

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/6/2024 10:22:16 PM

First name: JD

Last name: Marshall

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed restrictions on target shooting in the Pike National Forest, particularly around busy areas like Rampart Range and Gold Camp Road.

As an avid outdoor enthusiast who frequently enjoys the natural beauty and recreational opportunities in this forest, I have personally explored many of its trails and found them to be areas of isolated beauty that should remain open and accessible to the public. Ensuring safety and preserving these areas for all users is paramount. I write for Trails Offroad and have traversed hundreds of trails across Colorado, spending a significant amount of time in the mountains.

I have seen firsthand the damage that target shooters cause in places like Rampart Range and Old Stage Road. There seems to be little respect for the land being shot into and often a lack of care for non-shooters in the vicinity. These behaviors pose serious safety risks and detract from the enjoyment of these natural areas.

Also, as the host and founder of The Trailhead Podcast, an off-road podcast where we discuss topics like this, we have highlighted how these shooting areas are highly damaging to the trails we love. Our community is deeply concerned about the adverse effects of unmanaged shooting on the environment and public safety.

The proposed Integrated Management of Target Shooting (IMTS) plan offers a balanced approach by developing designated shooting ranges and closing certain areas to dispersed shooting based on public safety, wildfire risks, and resource impact. This strategy is essential in managing the increasing number of visitors and the various recreational activities enjoyed in the forest.

Furthermore, the economic impact of outdoor recreation cannot be overlooked. The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis reported that the outdoor recreation industry generates more than \$1 trillion annually. By ensuring safe and enjoyable access to the Pike National Forest, we can continue to support local economies and provide opportunities for all types of recreational activities.

In summary, I strongly support the proposed restrictions on target shooting in Pike National Forest. These measures will protect public safety, preserve the environment, and ensure that the forest remains a welcoming place for all visitors.

Thank you for considering my comments.