we select the following.

Summer Recreation Opportunities [ndash] Alternative C Forest Wide

Management Area [ndash] Alternative C Forest Wide

Scenic Integrity Objective- Alternative C Forest Wide

Winter Recreation Opportunity- Alternative C Forest Wide

Timber Suitability [ndash] Alternative C Forest Wide

Sincerely,

Michael Graves, Director