

Thank you for adhering to the NEPA process that provides the opportunity to comment on the preliminary EA for the proposed Redstone to McClure Pass Trail #56913.

My concerns range from general, process-based issues, to specific impacts on wildlife. As we continue to see our local elk herds dwindle in numbers due to impacts from climate change, increased recreation, and the cyclical nature of populations, I am concerned that this trail will provide additional access for recreation that will impact the elk. I am concerned that the benefits of a seasonal trail closure will be negated by the increased impacts of 3-season recreation on the proposed trail.

As a procedural concern, I feel that breaking the larger trail proposal into smaller segments for analysis does not allow for a whole system approach. This portion of the trail is part of a much larger, 83-mile proposal for a trail from Redstone to Crested Butte. The project should be examined in its entirety. The scale of this project and its environmental impacts should be considered as a full package so that all impacts can be identified as part of this analysis. A piecemeal analysis process does not do justice to this landscape and its components.

I would prefer to see an alternative that creates a bike corridor along the existing highway. This would have the least impact on the surrounding lands. An alternative for this possibility was not included in the proposal.

Lastly, the Forest Service must revise its environmental analysis to address the following:

- E-bikes cannot be permitted on any segment of the trail. The proposal to allow e-bikes on portions of the trail but not others is an unenforceable management situation. NO E-BIKES. Do not open this Pandora's Box of electrified access. Motorized vehicles belong on highways, not bike paths. I am concerned that enforcement of regulations will be impossible.
- Bighorn sheep recovery efforts are underway in the Crystal Valley, and this trail could impair those efforts.
- Impacts on Canada lynx, peregrine falcons, and wetland ecosystems are not adequately addressed or mitigated in the environmental assessment.

Thank you for considering my comments.