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First name: Gordon

Last name: Reichard

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Recreational Assessment of the Forest Service Plan.

While it is an improvement over the 30 year old plan it still lacks in a few areas.

1. It appears as though the area around Ridgway/Ouray was left out of much of the plan to increase the number of "non-motorized trails." The USFS knows well our challenges and lack of "sustainable" single track trails in the Ridgway/Ouray area. Our terrain is often very steep and rocky but with the right planning and teamwork, there could be several miles of sustainably built singletrack added to the region. The few hiking trails there are around Ouray are often very steep and unsustainable resulting in huge annual maintenance challenges. Ridgway has developed a number of sustainable non-motorized trails on BLM that has brought a significant economic boost to the area. It is my desire to see the number of non-motorized trails (with appropriate seasonal closures to protect large game wildlife habitat) increased to further increase the appeal of the area for low impact recreation users and concomitant economic development! I would like to suggest you please consider including the Ridgway Area as a separate geographic region in Appendix A outlining at least the mountain biking needs and economic driving forces to the community.

2. I would like to see a clear statement in the plan as to A) The standard that USFS trails are to be developed and maintained. As an example, the Dallas Trail (just south of Ridgway) is a great trail but has many unsustainable switchbacks, boggy areas and just bad lines. The Ridgway Area Trails (RAT) group is happy to work with the USFS to see that the trail is maintained and improved to the standard set by the Forest Service. However without a clearly articulated standard, one cannot know what constitutes a poorly maintained trail or even what trail needs attention. B) There needs to be a list of all sanctioned trails (and which trails have been decommissioned) and to what useable standard they are to be maintained by which agency or group and on what frequency. This would give all volunteer groups working with the Forest Service a clear understanding of what their role is and how best to work with the FS. I know of trails that have fallen into disrepair and are thus unusable, but could be revived and made into a very valuable non-motorized trail that would attract users to the area.

3. The proposed plan totally misses the boat for one major recreational user - Mountain Bikers. Currently there is no mention of a need for high density looped singletrack. There is mention of challenge courses and loops but that is no language about "high density looped singletrack" in the assessment. This is what brings mt. bikers to a destination.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment,
Gordon Reichard