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Title:

Comments: I have some concerns with the North Valley Trail Project as it stands today. I am very much in concert with the thinking of CBMBA as it relates to their concerns with proposed Forest Service alignment changes and omissions. The total number of miles for these projects pales in comparison to some other communities and organizations. Sedona, AZ area has approved 13 miles of user built trail and over 17 miles of new trail in recent years. In the Prescott National Forest they have constructed over 42 miles of new trail in the past 5 years. The mileage in this proposal is not only reasonable but needed. I have the utmost respect for the brain trust at CBMBA. I have seen first hand the culture that they have fostered and developed over the past 13 years of biking and hiking local trails. Non-motorized recreation is exploding across the country. The past two years of covid gave us some insight into the importance of providing sustainable recreation in and around our National Forests.

Some of my specific concerns:

Upper Upper to the Brush Creek Trailhead

The proposed alignment gives way too much weight to cattle ranching. I am currently involved in a large project in Arizona.

<https://www.nationalforests.org/regional-programs/southernrockies/highline-trail-restoration-initiative>  
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I was personally responsible for nearly 18 miles of reroute on this project. This trail was a working trail for cattle ranchers. Over time, this trail has recreated it's purpose and has become a recreational trail. The destruction and misuse of riparian areas by the ranching community was appalling. This public land use practice has been abused for too long. The impact of this industry on our western public lands needs a reboot. The original proposed alignment of the Upper Upper to the Brush Creek Trailhead needs to be part of the plan. The alignment isn't radical nor preventing other uses. The acreage impacted is minnimal. My philosophy when laying out track is always centered on the user experience. Having a trail that parallels a road is a bad choice if other options are available which clearly is the case in this instance. This is not a trail for next summer, it is a trail for generations, build it right the first time.

Deer Creek to Tent City:

This is another example of getting the trail off a road to provide a single-track experience. One of the things that has always chaffed me with local trails was losing elevation on roads after climbing for long periods of time. From a mountain bike perspective the changes to the CBMBA proposed alignment make little sense. The two track climb that exists is neither fun up or down... People new to biking are not only intimidated by the current egress/ingress but it is definitely not a great user experience. Please accept the CBMBA alignment and build it right the first time.

Upper Cement Creek Trail to Crystal Peak Trail:

To me, this is a no-brainer. The Middle Cement Creek Trail connection to Upper Cement Creek Trail is all you really need to know to understand how the trail experience would be improved. The Cement Creek drainage is iconic. The wildness of this area creates trail experience that is much different from much of our other trails. Again, dropping elevation on FS roads is not ideal and I can't imagine hikers being interested in walking the 5 miles on a jeep road. Plans are made for the future. If you look at recreation use in our National Forests it has exponentially increased. This trail will be there to meet the needs of future generations and create that "wild" user

experience. Please reconsider adding this to the trails plan.

I am very disappointed that the Snodgrass reroute on FS land was not included in this plan. This trail is one of the most valuable pieces of the local trail puzzle for a myriad of reasons. First, this trail is local and can be accessed via bike from most places around Crested Butte. Secondly, the trail is a great intermediate trail that is not too long. I like to say it is a good fitness test for seeing how one might do on the longer trails we have around our valley. And thirdly, it has the potential of connecting the three major drainages via single-track. We have a four to five month riding season and the yearly closures in August/September take away one of our local gems for a chunk of this time.

I would like to voice my concern about one other issue that is being debated and will have a lasting impact on our trails and that is e-bikes. I am not in favor of allowing e-bikes on our non-motorized trails. I am an advocate of and have purchased an e-bike. However, I am dead set against the introduction of these "motorized" forms of conveyance on our single-track. Let's be real.... they are motorized. As such, they should be relegated to the hundreds of miles of legal trails in our valley. If e-bikes are approved on FS trails it will be very difficult to take this privilege away. Policing this user group will be nearly impossible. There are many classes of e-bikes available today from twist throttle to pedal assist and the power output and battery technology is changing with each new model year. Limiting e-bikes to one class will become a futile policing event. Please consider leaving this issue off the table and keeping our trails non-motorized.

I am incredibly confused as to why there is no trail proposal that would get bikes off of Gothic Road from the 403 to 401. This should be front and center as far as creating a better trail experience for all non-motorized users. There are many reasons that support this idea. There is already a campground with facilities, a connector trail would get bike traffic off of Gothic Road in the worst area, and it would create a loop 403-connector (402)-401 to Rustlers. Please consider the importance of this project.

I do have a one other suggestion that may seem over the top but would have a positive impact on our valley and that is closing Gothic Road to motorized traffic from June 15 to September 1..... (Rustlers to Emerald Lake). Because we breath should not mean we're "entitled" to access use our shared resources any way we want at the expense of that resource.