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November 5, 2020

USDA Forest Service Rocky Mountain Region
 Attention: Objection Reviewing Officer
 P.O. Box 18980
 Golden, CO 80402

Dear Reviewing Officer,

The Eagle Valley Land Trust (EVLTL) Board of Directors appreciates this opportunity to comment on the USFS draft ROD regarding the Berlaimont Estates. EVLT is dedicated to protecting land, wildlife habitat, and scenic open spaces for our community while respecting private property rights of landowners. We appreciate the important and difficult work of the US Forest Service.

It is our opinion that the approval of a paved access road to the Berlaimont Estates will have a negative impact on vulnerable wildlife populations, wildlife habitat and scenic beauty in the area. The increase in noise and human and vehicular traffic will detrimentally affect already diminished wildlife populations. Wildlife habitats are already fragmented throughout Eagle County – this road would add additional barriers to already imperiled populations that not only use this area for migration purposes, but also for severe winter refuge.

Increasing access to the Berlaimont property is a clear disturbance to wildlife habitat, migrations, winter range, scenic vistas and will additionally incur negative impacts to surrounding forest lands. These effects will be far-reaching and permanent. Furthermore, the improvement of the road is contrary to the desires expressed in the Edwards Community Plan.

EVLTL continues to request that the owners of the Berlaimont property consider selling the property for open space or protect it via conservation easement or other means.

The Eagle Valley Land Trust stands in solidarity with all citizens and organizations who oppose the paving of public land through critical wildlife habitat. We are happy to support the White River National Forest in any way we can to ensure that our protected lands remain protected for all.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Foulis
 Executive Director
 Eagle Valley Land Trust