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Organization:

Title:

Comments: To those proposing to add a bike path,

we moved to the Crystal Valley because of the quiet, the deep retreat into the spruce/pine forests, and the profound wildlife which abounds here. We have owned property out the Crystal for more than twenty years, and have been at our current location for over five. The proposed bike path will be contiguous with our property line for about 400 feet, 250 of which is a conservation easement. As naturalist and wilderness guides, I do not believe that there will be NO EFFECT on the wildlife; there will be. We regularly have deer walking in our yard and the adjacent Pitkin County Open Space which is contiguous. Further, the proposal says that the bike path would remain closed for half of the year, which means that the proposal seeks to affect the delicate human and more-than-human community of these wild forests permanently AND THEN only allow use during part of the year. This seems like a great waste of effort and an increased barrier for the deer, fox, coyote, and wild turkey who cross our land to drink from the river [if you do not believe me about who visits our yard and who crosses the highway to the river please email me and i can provide detailed citizen science reports and photos]. What will be the separation between the trail and the highway? Will there be concrete barriers to protect the riders---a good idea for human safety and also a terrible idea for more-than-human safety? Finally, who are the expected users of this new trail? Do the proposed builders have actual research on exactly what demographic that might be? I love these forests and am all about sharing them; however, in my opinion, the trail costs to wildlife and ecosystem far outweigh potential benefits to the very few people who will ever really use it. Where is the research which details the actual affect such a trail will have on the more-than-human community, and the detailed cost-benefit analysis of why the human benefits outweigh such concerns.

For these reasons, we are writing to express our official objection to this proposal. To be blunt, this trail has been proposed by people in power that do not live here, are not in daily relationship with these sacred trees and animals, and who are more than likely never going to use the trail.

Were there a great need for this trail, and had the environmental and ecosystem considerations been truly considered and accounted for, then myself and many like me would be more open to the construction. That being not the case, I hope that you will reconsider creating such destruction to the natural ecosystem that is the Crystal Valley as it is.

Thanks you.

A concerned advocate for wild earth