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Comments: As a 40+ year resident of Carbondale/Redstone I was conflicted about this 7-mile project until I read the entire DEA and the +/- 200 pages of materials submitted by the Wilderness Workshop.

In short, I support this project. The DEA is both informative and thorough. The concise Project Design Criteria (PDC) in Appendix A is a good overview. The Project alignment follows existing routes and winter closures do protect wildlife production. Other concerns are acknowledged, addressed, and in my mind, mitigated. The Project also preempts the influx and overflow of mountain bikers from the newly opened Coal Basin Park by establishing management of the Project Area whose increased future use is all but inevitable. Out of town hikers will minimally impact the trail south of Hayes Creek due to terrain incline, ticks, and heat exposure

Comments:

*Winter closure may see the return of elk and deer to the western slopes of the Crystal.

*If dogs must be allowed off leash, a few provide waste stations (people will NOT do the right thing).

*Please do NOT improve the informal parking area at the top of the Pass. This will only encourage too many lazy mountain bikers (downhillers) and cause safety concerns for hikers.

*Do NOT allow commercial shuttle services to bring hoards of inexperienced downhillers, again for hiker safety.

*No e-bikes ANYWHERE on the 7-mile Project area, especially North of Hayes Creek to Redstone. E-bike speed + pedestrians adjacent to the mostly blind curves of Hwy 133 is a recipe for crashes.

All in all, kudos to all who have worked so hard to be proactive in shaping the future of the Crystal River Valley while preserving its character.