

MEDIA RELEASE

RECREATION GROUPS SEEK TO ENTER COLORADO TRAIL LAWSUIT

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DENVER, CO – A coalition of recreational access groups recently filed papers to join a lawsuit challenging motorized vehicle access to the Pike and San Isabel National Forests in southcentral Colorado. The Colorado Off-Highway Vehicle Coalition (COHVCO), Trails Preservation Alliance (TPA), and BlueRibbon Coalition (BRC) moved on April 21st to intervene as parties in the case, which was brought by preservationist interests led by The Wilderness Society. The suit claims that the Forest Service illegally authorized motorized travel to at least some trails in the Forests.

This lawsuit comes in the broader context of travel planning throughout the National Forest System. In 2005, the agency promulgated a nationwide rule requiring designation of roads, trails and areas for motorized access. The resulting agency decisions have spawned lawsuits in Montana, California, Idaho, Oregon, North Carolina and elsewhere. Trail-based recreation interests have frequently participated in those actions.

“Our groups have long championed effective recreation management,” said John Bongiovanni, a COHVCO Director. “We are far from satisfied with the outcomes on these Forests. It is the motorized recreation community who apparently shoulders the burden of defending trails long used by all. It is essential our role continue when preservationists move the dialogue behind courtroom doors,” Bongiovanni concluded.

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COHVCO is a nonprofit organization whose member enthusiasts, organizations and businesses collectively comprise over 200,000 Coloradoans and regular visitors to Colorado and other western states who contribute millions of dollars and thousands of hours annually to off-highway vehicle recreation through registration fees, retail expenditure, project participation and related support. www.cohvco.org

The Trails Preservation Alliance is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the sport of motorized trail riding, educating all user groups and the public on the value of sharing public lands for multiuse recreation, while protecting public lands for future generations. www.coloradotpa.org

The BlueRibbon Coalition is a national recreation group that champions responsible recreation, and encourages individual environmental stewardship. With members in all 50 states, BRC is focused on building enthusiast involvement with organizational efforts through membership, outreach, education, and collaboration among recreationists. 1-800-BlueRib - www.sharetrails.org