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Comments: Hello, I would like to comment on CBMBA's Riders Off the Road Proposal. Thank you for considering my comments. I have lived in Crested Butte for 26 years and ridden extensively in the Gunnison and Crested Butte areas, so am quite familiar with all these trails. I understand the problems quiet users are facing these days and the crowds many bikers find on their old favorite trails. I also see the changes in our valley with greatly increasing pressures from a growing population and more visitors that want to get out and recreate. I am very concerned about the impacts on wildlife, the earth itself, and those who are still trying to enjoy a peaceful time out without seeing a lot of other users. Spreading users farther around the valley disperses wildlife more. People are going to have to get used to seeing other people as growth continues and learn to be considerate and share, or plan their outings at less busy time of the day, week or season. Adding more trails and better trails will bring more people and more impact and the cycle will continue. We cannot build enough trails to accommodate everyone's desires.

Many mountain bikers that have lived here a long time, and some visitors and new residents too, are considerate of others and the landscape. Many newer residents, visitors and some long-time residents however, are speeding down trails scaring livestock, leaving gates open, pushing wildlife farther and farther from some of their original habitat, and making other human users jump out of the way in their quest for excitement. Many of these users are leaving more trampled camps, trash and human waste. The sheer number of people make a bigger impact. All of these factors should be considered as we add more trails and push people farther out.

All new trail being considered should go through a rigorous full year at minimum assessment for possible impacts to rare plants and to wildlife. A trail in Cement Creek was given the green light by the Gunnison Ranger District and built last year. The forest service completely missed the fact that it goes right through a rare plant colony which is documented nowhere else in Gunnison County and only in a few places in Colorado. This is a serious oversight. The trail should not have been built in that location and damage to the plant remains to be seen.

I know everyone likes to ride a new trail, myself included, but many trails could use improvement and repair first, such as the Point Lookout Trail and 409.5A. I am glad to see reroutes which will make a nicer trail and reduce erosion and route braiding such as the changes to 405.3A. This makes a better mountain bike opportunity out of an already existing trail. Switchbacks should lower the speed that motorcycles travel here and that is a good thing for other users' safety. We have a lot of trails and roads throughout the forest, and new habitat fragmentation should be kept to a minimum while adding and moving sections of trails.

Creative ideas to get people out of their cars and riding to the trailhead, or taking a bus is helpful. Fees for driving and parking to Gothic? A parking permit with a fee? Gothic Road, Washington Gulch and Lower Cement Creek Road up to the Reno trailhead are the worst roads to ride a bike on and the ones that need solutions.

I have some specific comments per trail:

#1: Lake Irwin trail: a good idea to get riders away from traffic and to reroute the unused section of the Wagon Trail that isn't a great alignment or very easy to find. There are so many people up here I don't believe a trail following the road would impact too much wildlife. Big flower meadows should be considered with care for alignment.

#2 Snodgrass reroute off private land: Both these suggested reroutes are major realignments that cut through the heart of an area with very little human impact and no trails. I have hiked around in here and seen several deer, grouse, many species of birds and a lot of elk. It appears to be a heavily used corridor by wildlife in the fall between the Gothic corridor and Washington Gulch from the numbers of tracks, droppings, and actual animals I saw. I believe the suggested routes would have huge impacts on wildlife and I am against this. There is already so much pressure on wildlife and this would add to it. Looking at the map there may be a possibility of a lower impact and less major reroute that doesn't totally bisect a wild area. Also a more downhill oriented option is a bad one for a public trail. It will only invite user conflicts between fast downhillers and slower bikers and hikers. I think it is fine to have seasonally closed trails.

#3 Rustlers mudbog: muddy trails invite people to go around. Rerouting to a dry area is a great idea.

#4 Upper Upper to Brush Creek Trailhead: This is not a good idea at all. This is one of the most special and easily accessible flower meadows around to admire and photograph from the road. A trail cutting through it would introduce weeds and a lot more trampling of the flowers. These areas host a lot of pollinators and birds and these would be greatly impacted. Riders must go onto the road at the BCTH anyway, and traffic is a bit slower here than Cement or Gothic Road. Do not allow a mountain bike trail to cut through one of our best flower meadows!

#5 Strand Bonus to Trail 409: It would be nice to cut across and possibly there are no added great impacts since cows trample all around here. Riding the road here is ok however with so little traffic.

#6 Ambush/Budd Connection to tent city: probably a good idea to have a camping hub with connecting trails so people don't drive as much. Any creative idea to keep people out of their cars is a good one.

#7 Deer Creek Road: more fun to come down a singletrack but the proposed route cuts through springs and flower meadows. The road has very little traffic and is mostly fine to ride. I think we should not cut up any more flower meadows as this is one of our most treasured resources. Turning the road into a non-motorized route is a better option: hikers could start at the bottom and a singletrack with slightly better grades made from the road grade.

#8 Teo extension: This would be a fun trail down and probably little impact. There are some fairly well beat in cattle trails that could be used as part of the alignment.

#9 405.2a and 405.3a: adding easier grades would be nice for users and create less erosion. This is a good idea.

#10 Reno Road parallel trail: Would make a nice descent and get riders off the road. I do think motorcycles would go very fast down it so a solution would need to be found so mountain bikers don't take a risk of getting run over. How about non-motorized or directional motorized uphill only?

#11 Upper Cement: The road is a bit of a grinding baby head climb in places, but I am against a singletrack here due to fragile alpine environment and springs that come out in a few places on the side of the valley. Possibly there are rare plants here and boreal toads (I have heard of them being seen here but no confirmation). There is a lot of wildlife in here, increasing use from a singletrack will increase pressure. Maybe a short section or two along the road only and not getting into the springs or fragile areas would be ok.

#12 Lower Cement to Caves: This would be high priority to get riders and hikers off this very busy section of road. I also think flashing speed signs should be used here all summer and cameras to catch the high speeders too.

#13 Eccher and Granite Basin: This is a really big wildlife corridor and increased use on the trail would result from improvements. Every time I have hiked here I see a lot of elk up in the basin and they cut around all these hillsides as they migrate spring and fall. Keeping some trails low profile is better for wildlife and better for those seeking solitude.

#14 Bear Creek and #15 Dr Park reroute: Moving trails out of wetlands and bogs a good idea generally. I am not familiar with the actual on the ground location of these proposed reroutes so can't comment on this with a high degree of certainty.