

South Park District Priority Routes

Support protecting Wildcat Canyon by keeping it closed to motorized use

We strongly oppose reopening any roads as roads, and oppose reopening any closed or administrative roads as new motorized trails, in the Wildcat Canyon area on the South Park and South Platte Districts. Motorized use in this area will negatively impact fish, wildlife, water quality, soils, botanical and archaeological resources, and be extremely expensive to responsibly sustain.

Motorized use across, in and adjacent to the South Platte River will compromise the quality of the primary source of drinking water for the City of Denver

We support the aspects of alternatives A, B, C and E that propose to decommission routes in this area.

The high volume of damaging unauthorized motorized use in this area should not be rewarded.

We support decommissioning of the currently closed segment of Longwater Road 221 on the South Platte District to and across the river. This is proposed in alternatives B, C, D and E. This is a low benefit high risk road that poses extremely high risks to the South Platte River and to wildlife. Short of building a bridge across the river in this location, there is no to mitigate the risks this route poses to the river.

There is a long unauthorized route heading upriver from where 221 meets the river, and this route receives unauthorized motorized use all the way up to the existing end of Teller County 221 from the point. We would support the South Platte District working with Teller County to determine and implement a more suitable and enforceable end point for Teller County Road 221 east of the current closure point, if appropriate. This would help eliminate use of this unauthorized loop.

We support decommissioning the Corral Creek Road 540 from road 211 down to the river as proposed in alternatives B, C and E, and also could support alternative D which proposes to convert this route to a non-motorized trail. If this segment of road is decommissioned, it should be done so in a manner which stabilizes the route in a manner that permits dispersed hiking down to the river. If another designated trail were desired in Wildcat Canyon this would be the best choice, as it would create separation of motorized and non-motorized uses on the opposite sides of the canyon. This trail would be on the same side of the river as existing non-motorized trail 619. Of all routes descending to the river, this route is the most sustainable as a hiking trail.

We support proposed decommissioning of the Crossover road 220.A If an administrative road is desired to be kept open to the river we are not in favor of this route being 220.A. Since hiking and horseback use would be allowed on an administrative route, and since 220.A poses extremely high risks to wildlife (higher than the northern segment of 220 descending to the river)

We support proposed conversion of the northern segment of Hackett Gulch 220 to an administrative road, as this seems to be the best option if an administrative road is desired down to the river. This route is the shortest distance to the river from a designated open route. We know some people will want to hike down to access the river, and this use could be allowed and managed for on an administrative route. Although there are issues with the route following a creek bed for a segment, it appears as though this route would have the least impacts.

We recommend relocating the end of the northern segment of Teller County Road 220 Hackett, and the end of Teller County Road 220.A Crossover, to a single point east of where these routes currently end. It would be more cost effective and easier to manage and enforce a single closure point rather than two closure points.

We oppose the opening of the southern segment of road 220 to and just north of the intersection with the no name trail #736 as a trail open to all vehicles. It will be difficult to monitor, maintain and enforce such a remote closure at a dead end route.

Opening this route to motor vehicle use will not provide easier or new opportunities for people to hike down to the river that are not already provided by the open northern section of Teller County Road 220. It is a shorter distance (.34 miles as opposed to .5 miles) and a much easier hike on a less steep and rocky closed road to access the river via the northern segment of closed road 220 as opposed to using the southern segment. Hiking to the river from the end of Teller County road 221 is also an easier option.

We oppose the reopening of Widowmaker 220.B to any motorized use. This is an incredibly steep and eroding route and it would be extremely difficult to maintain. Quiet Use trail 619 the Longwater Trail overlays a segment of this route, and reopening 220.B will increase conflict.

Support conversion of trail 691 on Sheep Mtn to a quiet use trail

This trail climbs up to over 12,000 feet on Sheep Mountain, and offers exceptional views of South Park, Horseshoe Peak and the Mosquito Range. The route is a narrow primitive track through the tundra, and in loose rocks and soils that will not be able to sustain frequent and intense use. This trail passes through an area known as the botanical hot-spot of Colorado due to the large number of imperiled species of plants there.

