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Comments: A significant impact would be on the sections of existing trails that happen to be on Level 1 roads (closed roads that are in storage and can be reopened for projects). The EA allows for some of these roads to be reopened and rebuilt for logging operations. This will obviously destroy the singletrack tread and reduce the value of the trail and user experience. Multiply that by the repetitive cutting cycles and the possibility of future projects, and these trail sections may not look natural again for years, if ever. A solution is rerouting ALL non-motorized trail sections off Level 1 roads and/or permanent removal of the Level 1 status from appropriate already closed road sections. SWCCA volunteers have contributed time and resources to these sections, as such, funding for these reroutes should come from the project proceeds. (Ref. EA pages 48 and 57.)

This project will result in temporary trail closures. To "ease the pain" of these closures, mitigate frustrations and minimize the negative economic impact here are solutions:

Lifting closures any time there will be more than a two-week no-work gap in operations.

Utilizing existing, numerous roads as trail detour routes instead of a complete trail closure. SWCCA volunteers are willing to assist with the trail detour routing and the placement of temporary guidance signage.

Only close the trail section when there are dangerous operations within a defined buffer around the trail.

SWCCA volunteers are willing to assist posting "Danger, stay on trail..." signs and assist in marking buffer area.

Speed limits and slow down signage should be posted and enforced for logging trucks at trail crossings and parking areas.

Removing trees along winter recreation routes could impact snow levels and negatively affect grooming efforts.

The proposed non-motorized trail from the town of Dolores to the Bean Canyon trail becomes more critical when considering the EA's Modified Proposed Action. The proposed trail generally parallels Road 31, providing a safer alternative for trail users versus the heavily trafficked road. Road 31 will be the haul route for the logging trucks in the proposed project. Providing a trail alternative to the road is safer for the trail users and the logging trucks and should be a top priority. A portion of the proposed trail includes a short new section of trail on Forest Service land between the boundary and Bean Canyon Trail and requires FS approval. We urge them to consider rapid approval.

There is not adequate language in the EA addressing the negative economic impact due to the temporary loss of recreational opportunities. The above requests require more attention and management by contractors. While there are economic benefits from the logging operation that are easy to quantify, some of the more significant economic impacts from recreation require a deeper analysis, tracking dollars through numerous hands.

Residents opposed to recreation or indifferent about trail impacts may be surprised how they unknowingly benefit. There are abundant statistics and studies available on the internet that could be referenced in your comments, but personal stories and experiences have great impact.