

**2024-2025  
Off-Highway Vehicle Program  
State Trail Grant Application**

46  
SW-M, YC



<b>Name of Project:</b> Columbine OHV Trails Program 2025		<b>Date of Application:</b> 11/27/20
<i>(Please limit the project name to 5 words or less)</i>		
<b>Total Project Cost:</b> \$ 121,000		<b>Grant Request:</b> \$ 93,000
<i>(round off to the nearest \$1)</i>		<i>Amount Requested (round off to the nearest \$1) must match the Project Budget Form.</i>
<b>PROJECT SPONSOR</b> (Name and Address for entity legally responsible for project)		
Organization Name: Columbine RD, San Juan NF		
Mailing Address: PO Box 439, 367 Pearl St, Bayfield, CO 81122		
Telephone: 970-884-1403	Email: Jordan.burningham@usda.gov	
<b>OFFICIAL USE ONLY – UEI # (IF REQUIRED):</b>		
<a href="https://sam.gov/content/duns-uei">https://sam.gov/content/duns-uei</a>		
<b>PROJECT CONTACT</b> This is the person with day-to-day responsibility for the managing the project, ensuring the contract scope of work will be fulfilled. Please notify us if <i>Project Contact</i> changes.		
Name: Jordan Burningham	Title: Trails Manager	
Mailing Address: PO Box 439, 367 Pearl St, Bayfield, CO 81122		
Telephone: 970-884-1403	Email: Jordan.burningham@usda.gov	
	Is this the primary contact for this grant: <b>YES</b> NO	
<b>PROJECT CLOSE-OUT CONTACT</b> This is the person responsible for submitting receipts for project spending and close-out. Please notify us if <i>Project Contact</i> changes.		
Name: Jordan Burningham	Title: Trails Manager	
Mailing Address: PO Box 439, 367 Pearl St, Bayfield, CO 81122		
Telephone: 970-884-1403	Email: Jordan.burningham@usda.gov	
<b>GRANTS &amp; AGREEMENTS SPECIALIST (USFS only) or BUDGET CONTACT (BLM only)</b>		
Name: Lindsey Burkett	Title: Grants Management Specialist	
Mailing Address: 15 Burnett Court, Durango, CO 81301		
Telephone: 970-385-1259	Email: <a href="mailto:lindsey.burkett@usda.gov">lindsey.burkett@usda.gov</a>	

**PROJECT LOCATION**

Nearest Town or City: Bayfield, Durango, Silverton  
 County(ies): Archuleta, Hinsdale, La Plata, San Juan  
 Provide a point of reference for mapping purposes (i.e. a google searchable landscape feature):  
 Durango, CO  
 Township/Range/Section: T 34-39N, R 5-10W, N.M.P.  
 State Senate District #: 6      State Representative District #: 59

**LAND OWNERSHIP**

1. Provide the name/s of the property owners:  
 2. The trail corridor is controlled by:  Fee Simple     Lease     Easement     License  
 Right-of-Way     Land Acquisition Ownership to be obtained     Other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

**TRAIL SYSTEM INFORMATION** (List the number of miles for each type of OHV trail in your area)

Miles of Singletrack: 42.5    Miles of 50" or less: 90.3    Miles of Full-sized: 17.5

**TRAIL USER INFORMATION** (Please check all that apply to the work planned for this project)

All-Terrain Vehicle     Side x Side     Full Sized 4X4  
 Motorcycling     Four-Wheeling     Accessible Access

**PROJECT INFORMATION** (Please check all activities that apply to this project.)  
 Include detailed information for each in the Project Scope of Work.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trail Maintenance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Travel Plan Implementation
<input type="checkbox"/> *New Trail Construction miles / ft. _____ (Approved through Travel Mgt Decision)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resource Protection & Improvement
<input type="checkbox"/> *Major Re-Route miles / ft. closed _____ (that will require new or additional environmental approvals) miles / ft. added _____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Signs
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Youth Corps
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restoration/Rehabilitation (existing corridor)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planning
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Visitor Contacts & Law Enforcement	<input type="checkbox"/> Capital Equipment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Land Acquisition or Other

\* **New Trail Construction & Major Re-Route:** Trail location(s) must be indicated on project map and detailed description of trail work plans must be provided in Project Selection Criteria, Section D-1, #3 Resource Protection, Enhancement & Restoration

**TRAIL ACTIVITIES SUMMARY** (Based on your project description and budget, provide the percentage for each of the categories listed below.)

