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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I have lived in the area for over twenty years and enjoy recreational shooting. I am also a career Firefighter. I fully support the development of the turkey Traks area for recreational shooting. This is long over due and I believe most people would appreciate any improvements to this shooting area. I do not support the closure of over 1.1 million acres of the Pike National Forest to dispersed shooting however. There are many responsible shooters and landowners in the area that do not shoot at the Turkey Traks area and you would never know where they shoot because they clean up after themselves. The proliferation of slob, dispersed shooting in the area is directly related to the Forest Service inability to patrol and monitor recreational shooting. If the Forest service cannot afford to have employee's patrol known problem areas, then how will the Forest Service be able to develop the proposed shooting area and patrol or staff it? Further, it is grossly unfair to close our vast forest to law abiding shooters and use a pandemic to effect that draconian change. I acknowledge that with the growth in usage of our Forest and population increase in the area that dispersed shooting may have to be more tightly regulated in the future. Before this is done though I recommend Turkey Traks be developed and see if this has a positive impact on the other problems we have in our region. If so, there is no need for further regulation at this time. I also propose that the Forest Service patrol the known shooting areas on a more regular basis to educate shooters and discourage people who are shooting in an unethical, illegal manner. Until this is done on a more consistent basis I cannot support or encourage taking away privileges from law abiding members of our community who have done nothing wrong and would be adversely impacted by taking away dispersed recreational shooting. I would also add that although this is anecdotal information at best; since I received in the mail (about a month ago) my notice of your proposal I have not observed a single Forest Service vehicle at Turkey Traks or in the West Creek region. Neither has anyone else that I have talked to. My point is, if you cannot manage what you already have with basically zero effort by your organization, why should law abiding citizens be made to suffer the effects of this over reaching policy change you are moving forward with? There are many alternatives; some of which I just mentioned, that could have probable, positive results if more effort was put forth by the Forest Service to meet the demands of the public.