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First name: Len

Last name: Mason

Organization:

Title:

Comments: As recreation use of Gunnison National Forest land increases, especially with diverse user types, the potential for user conflict is significant. Additionally, diverse modes of transport (e.g., bicycle, pedestrian, OHV, motor vehicle) can result in diminished user experience. While all users should be able to show courtesy and respect diverse use, we know that this is not always the reality. Trail connectivity is important for enhanced user experience. Moving more vulnerable user traffic (e.g., pedestrians, bicycles, etc) off of roadways and onto adjacent trails can help alleviate sources of potential conflict. Vulnerable users may also feel safer traveling on off-roadway trails, resulting users opting to walk/bike to trails. This could help reduce some impacts recreational infrastructure if fewer users feel the need to drive to backcountry trailheads.

I appreciate the process of active stakeholder involvement, feedback, and buy-in. Due to that process, these trails should achieve more sustainable design, meet diverse user needs, and minimize ecological impacts.

I am in support of the North Valley Trails project moving forward.