<b>% of Budget</b>	<b>Program maintenance</b> (e.g., erosion controls, water bars and culverts, trail clearing and brushing, trail hardening and trail tread repairs, bridge construction and repairs, trailhead improvements and maintenance, crew wages, etc.)
<b>70</b>	
<b>5</b>	<b>Enforcement, Education &amp; Visitor Contacts</b> (e.g., patrols, enforcement, education and visitor contacts, wages, safety contacts, equipment, etc.)
<b>10</b>	<b>Planning &amp; Travel Plan Implementation</b> (e.g., planning, engineering, maps, inventorying, travel management signs & installation, decommission non-system routes, rehabilitation, new construction, wages, monitoring, etc.)
<b>15</b>	<b>Equipment /Materials/ Signs/ Youth Corps/Miscellaneous</b> (e.g., equipment maintenance and repair, personnel training, certification in the use of specialized equipment, program coordination, etc.)
<b>100</b>	<b>Total: (Note: Percentages should add to 100 %)</b>

SCOPE OF WORK – Project Description:	
Project Name: Columbine OHV Trails Program 2025	Project No.: (to be completed by CPW)
Project Sponsor: Columbine RD, San Juan NF	Application Year: 2024-2025
Project Contact: Jordan Burningham	Application No.: (to be completed by CPW)
Total Project Cost: \$121,000	Grant Request: \$ 93,000

**Project Description:** Please write a brief description of your project and the expected accomplishments. Be sure to include Who, What, When, and Where. This is your scope of work. (This section is not for project background, benefits or anything other than the actual work to be accomplished. Please address this information in question #2 of section D, Project Selection Criteria.)

*Remove all instructional text (below) and replace it with information specific to this project request*

**Project Description:** The Columbine OHV Trails Program will maintain and improve OHV trails, trailheads, parking, infrastructure, and related facilities. The program will plan, produce and install signage for OHV related trails and infrastructure. Members of the program will provide a necessary field presence that helps to provide visitor contacts, compliance and enforcement, and education around multi-use OHV trails and trail user ethics.

The primary objectives of the program in 2025 are 3 fold:

- 1) Utilize awarded funding to offset at least half of the cost of salaries for a 2-3 person OHV focused trail crew that would be hired by the USFS as part of the seasonal workforce.
- 2) Provide for 4 weeks of Youth Corps (Southwest Conservation Corps) work on major maintenance projects within the Hermosa creek SMA.
- 3) Provide for the cost of a mini-excavator rental for 2-4 weeks to support more technical trail work and build out expertise of program operators.

**Who:** This grant application has been submitted by the Columbine Ranger District Recreation and Trails program, on the San Juan National Forest within Region 2 of the USFS.

In the last 2 years the Columbine Ranger District has seen significant turnover in Full-time, permanent staff positions critical to the success of recreation management in the District service area. Our Recreation Staff officer, Trails Manager/Foreman and our Trails Crew Lead are all new permanent hires for the 2023 season. In addition, Forest and Regional leadership are making significant investments in staffing within recreation – the goal is to move more of our seasonal workforce to permanent positions that would work at minimum 13 pay periods and be retained with benefits from one year to the next. For 2024 we are staffing up 4 new Permanent Seasonal Positions in the GS-0462-5/6/7 career ladder category within recreation as a whole and shifting all of our new hires to a minimum of GS-0462-5s or Wage Grade 3s (~\$20/hr). These efforts will hopefully pay off with more investment in our workforce and more experience retained from year to year, while simultaneously opening capacity for existing positions. There are still many moves to make to reach the full capacity this unit needs, but these are solid first steps.

Starting in 2024, we are going to pilot a new structure for trails management on the District to allow for more effective use of funds and resources.

