

October 10, 2018

Hahns Peak-Bears Ears Ranger District
925 Weiss Drive
Steamboat Springs, CO 80487
Attn: Kent Foster, Project Leader

Re: Mad Rabbit Trail System

Dear Mr. Foster,

Thank you for taking our public comment on the above referenced project. The Board of Routt County Commissioners has serious concerns about the Mad Rabbit Trails Project. We are concerned about the impact on county roads. Many of our roads have "native" designations which indicates our lowest level of service. We've experienced other, non-Forest Service, trail projects that draw high traffic counts onto county roads that have no funding source for improvement. The county currently does not have the funding to improve native roads or upgrade graveled roads and cannot support projects that draw greatly increased vehicular traffic onto those roads.

The Routt County Commissioners also have concerns about the impact of such a large trail system on the habitat for many herds that exist within the proposed trail system. The Commissioners have read the Colorado Park and Wildlife letter submitted by the North West Regional Manager J.T. Romatzke dated January 15, 2018 and understand it to be an analysis that is looking for a balance of habitat and animal health with increased and cumulative human impact. However, we believe the risk of the destruction of habitat and impact on wildlife that will not become habituated to the cumulative impacts of human activity outweighs the potential positive economic impact.

We would urge the Forest Service to slow down this process. We believe that most local citizens are just becoming aware of this proposed project and the comment period should be extended. A project of this magnitude deserves it. Finally we believe that there may be geographical areas that are better suited for the final 6 years of citizen-approved 2A Trails Funding that won't have the negative impacts on habitat, herds and county roads.

Thank you for your consideration,