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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Our community desperately needs more purpose built (or non purpose built if not possible) mt. bike trails. When looking across the US, Telluride's mountain biking infrastructure, trail network etc is living in the stone age compared to even the most miniscule mountain towns. Despite being world world-class ski resort, music destination etc - or maybe because of it - mountain bike trails have been an afterthought in our growth/development strategy for years.

What I can testify to, however, is the immense volume of avid bikers who live in town. I would say 80%+ of my friends (im in my mid-30's) bikes, and most of us resort to driving to (and thereby, infusing financial stiumulous in) other regional communities whose trail systems dwarf ours. Mountain bikers are not only great for the local economy (bikes are expensive, so bikers usually spend \$\$) but are also incredible stewards, champions and supporters of land conservation. Look at any case study in which a town invests in bike trails, and you'll see the direct economic benefits to the local community. That part is clear. What's less hard to quantify (but almost as important and true) is how bike trails help foster a more engaged/loving/committed community, as it increase citizens' sense of ownership and responsibility for our local region/ community/public lands/

Furthermore, approving more trails in the region is one of the most effective ways to stop illegal trail building/unapproved trails. As you know, when bikers dont have enough trails, they make them themselves. Accordingly, there is a strong argument to be made that the more legal trails that are built, there is a corresponding decrease in impacts to the land due to illegal trail development. We are at a great juncture currently, as ther are almost zero illegal trails in the local area. But I can say anecdotally that as our mt bike community continues to quickly grow, more illegal trails will be built if there ain't more approved trail development around the area. The best way to stop this impending flood of unapproved trail development is approving more legal trails....hard stop.

In closing, I beg the Forest Service to consider and approve as many miles of trails as possible, as our community desperately needs and wants this in the years to come. Take a look at any other (far smaller) mountain community in this state, and you'll see how many more trails, facilities etc there are for mt. bikers. Its time that telluride catch up with the times, maintain its competitive positioning with our other friendly mt. town competitors, and help support and bolster one of our communities most cherished past times. Biking is a pass time enjoyed by all ages, and continuing to overlook this community would be a massive mistake and missed opportunity for making Telluride (and its surrounding areas) a more vibrant, profitable, and industry leading location.