- 1) Our Wilderness program will take on dirt work formally within wilderness and more “backcountry” (difficult to access) non-motorized trails.
- 2) Our Trails Foreman and the existing trails program will focus more on motorized and mechanized trails that are more “frontcountry” in nature. Within the Frontcountry Program we will have a 4-5 person hand crew with a lead, and a 2-3 person OHV crew with a

dedicated lead. This will also allow the trails program to work more closely with our developed and dispersed recreation staff to manage things like signage, motorized travel, Trailhead, parking and campground infrastructure.

- 3) This strategy will also help us match our program needs with the needs of employees more effectively (The Frontcountry Trails crew will camp occasionally, usually from vehicles or equipment and be on a more traditional 40hr/week schedule, Backcountry Trails on the other hand will be out for longer periods in more remote locations).

For the use of this grant funding, we hope to have a dedicated crew of 2-3 individuals – a primary operator that would lead the crew and over-see projects directly with a dedicated assistant. Occasionally for larger projects we will use additional funding to pull a member over from our larger hand crew to support those initiatives. With this setup we hope to build in more leadership and succession planning to our trails program at large, create opportunities for employees to diversify their experience, and create some redundancy within the workforce throughout the season. The bulk of groundwork associated with this grant application will be conducted by this 2-3 person OHV crew.

The OHV crew work will be supplemented by the large project efficiency of an SCC crew, working primarily in difficult to access locations where targeted presence is necessary to finish a project in a timely manner. The OHV crew and Trails Foreman would work closely to properly prepare, educate and support the SCC crew on the nature of OHV trails, funding and purpose. Specific projects for SCC are in the works already but will be finalized the spring of 2025 for this grant.

**Where:** The Columbine Ranger District of the San Juan National Forest is in southwest Colorado, working in the Archuleta, Hinsdale, La Plata and San Juan counties. There are no OHV trails located in the Hinsdale county portion of the district. The district is comprised of approximately 720,000 acres with nearly 700 miles of system trails in total. Of this total mileage we have 150 miles of motorized, multi-use trails – 42.5 miles of single-track, 90.3 miles of two track (<50”) and 17.5 miles of Jeep trails (50”+). Work for this grant will focus on these three categories of trail, as well as areas impacted by unauthorized motorized use in need of rehabilitation, restoration and site stabilization. See maps in section E.

**What:** The ongoing priority of the District in the use of these funds is to improve recreational experiences for motorized users, mitigate resource damage and increase the buy-in and voluntary compliance through education, engineering, signage and route improvement without changing the character of our current OHV trail systems.

The crew’s primary goal in 2025 will be to log out (clear) at least 50% of our system OHV routes and work closely with volunteer groups to coordinate the clearing of additional mileage, if not the whole network. The crew will perform monitoring and maintenance to varying degrees, based on need throughout the system – all work will be completed to USFS Trail standards for motorized single-track, two-track and jeep trail standards, as applicable.

A secondary goal is to further improve the awareness and compliance of users regarding travel management regulations, landscape impacts and multi-use trail ethics. Highlighting the benefits of funding sources (OHV registrations) for projects such as this will be a significant point of education for all users the crew interacts with during their time in the field.

When available, USFS staff may have Forest Protection Officers (FPO) available as part of the workforce at large. These individuals are authorized to cite Class B misdemeanors, collect information, and assist Federal Law Enforcement Officers in felony citations.

Funding from this grant will also provide for materials and supplies to work and exist safely out on trail including Personal Protective equipment (PPE), project supplies and materials, signage, fuel, equipment maintenance and other miscellaneous operating expenses.

**When:** The vast majority of work will be performed during the 2025 field season, spanning from April to November.

**Program Funding Acknowledgement:** USFS staff appreciates the continued support and collaboration from Colorado Parks and Wildlife and the OHV Program – it's an important measure that we all take to make sure that our array of users and partners are aware of the unique funding model this program offers to keep critical multi-use trails open to the public. This education also works towards the motorized community in highlighting the importance of motor-vehicle registrations and how funding such as this can ultimately improve trail conditions and access where they recreate – a rare and direct translation of fees to service that directly impact those users' experience as a whole.

