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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello,

Thank you for allowing this space for public comment submission. I live in Hidden Valley with my family and am a regular visitor, by foot or bike, of the Falls Creek Recreation Area, the Colorado Trail, and the Logchutes bike system. I walk and bike to these areas with my partner and 4 year old daughter regularly.

Prescribed fire - I can see this as a valuable pursuit with the consideration that funding should be allocated for road grading and leveling as necessary with the introduction of heavy trucks and machinery to upper portions of Junction Creek Road.

Vegetation thinning- I can see how this may go hand in hand with prescribed fire section but feel that this proposal neglects to consider the established wildlife habitat that may be impacted. I see this proposal as contradictory to values 3 a, b, c. I see this action as potentially negatively impacting forest structure, age classes, and resiliency, as well as driving birds and herds that may frequent these areas to a new location.

Permitted winter grooming- I am adamantly opposed to this idea. I support the earlier closure date of the road, however, I do not believe the resources are in place along the whole of Junction Creek Road all the way from town for road maintenance or snow removal to support such a proposal. Also, Junction Creek Road, from the lower trailhead to Animas Overlook is already a winter recreation zone for bikers, skiers, hikers, and snowshoers who appreciate the peace and tranquility of the location. Making space for snowmobiles and other mechanized forms of winter travel would 1) destroy the peaceful space that so many community members already value and cherish 2) impact all aspects of forests and wildlife 3) pose great safety hazards for non-motorized travelers on a very steep and already curvy road. Where are the resources for grooming and maintaining the "snow" which is not even always present coming from? What is going to happen if the road is paved (also opposed) and becomes a giant ice rink because of the freeze thaw cycle on a steep asphalt road?

Road upgrade - I can see the value of having a paved road to the campground; otherwise I am opposed to this proposal. As stated before, I believe the whole of Junction Creek Road from town is undermaintained, and this proposal would invite increases in traffic, probably traveling over the speed limit through the more rural communities on upper Junction Creek Road. I see this as potentially dangerous to pedestrians, bikers, and runners who already use the area. I also see this as contradictory to values 3 a, b, c. I see this action as potentially negatively impacting forest structure, age classes, and resiliency, as well as driving birds and herds that may frequent these areas to a new location. Finally, I do not see the point of this proposal at all; Animas overlook is beautiful for what it is but there is no trail system there or anything that a recreational user, aside from someone out on a drive to take a picture and speed down the road, would be specifically interested in. I think this project would require a TON of money, that could be better utilized for maintaining existing trails, creating a bike lane along Junction Creek Road, and improving parking lots.

Mountain bike trails - I am open to this idea provided that adequate parking is considered if more traffic is being brought to the Logchutes area. I would also support the more maps for the entire Logchutes trail system and the allocation of resources to maintain and improve the existing trails.

Parking Lot upgrade - I support the maintenance and upgrade of the parking lot for the Colorado trail as it is a heavily frequented area, I would also support expansion/upgrade of the restroom facilities at the trailhead

Increased ADA opportunities - I do not believe the landscape at the lower Colorado trail specifically lends to the development of a more ADA accessible trail; like other comments I have seen, I would recommend pursuing this goal in a landscape that lends better to it such as Falls Creek Meadow, etc. I have seen some fish in junction creek but I have never seen anyone fishing in the creek; so I do not believe making the trail more ADA compliant for fishing purposes is relevant.

Falls Creek Geographic Area-Have the 25 tribes that are culturally affiliated and traditionally associated with the San Juan National Forest been consulted on this topic? I know the Falls Creek archaeological area has been closed for preservation of historic and prehistoric properties. I do not believe adding a train system for motorized and non-motorized use is compatible with preserving the area and keeping historic and prehistoric areas intact. I do not agree with a thorough archaeological survey of the area, and finally do not think this topic should be in discussion without first consulting the 25 tribes that are culturally affiliated and traditionally associated with the San Juan National Forest. This is directly oppositional to 1c- Be sensitive and responsive to Tribes by protecting cultural resources.

Thank you for considering this opinion.
Kelly Sheridan