

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/13/2023 2:39:31 PM

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Comments: We have significant concerns allowing disbursed vehicle camping along CR 162. The proposed disbursed camping map also includes CR 292 which runs through the residential area of Alpine, where approximately 100 homes are located. Although the private land areas along CR 292 are excluded, allowing disbursed camping immediately adjacent to a residential community is risky. Our concerns include the following:

Fire

Alpine residents routinely discover illegal campers and fires along CR 292. Often fires are left unattended or remain lit after campers leave. Although the proposal limits fires to fire rings, the reality is the number of illegal and unattended fires would likely increase with the proposal. Even if fire rings are used, the risk of forest fires increases.

Emergency Access

Access to Alpine is limited to CR 162. Allowing vehicles including RV's to park along CR's 162 & 292 could impact the ability of emergency vehicles to reach our community in the event of an emergency as well as the need for residents to evacuate.

Wildlife

Only in the last few years have moose been spotted around Alpine, with at least 6 moose this winter. Increased traffic and campers would likely drive away moose and other wildlife migrating into the area.

Traffic Safety

Traffic along CR's 162 & 292 has increased significantly in recent years with drivers routinely driving recklessly and well above posted speed limits. Allowing disbursed vehicle camping would likely worsen this situation increasing the risks of serious accidents involving vehicles and pedestrians.

Limited Resources

Despite the best efforts of local and federal agencies, the reality is there are not sufficient resources to adequately patrol areas in the proposal. Over the last few years, we have seen increases in illegal fires, illegal garbage dumps, destruction to public lands, etc. Alpine residents have tried to monitor illegal campers, fires, reckless driving, excessive speed, etc., but have been met with confrontational and aggressive behavior from violators if approached. Allowing disbursed camping would only increase these issues unless there is a significant increase in resources dedicated to patrol the area.

Although the above concerns are specific to Alpine, there are identical concerns for our neighbors in St. Elmo, and the entire CR 162 & 292 region.

Based upon the concerns and risks identified above, we ask that the USFS withdraw the proposal to allow disbursed camping in the Chalk Creek valley.