Funding is acknowledged verbally as mentioned above (when interacting with ALL trail users) with "Funded by State OHV Registration" signs and stickers placed on all equipment and present at worksites. We are working to inventory all motorized signage and make sure that all related Carsonite Signposts and informational kiosks are stickered with "Colorado OHV Registration Dollars at Work" decals and logos.

For Budget, please refer to the attached Budget Spreadsheet attached with this application.

## Budget Form

**Project Name: Columbine OHV Trails Program 2025**

**Date Project will be Completed: 12/31/2025**

**Project Sponsor: Columbine RD, San Juan NF**

\*\*ITEMS LISTED IN THE BUDGET BELOW SHOULD BE SPECIFIC AND CORRESPOND TO THE PLANNED ACTIVITIES INDICATED IN THE PROJECT DESCRIPTION (SCOPE OF WORK) IN YOUR GRANT APPLICATION \*\*\*(Round amounts off to nearest dollar)

PROJECT FUNDING SOURCES <small>List all sources and amounts of project funding in this section (insert additional lines if needed)</small>	CASH	In-Kind (Non-Cash) Contributions	TOTAL
OHV Grant Funding (amount of requested OHV grant funds only)	\$ 93,000		\$ 93,000.00
Other Funding Sources <small>List other sources of project funding here and for what the funding will be used. (insert more lines if needed)</small>	\$ -	\$ 28,000	\$ 28,000.00
<small>Example: To provide additional Salary, Materials, and/or Equipment</small>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>USE OF GRANT FUNDING</b>	<b>TOTAL PROJECT AMOUNT</b>		<b>\$ 121,000.00</b>

List uses of grant funding (only) below

### I. Personnel Costs

Identify as: Salary/wage, benefits, travel, training, outfitting costs, personal protection equipment, etc.

Employee Name or Title/Grade	\$ Per Hr	Quantity	Total Cost
Trail Crew Member, GS-042-05	\$ 175.00	80	\$ 14,000.00
Trail Crew Member, GS-042-05	\$ 175.00	80	\$ 14,000.00
Trail Crew Lead/Operator, GS-0462-07	\$ 350.00	40	\$ 14,000.00
	\$ -		\$ -
	\$ -		\$ -
<small>For CPW use only: Approximate number of workhours</small>	240.00	<b>Category Total</b>	<b>\$ 42,000.00</b>

### II. Project Materials/Supplies

Identify as: Signs, rock, lumber, paint, nails, printing, maps/guides, education materials, etc.

PPE, tools, field and camp supplies (expendables such as camp fuel, medical supplies, etc), education materials, signage materials and supplies, building materials (culverts, geo-tech fabrics, rebar, concrete, lumber, hardware, etc.)	Price Per	Quantity	Total
	\$ 4,000.00		\$ 4,000.00 \$ 4,000.00
	\$ -		\$ - \$ -
	\$ -		\$ - \$ -
	\$ -		\$ - \$ -
	\$ -		\$ - \$ -
		<b>Category Total</b>	<b>\$ 4,000.00</b>

### III. Equipment

Identify as: Trail Dozers, ATV/UTV, motorcycle, chainsaws, winches, field equipment rentals, equipment fuel, repairs, and operations, etc.

Ditch Witch SK-650, ATV, Trailer and associated equipment maintenance and repair (repairs, routine maintenance, annual inspections, etc.), fuel for equipment and chainsaws, and a mini-excavator rental.	\$ 5,000.00		\$ 5,000.00 \$ 5,000.00
	\$ -		\$ - \$ -
		<b>Category Total</b>	<b>\$ 5,000.00</b>

### III.A. FLEET Equipment

Identify as: Crew Fleet Vehicles/Trucks monthly FOR & USE, Fleet Equipment monthly USE.

	\$ -		\$ - \$ -
	\$ -		\$ - \$ -
	\$ -		\$ - \$ -
		<b>Category Total</b>	<b>\$ -</b>

### IV. Contracted Services

Identify as: Youth Corps, NEPA, planning, engineering, construction contractor/subcontractor costs

Southwest Conservation Corps 8 person crew	\$ 10,500.00	4	\$ 42,000.00
	\$ -		\$ -
	\$ -		\$ -
		<b>Category Total</b>	<b>\$ 42,000.00</b>

### V. Volunteer Support

Identify as: For Volunteers Only Safety education, safety gear (gloves/goggles), outfitting, per diem (meals or mileage when travel required by and identified in project scope of work), non-monetary awards or recognition.

