

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 2/3/2023 2:42:38 PM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing in strong support of the proposed trail system, parking areas and associated facilities. I have hiked and biked in the Jackson Mountain area numerous times, and this contains a very enjoyable mixed forest and meadows terrain. The top of Jackson Mountain has some nice views too. The previous logging and associated old roads means the area is well suited for this development. The mixed hiking and biking is working well in our Turkey Springs trail system and I can see no reason why it would not work well here also. I believe that with the addition of these trails, Pagosa Springs can become a nice destination for mountain bikers and their dollars, thereby adding to the local economy. It also adds some nice trails to hike in our shoulder seasons. The current trails are somewhat haphazardly laid out and risk causing erosion and other problems; properly designed and maintained trails will minimize these impacts.

I also support the plan to maintain an area for wildlife on the west side of Jackson Mountain. This will help to balance recreation opportunities with needs of the wildlife we all appreciate. Additionally, I strongly support all efforts for fire mitigation and maintaining a health forest over the entire area. The area does border onto developed lands so lowering the risk of fire is important to everyone (especially to the bordering homes).

I feel that the addition of a non-commercial gravel pit here is probably warranted. While I understand the nearby homes do not want this, I would trust that appropriate mitigation such as appropriate vegetation, slow truck speeds, limited hours of operation, etc., then we can minimize dust and other issues. With hundreds of miles of dirt and gravel roads in Archuleta County and on US Forest Service lands, a source of local gravel is needed so that these roads can be properly maintained. Currently we are bringing gravel here from a long distance; with the distance and associated high costs, the number of roads that can be maintained is less than what most residents here truly desire. This site in the Jackson Mountain area also has the advantage of minimizing impacts on wildlife corridors over other possible sites in the County. There is no perfect site for us to get the gravel needed to maintain our local roads. I believe on balance this is probably our best option.