



August 17, 2017

Gunnison Ranger District
216 N. Colorado
Gunnison, CO 81230

Attn: Matt McCombs, District Ranger

“Welcome”

Dear Ranger McCombs:

On Behalf of the Colorado Trails Preservation Alliance (TPA), Colorado Off-Highway Vehicle Coalition (COHVCO) and the Colorado Snowmobile Association (CSA) we would like to “welcome” you to the Gunnison National Forest and the Gunnison Ranger District. Below is a brief summary of each of our organizations followed by a brief description of how Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) users have helped fund operations and projects in the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests.

The TPA is a volunteer 501c3 nonprofit organization created to be a viable partner to public lands managers, working with the United States Forest Service (USFS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to preserve the sport of trail riding and multiple-use recreation. The TPA acts as an advocate for the sport and takes the necessary action to insure that the USFS and BLM allocate a fair and equitable percentage of public lands access to diverse trail, multiple-use recreational opportunities.

COHVCO is a grassroots advocacy organization representing approximately 170,000 registered off-highway vehicle ("OHV"), snowmobile and 4WD users in Colorado seeking to represent, assist, educate, and empower all motorized recreationists in the protection and promotion of multiple-use and off-highway motorized recreation throughout Colorado. COHVCO is an environmental organization

that advocates and promotes the responsible use and conservation of our public lands and natural resources to preserve their aesthetic and recreational qualities for future generations.

The Colorado Snowmobile Association ("CSA") was founded in 1970 to unite winter-motorized recreationists across the state to enjoy their passion. The CSA advocates for the 30,000 registered snowmobiles in the State of Colorado. The CSA has become the voice of organized snowmobiling seeking to advance, promote and preserve the sport of snowmobiling by working with Federal and state land management agencies and local, state and federal legislators. For purposes of this document CSA, COHVCO and TPA are identified as "the Organizations".

While the primary mission of the Organizations most directly relates to motorized and OHV recreation, the overall scope of the Organizations often has a larger impact as motorized recreation and access can take many forms and involve many activities, including camping, hunting and fishing and other recreational activities where motorized access to public lands is critical but not the primary recreational activity sought.

The largest single partner with both the BLM and USFS in Colorado is the motorized trail/OHV user community, both in terms of direct funding to land managers through the Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) Trails Program and with direct funding and resources from clubs in the GMUG area. The partnerships impact is further expanded by the fact that all motorized routes on the GMUG are available for all other user groups and recreational activities.

In 2017, GMUG managers asked for almost \$600,000 in direct funding for annual maintenance crews and for site-specific projects from the CPW OHV program alone. This funding provides three trained seasonal crews who perform on the ground trail maintenance, provide basic maintenance services for more developed sites and expand the law enforcement presence on the GMUG. Additionally, these crews are able to leverage a significant amount of mechanized equipment in the GMUG planning area, such as the several Sutter trail dozers, mini-excavators and tractors owned by local clubs to address larger maintenance challenges in a very cost effective manner.

The availability of these resources exemplifies the strong relationship that the GMUG resource managers have with some of the strongest partner clubs in Colorado, and probably the Nation including the Thunder Mountain Wheelers, Western Slope ATV Association, Grant Mesa Jeep Club, the Uncompahgre Valley Trail Riders and the Gunnison Valley O.H.V Alliance of Trailriders (G.O.A.T.S.). These clubs routinely work on projects; such as bridge construction and heavy trail maintenance. These clubs also provide extensive additional funding for resource maintenance such as grants obtained from the Extreme Terrain Grant Program, BF Goodrich Tires Exceptional Trails and Yamaha Access grant program and Polaris TRAILS grants. This funding easily exceeds another \$100,000 per year in funding that is available to maintain routes on the GMUG and other public lands in the vicinity.

In addition to the OHV grant funding and exceptional partnerships available through summer use clubs, CPW funding through the Snowmobile Registration Program provides an additional \$500,000 in funding to local clubs for operation of the grooming programs, who maintain almost 400 miles of multiple use winter trails on the GMUG. The snowmobile registration program further partners with the local clubs to purchase grooming equipment used on these routes, which now is consistently exceeding \$200,000 to purchase used. This CPW funding is again leveraged with exceptional amounts of volunteer and community support for these grooming programs from local clubs and often times the CPW funding is less than half the operational budget for the clubs maintaining these routes. These winter trails are the major access network for all users of GMUG winter backcountry for recreation and all these opportunities are provided to the general public free of charge.

