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Comments: Comments regarding the Integrated Management of Target Shooting on the Pike National Forest, project #57807 and the proposed developed Turkey Tracks Shooting Area

Commenter: William Alspach, P.E., Woodland Park, CO on behalf of the Colorado Trails Preservation Alliance

?These comments are submitted in support of the Integrated Management of Target Shooting on the Pike National Forest Project, November 2023. The management of recreational shooting on public lands within the Pike National Forest has been needed for several years.

?Comments are in support of Alternative 2; Proposed Action.

?Comments provided are specific to the proposed development of the site at Turkey Tracks (off Colorado highway 67, approx. ten miles north of Woodland Park). The proposed development features and shooting range improvements are supported with the following comments:

oThe existing location and alignment of NFSR 343 that traverses through the proposed Turkey Tracks shooting area provides unique vehicle and motorcycle access and connectivity between SH 67 and Teller County Road 78. NFSR 343 also provides distinctive connectivity for licensed vehicles and OHV's between the Rainbow Falls and North Divide recreation areas along with access to NFSR 343.B and the proposed future connection between NFSRs 343.B & 340.B. Preservation of access and the connectivity provided by NFSR 343 should be preserved after implementation and construction of the Turkey Tracks shooting area improvements are completed. Minor re-routing or re-alignment of the existing NFSR 343 corridor should be considered to improve route sustainability, reduction of erosion and sediment production, improved resources protection and to enhance safety away from the shooting activities or potential interaction with errant rounds from the proposed Long-Range Precision Rifle feature.

oThe proposed plan is not specific or clear as to how the safety of vehicles traveling along NFSR 343, especially along the portion of NFSR 343 parallel to the southern boundary of the Long-Range Precision Rifle feature, is needed or how safety might need to be enhanced or improved to protect errant rounds from striking users of NFSR 343.

oThe proposal is not specific or clear if Adaptive Management Framework determines that closure of the Turkey Tracks area is required and how or where gates might be installed to restrict or control access only to the shooting area. If gates would be deployed and used to close the Turkey Tracks shooting area, where would the gates be located and how would access and connectivity of NFSR 343 be maintained for non-shooting activities and travel? Non-shooting uses and access to NFSR 343 must not be dependent exclusively upon the actions and behaviors of the users of the Turkey Tracks shooting area. Recommend that an alternative or substitute access point be considered (e.g., across SH 67 from the entrance to Rainbow Falls) to separate access to the Turkey Tracks shooting area and connection to NFSR 343 for non-shooting activities and travel. Realizing that this proposed access point and route corridor is on existing Manitou Experimental Forest property, the location is conducive to separating recreational access to NFSR 343 from access and uses solely related to the Turkey Tracks recreational shooting activities.