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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Trails/Climbing Access

I agree with the proposed actions regarding the climber trails in and around Ten Sleep Canyon. Regional trail maps (including rescue box locations, crag nomenclature and emergency response meeting points) should be available at parking areas to help users identify the correct trailhead and to help local search and rescue/first responders know where to go in case of an emergency.

The addition of trail kiosks at trailheads would help users know where the trail system goes, the distance to specific crags, and how to correctly approach a specific climbing wall. Adding a sign-in system at the major trailheads to indicate party size, where you are climbing, and your time of arrival would help both the Forest Service and recreational users to assess usage statistics for specific areas. This would give the Forest Service exact information on the total number of users at specific walls and it would help users make informed decisions on where to climb (i.e. not overcrowding one specific wall).

Staging Areas

Ensure staging areas are large/wide enough to accommodate both users who are actively climbing and users who are traversing the cliff-band to approach a different crag simultaneously.

Leigh Creek Research Natural Area

A Research Natural Area is an official designation by the Forest Service defined as an area that is "permanently protected and maintained in natural condition". Due to its official designation, we will not make recommendations on the Leigh Creek Research Natural Area.

Camping

We support the proposed campsite closure areas from the lower Old Road (FSR 18) to just above the parking for Psychoactive Area. This will eliminate safety concerns for both drivers and campers along the paved high-traffic area of the Old Road, as well as reduce some of the congestion at parking/trail-head areas along the lower Old Road. It will also help to reduce potential impacts of recreational users on sensitive areas at the base of the canyon.

Health and Human Safety

The addition of at least one strategically placed vault toilet along the Old Road would reduce the need for portable toilets and lower the overall impact of human waste in the canyon. Alternatively, backcountry toilets (see: Alpine Lakes Wilderness area in Washington State) could be a good solution for high traffic crags (i.e. Mondo Beyondo area, FCR, Crag 6 and Waterfall area).

Outfitter/Guide:

Outfitter guides should abide by specific best practices outlined by the forest service (i.e. maximum group size, avoiding overcrowding popular areas, and guiding during less busy days of the week).

Geological Resource/Future Route Development

Proposed action 4:

Item 7 states:

"Areas that are identified as having limited parking and access to the cliff face".

There is very limited parking throughout all of Ten Sleep Canyon and this statement would cover nearly every crag in the canyon.

Proposed action 6 states:

"Current Condition: New established routes since 2019".

If new route development is to happen in Ten Sleep Canyon in the future this language needs to be altered.

Consider saying, "Current Condition: Illegally established routes between 2019 and the completion of the CMP."

New Action

New routes developed in Ten Sleep Canyon should only be equipped with the safest and longest lasting modern hardware available (e.g. stainless steel glue in bolts (2023))