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Organization:

Title:

Comments: My wife and I moved to the Crystal River Valley thirty three years ago after previously living first in Aspen, and then Missouri Heights. We chose this area for its rural character and low potential for development.

The commercial development being proposed by the OST is an unacceptable assault on the very character of this valley. Once it's gone, it won't come back. To see what is coming next, just look at the mess on Maroon Creek road, or the circus that occurs on the Lead King Loop. Or the overuse of the new trails on Brush Creek and Prince Creek.

Bicycle riders, by and large, are not riding to enjoy the scenery or enjoy nature. They want to push themselves to get somewhere as fast as they can. This makes them dangerous, whether they are riding on a paved road with other vehicles, or on a trail shared with hikers.

"OST has hosted a record number of visitors in 2020," wrote Gary Tennenbaum in the budget supplemental request presented to the county's board of county commissioners and OST board on March 2. Trail visitation, tracked by infrared counters, rose from 382,969 in 2019 to 551,869 in 2020 - a 44% increase - according to OST data shared with Aspen Journalism.

"Some of the largest user-day increases were seen on the Brush Creek, Crystal and Prince Creek trails, both of which saw visitation in 2020 double that of 2019. Prince Creek Trail, which serves a popular mountain-biking trail network outside Carbondale, has seen increasing use since the county made trailhead improvements in 2017. Annual visits went from 22,308 in 2019 to 44,190 in 2020."

Please, do not allow this project to move forward.

They should take the money and build a dedicated bus lane on Maroon Creek Road instead.