United States Department of Agriculture
Forest Service
Dolores Ranger District
San Juan National Forest
29211 Hwy 184
Dolores, CO 81323-9308
Phone 970-882-7296
Fax 970-882-6841
http://www.fs.usda.gov/sanjuan

File Code: 1950
Date: June 14, 2019

Dear Interested Party:

The Dolores Ranger District of the San Juan National Forest has released a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the *Chicken Creek Trails Project*.

The proposed project consists of motorized and non-motorized trail additions to the existing network of trails on U.S. Forest Service lands. The motorized trails proposal would allow motorcycles on two existing trails (1 mile in length, total) in the Owens Basin area to provide connection between other existing motorized trails. The non-motorized proposal includes approximately 10 miles of new trails and designation of 2 miles of existing trails, all near the Chicken Creek Nordic trail system area.

The district invites your input on these proposed trails.

The Draft EA describes the proposed action in more detail and provides a summary of potential effects of the project on various resources. The Draft EA, along with other project documents, is available for review at https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=55794 The draft EA is also available at the Dolores Public Lands Office. For more information on the project, contact Tom Rice (see below).

For this project, compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) are being conducted concurrently. In order to better involve the public in the NHPA process, NEPA notification letters and public legal notices which invite public comment as part of the NEPA process also serve to notify and invite public comment on the proposal as stipulated by NHPA.

How to Comment and Timeframe

The *Chicken Creek Trails Project* would implement the San Juan National Forest's existing Land and Resource Management Plan; it is subject to the objection process pursuant to 36 CFR 218 Subparts A and B. The public is encouraged to provide specific written comments (§218.2) on this proposal for the responsible official to consider. Specific written comments should be within the scope of and have a direct relationship to the proposed action.

Written comments will be accepted for 30 calendar days following the publication of a legal notice in The Cortez Journal. The publication date in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the comment period (anticipated date June 14, 2019). The regulations prohibit extending the length of the comment period.

Only those who submit timely and specific written comments during this formally designated comment period will have eligibility to file an objection under §218.8. Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted timely, specific written comments regarding the proposed project unless based on new information arising after the designated comment opportunity. Individuals and organizations wishing to be eligible to object must meet the information requirements in §218.25(a)(3), including that each individual or representative from each entity submitting written comments must provide the name and postal address of the individual or entity submitting the comment, and either sign the comment or verify identity upon request. Names, contact information, and the comments will become part of the public record and may be released under the Freedom of Information Act.

Comments must be received by the end of the comment opportunity and may be submitted as follows:

Electronic comments can be submitted through the electronic comment form located on the project webpage - https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=55794

Mail, or in person, to either Tom Rice, Recreation Program Lead, or Derek Padilla, District Ranger, Dolores Ranger District, Attention: Dolores Aspen Project, 29211 Hwy 184, Dolores, CO 81321 (Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., excluding holidays), (970) 882-7296.

Fax (970) 882-6841, Attn: Derek Padilla.

Thank you for interest in the project and the management of the San Juan National Forest,

Sincerely,

DEREK J PADILLA
District Ranger