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Comments: THE OUTDOOR RECREATION INDUSTRY IS BOOMING, OVER $800 BILLION DOLLARS IN 2019. THIS IS GREAT NEWS ON ONE HAND, BUT ON THE OTHER HAND, ALL THIS SUCCESS IS CREATING NEW OUTDOOR ISSUES. ONE OF THOSE BEING SO MANY OF US HUMANS IN THE OUT OF DOORS IS REMOVING AND DISTURBING CRITICAL WILDLIFE HABITAT. RIGHT HERE IN DURANGO IN OUR SURROUNDING MOUNTAINS ELK POPULATIONS ARE CONSISTENTLY DROPPING WITH ONE OF THE CAUSES IDENTIFIED BY COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE AS OUTDOOR RECREATION, I.E. ELK CALVING AND BREEDING SEASONS DISTURBED BY THE NUMBERS OF MOUNTAIN BIKERS ON HIKING TRAILS. I'M NOT BLAMING MOUNTAIN BIKERS AS I WAS HIKING MYSELF UP LIME CREEK LATE IN THE DAY ABOUT A MONTH AGO. AND CAME UPON 4 OR 5 ELK GRAZING AT THE TOP OF A MEADOW 300 YDS. AWAY. I FROZE IN THE TRAIL BECAUSE I DIDN'T WANT TO DISTURB THEIR FEEDING TIME, BUT IT WAS TOO LATE. THEY TROTTED OFF INTO THE TIMBER AWAY FROM THE NEW FRESH GRASS THEY HAD BEEN GRAZING UPON, AND THAT WAS JUST ME WALKING SIENTLY ON THE DIRT TRAIL!
I SINCERELY BELIEVE THAT IF WE ARE TO SUSTAIN AND RECOVER OUR PRECIOUS WILDLIFE, WHICH IS ONE OF THE PRIMARY REASONS PEOPLE VISIT WILDLANDS, WE NEED TO BE VERY CAUTIOUS AND PROCEED WITH ANY CHANGES ONLY AFTER THOROUGH STUDIES HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED.
PURGATOTY IS A WONDERFUL RESORT, HOWEVER, THEY LIKE ALL OUTDOOR RECREATION ORGANIZATION MUST RESPECT AND BE GREAT STEWARD OF WILDLIFE AND WILDLANDS OR WE ALL WILL LOSE AN IRREPLACEBLE AND PRECIOUS RESOURCE.