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Comments: In reviewing the Telluride Mountain Club Trail Proposal 2023 #65616, I would like to respond specifically to the Sheep Mountain Traverse.

It is interesting the rationale for this proposal is that it "will reduce recreation on the already busy existing road and create more variety and options for campers, locals, and visitors alike." This is analogous to the argument for building more roads to reduce traffic congestion. But as has been demonstrated time and again, congestion is only reduced in the short term, and an overburden of use thereafter results.

The area impacted by the proposed trail is a relatively undisturbed forest and habitat for numerous wildlife that is already feeling the impact of human recreational encroachment. Look at any trail map for the area and it is evident that numerous trails and recreational opportunities are already in place. But this is one area that has so far been left alone. Yet the proposal seems to take that as a challenge submitting "very little trail infrastructure currently exists to the south and east side of Highway 145 off Lizard Head Pass." So by all means, let's change that!

Continuing, "This area continues to grow in popularity for camping, recreational use... etc...." And that is correct. What is not mentioned is the impacts that this growing popularity has had and what this proposed trail will add.

While Trout Lake is a wonderful place for the public to enjoy water activities, it specifically was not to be used as a commercial enterprise. Yet everyday during the summer season, commercial paddle board companies bring their vans, trailers and customers to Trout Lake and overtake the parking, roads and boat ramp. This trail proposal almost certainly guarantees the same will become the norm with commercial mountain bike rental companies clogging the Galloping Goose Trail, Lizard Head Pass and the old Trestle bridge area, with even more people, cars and trash.

Looking into the options presented for this trail, both are lacking in suitable merit. Option B should be dismissed out of hand stating, it "would be challenging to build sustainably and would forgo many sustainable trail principals," and "is certainly not the recommended approach based on challenging and steep terrain, and the quality of build that would be the end result."

Option A is almost as lacking with the argument that it could serve as the boundary for the CORE Act Sheep Mountain Special Use Area. There is already the Galloping Goose Trail that should serve as that boundary. And the statement that "Trails like this help to build more support for conservation," is like saying approving a new landfill will help support recycling. When more is granted, more is wanted. Where does it stop? We respectfully oppose the Sheep Mountain Traverse.

Thank you for allowing the chance to respond to this proposal.