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Organization: Ouray Backcountry Alliance

Title:

Comments: Dear Ms. Gardunio,

We thank you for considering these comments. We appreciate the time that you have taken so far in the process, and the time you have taken so far in developing the proposed rules. We especially appreciate the dynamic management approach that you have proposed.

We have two broad recommendations to the proposed permitting system, both hinge around some proposed changes to the permitting process.

Our first suggestion is to provide a 1 -2 year opportunity for people to change behavior before instituting a hard cap on the number of people within the wilderness area.

We believe that the camping restrictions are timely and well written. We support these restrictions with one small suggested change - Change the dates from Memorial day weekend through the weekend after Labor Day weekend.

With regard to the day use permits, we would recommend the following changes:

- 1: Make clear guidelines regarding parking and associated ticketing, and consequences for repeated illegal parking.
- 2: Allow for unlimited self-issued permits that can either be self issued at the trailhead (for us luddites) and also self - issued online at rec.gov. Use this to monitor usage. Additionally, if it is possible to show the number of permits that have been secured for a given day, and the number of parking spots available, it will help to guide people's behavior.
- 3: set clear, actionable metrics for an escalation to the currently proposed 64 total permits. Make these viewable by the public.

The goal of this proposal is to 1) gather better and more usable use data, and 2) allow people the opportunity to change behavior.

Our second set of suggestions is to essentially keep your proposed permit system with the following tweaks:

- 1) Memorial Day - the weekend after Labor Day as noted above
- 2) 50% of the day use permits are released at the standard time, 25% are released 1 week ahead of use date, and 25% are released 24 hours ahead of use date.

As a final note, after consideration, we believe that the USFS should review their policy on dogs considering the restrictive human limitations being proposed. Dogs have a large impact on wildlife (Wilkinson, Todd - Mountain Journal May 2023). They also pose a safety risk to others in exposed, loose terrain such as Mt Sneffles. We believe the proposal should consider these elements.

Thank you for considering these views,
Trevor Peterson,
Ouray Backcountry Alliance

We appreciate your taking the time to consider these suggestions.