The USFS believes this trail was designated as open to motorcycles, although there was no evidence of past motorcycle use on this route until they added it to motor vehicle use maps. The route in its current condition could not sustainably accept low to moderate levels of motorized use. The trail becomes almost indistinguishable in sections of the tundra, and there are concerns with motorcycles not being able to stay on the trail and damaging imperiled plants.

This route intersects with wetland areas and also significant wildlife habitat.

The segment of trail above trail 740 over to road 176 is of the greatest concern.

Since most of this segment of trail is above treeline, noise from motorcycle use would be heard for long distances.

Excluding motorized use from the segment of Trail 691 above Trail 740 as proposed in alternative E is a good option, as would be decommissioning this route as alternative B proposes.

Support decommissioning of the Pirate Road 856

Proposed in alternatives C and E

This is a steep eroding road which crosses flowing surface water in ten locations. This supports the high risk this road poses to watersheds.



Photo 63. 39° 19' 53.92"
N, 106° 10' 31.63" W.
Creek crossing widened
from traffic erosion.

856 is entirely above timberline in fragile ground that is undermined and collapsed where the road has been widened from off road vehicle use.



Photo 49. 39° 19' 32.39" N, 106° 9' 17.66" W. Erosion/ruts in road.



Photo 65. 39° 19' 0.56" N, 106° 10' 35.08" W. Ruts and collapsed historic building (in background).

In the upper reaches of 856, historic mining equipment including pipes, metal artifacts, a building, tram, bedsprings, and a rock wall foundation are also present. Keeping the road open to public use poses a risk to these archaeological resources.

Bighorn sheep concentrate around this route in the summer, and the visual presence and noise of motorized use on this route negatively impacts sheep. This route fragments a large area of wildlife habitat.

There are numerous unauthorized routes emanating from this road. These routes and the road are in an area the Colorado Natural Heritage Program has identified as being habitat for numerous species of imperiled plants. Off road use contributes to the high risk this road poses to botanical resources.

We recommend closing this road off where it intersects Park County Road 12 with a locked gate, and stabilizing and fully decommissioning this road north of private land at 39°18'11.71"N 106° 9'21.70"W.

Support decommissioning of roads 183, 184, 669.2B and 194

Support conversion of roads 285, 450 and 451 in the Mosquito range in Park County to SUP roads

Significant segments of roads 285, 450 and 451 cross large areas of private land. Converting these roads to Special Use Permit roads as proposed in alternative C, D and B or E will permit limited access to these lands for private property owners while minimizing the risks that public motorized use of these

routes pose to resources and wildlife on both USFS and private land. Special Use Permit roads will still allow USFS administrative access for any needed management. Limiting the amount and type of motorized use on these routes will minimize high risks to waterways, wildlife, botany, archeological resources and finances. These roads provide relatively low benefits for public recreational use, and the nearby Mosquito Pass road provides similar but higher motorized recreation opportunity.

Oppose opening of new motorized trail PA 5

This damaging unauthorized route that connects roads 371 and 237.A was previously closed by the USFS and volunteers. This route slices through a large area of unfragmented habitat comprised of the Schoolmarm Mountain Roadless Area to the south and Farnum Roadless Area to the north. Motorized use of this route poses risks to wildlife, wetlands and riparian areas. The alternative D proposal to reopen this route as a motorized trail must be opposed.

Support decommissioning of the Sapling Road 864

This little used dead end route provides low recreational benefits. It poses high risks to wildlife, especially wintering mule deer, and poses a high risk to finances as it will require repeated investments to maintain properly.

Decommissioning of this route is proposed in alternatives B, D and E.

Support converting the initial segment of the Lookout Road 228 to administrative use only

As proposed in alternative D, we support conversion of the initial 1.25 miles of the Lookout Road 228 to an administrative use only road, and applying target maintenance techniques to this route. It will be easier to access and monitor a new locked gate closure at the intersection with the Puma Road 44 than in the present location.

This route is also within 5B Big Game Winter Range management area, according to the Forest Plan, and CPW data indicates this area is winter range for deer and elk. Closing this segment of route to public motorized use will benefit wildlife and habitat.

This relatively short dead-end route provides little recreational value. The Badger Flats Travel Plan decision prohibits any marginal dispersed motorized camping along this road segment.