Our Organizations believe that continued multiple-use access and motorized recreation within the GMUG and especially the Gunnison Ranger District is vitally important to the preservation and conservation of our public lands and the well being of our citizens. Our Organizations have a history of partnering with the USFS to protect our forest resources while reducing and eliminating barriers that are continuing to make it difficult for Americans to get outside and travel on a multiple-use trail or share a road as part of their outdoor recreational experience.

For your use and reference, we are including a copy of the recent report, **2014-2015 Economic Contribution of Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation in Colorado** showing the trends and the substantial economic contributions of Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation in Colorado (<http://www.coloradotpa.org/2017/01/25/economic-contribution-of-off-highway-vehicle-recreation-in-colorado/>) and a fact sheet that provides you with additional details on the Trails Preservation Alliance. We also hope that you will continue to foster the working relationships with our three affiliated off-road motorcycle clubs in your area, namely the Central Colorado Mountain Riders (CCMR), the Tomichi Trail Riders (TTR), and the Gunnison Valley O.H.V Alliance of Trailriders (G.O.A.T.S.). We would also like to request an introductory meeting with you in the near future either at your office in Gunnison or perhaps during a future visit to the Front Range.

“Welcome aboard”, and we look forward to working with you and your staff.

Sincerely,



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Background:

The Trails Preservation Alliance (TPA) is a 501c3 nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and protecting Off-highway Vehicle (OHV) use on public lands in Colorado and surrounding areas. The TPA's primary goal is focused on preserving the sport of motorized single-track trail riding. However, all forms of OHV recreation, be it ATVs, 4WDs, and snowmobile are all supported by the TPA. The work of the TPA is accomplished through working with federal agencies (i.e., the US Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management), educating user groups on appropriate trail etiquette, and supporting likeminded organizations such as COHVCO and the Blue Ribbon Coalition. The TPA is a 100 percent volunteer organization partnering with the federal land managing agencies to preserve the sport of trail riding. The TPA acts as an advocate of the sport and takes the necessary actions to insure that both the USFS and BLM allocate a fair and equitable percentage of access to trail riding on public lands.

Review of the past 25 years of USFS and BLM travel management planning, it is obvious that there has been a focused effort to reduce or eliminate OHV recreation on public lands. When this reduction in OHV recreational opportunities is compared with the significant increase in wilderness designations, unfettered ski area expansions, and commercial enterprises on public land, almost every form of leisure time activity has received a reasonable share of access to

public resources, with one exception - motorized vehicle recreation.

The TPA constantly watches and reviews federal land use actions and projects undertaken by the USFS and BLM. The TPA regularly provides updates to their website (<http://www.coloradotpa.org/news/>). Then at the end of each year, the TPA summarizes the accomplishments and activities in an annual report (<http://www.coloradotpa.org/2017/02/06/trails-preservation-alliance-2016-end-of-year-report/>).

In 2012 and 2015, the TPA sponsored and helped fund economic impact studies associated with OHV recreation in Colorado. The most recent study determined that over \$2.3 billion makes its way each year into Colorado's economy thanks to tourism and sales activity associated with OHV recreation (<http://www.coloradotpa.org/2017/01/25/economic-contribution-of-off-highway-vehicle-recreation-in-colorado/>).

Colorado 600 – A Trails Symposium Workshop

The Colorado 600 is a five-day, off-road motorcycle ride and trail symposium through the mountains of southwestern Colorado. Each day, both in the morning and evening, riders learn about the challenges facing trail riding enthusiasts and the issues surrounding the persistent reduction of motorized trails in Colorado and the surrounding areas. Riders have options to ride single-track, dual-sport routes or adventure trails. The event often includes speakers from the USFS and BLM and other clubs and organizations around the country. All proceeds from the ride go to support the TPA, along with the associated positive economic impact to the many small communities and counties in southwestern Colorado. Each year the ride culminates with a banquet featuring leaders and personalities from the motorcycle industry.