	\$ -		\$ -
	\$ -		\$ -
		<b>Category Total</b>	<b>\$ -</b>

Note: Any changes to the budget must have pre-approval from the Program

<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 93,000.00</b>
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# C-1

## FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION and LAND MANAGER APPROVAL

The applicant is responsible for securing all necessary permits, licenses, clearances, SHPO, and environmental analysis documentation necessary to comply with local, state, and/or federal laws.

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Project Name	Columbine OHV Trails Program 2025	Project Sponsor	Columbine District, San Juan National Forest
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**As the official responsible for management of the land on which the project will be accomplished, I agree to the following:**

1. The project as described in this application has my approval.
2. The project is located on federal public lands and is in conformance with the appropriate Forest Management Plan, BLM Resource Area Management Plan or other decision document titled:

The San Juan National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan      Date: September 2013

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3. A decision has been issued as part of the NEPA environmental review process.

Date and title of document:

Hermosa Creek Watershed, Recreation and Travel Management Project Decision Notice: 12/19/2017

La Plata Canyon-Junction Creek Landscapes Travel Management Decision Notice: 7/9/2012

Beaver Meadows-Sauls Creek Landscapes Travel Management Decision Notice: 4/26/2010

Amended Lakes Landscape Travel Management Decision Notice: 3/11/2009

Northern San Juan Basin-Record of Decision: 4/4/2007

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If a decision has not been issued as part of the NEPA environmental review process, please state the reason why. No funds will be distributed until any required NEPA documentation is completed.

Not Applicable

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For more information about the NEPA environmental review process, contact:

Jordan Burningham, Trails Manager, 970-884-1403, Jordan.burningham@usda.gov

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4. The next planning process that may affect this project is planned for (date).

Unknown

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Print or type Land Manager's Name and Title

Nicholas Glidden, District Ranger, Columbine RD, San Juan NF

NICHOLAS

Digitally signed by NICHOLAS

GLIDDEN

GLIDDEN

Date: 2023.12.01 13:15:26 -07'00'

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Land Manager Signature and Title

Date

**NON-FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION and LAND MANAGER APPROVAL**

The Applicant is responsible for filling out this TOP portion of this page ending at "Applicant Environmental Checklist". The applicant is also responsible for securing all necessary permits, licenses, clearances, and environmental analyses documentation necessary to comply with local, state, and/or federal laws.

Project Name Columbine OHV Trails Program 2025 Project Sponsor Columbine District, San Juan National Forest

The project described in this application has my approval.

NICHOLAS GLIDDEN Digitally signed by NICHOLAS GLIDDEN  
Date: 2023.12.01 13:15:48 -07'00'

**Owners or Authorized Person's Signature and Title      Date**

Nicholas Glidden, District Ranger, Columbine RD, San Juan NF

**Print or type Owner's or Authorized Person's Name and Title**

**APPLICANT ENVIRONMENTAL CHECK LIST**

Describe the process (es) or efforts you have made to review potential wildlife and environmental impacts of your project as concisely and specifically as possible. Include any relevant information in each of the category questions listed below and indicate which question you are answering. Examples are given of the types of information that may be valuable. If a question is not applicable to this project, please write "N/A" and state your reasoning.

**1. Species of Concern:** Is it likely that plant and/or wildlife species of concern are present on the proposed project site?

- Federally listed, threatened, and/or endangered species

Canada lynx (*Lynx canadensis*, Threatened), New Mexico meadow jumping mouse (*Zapus hudsonius luteus*, Endangered), southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*, Endangered), and yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*, Threatened) are federally listed threatened or endangered wildlife species that can be found in or have potential habitat in the project area. Knowlton cactus has potential habitat in the southern HD's but there are no known occurrences on the Columbine RD. There are no other federally listed plants found in the project vicinity.

- Species that are rare or have limited range in Colorado

The following species are Region two sensitive species that are known to occur in the project area: Brewer's sparrow (*Spizella breweri*), Grace's warbler (*Setophaga graciae*), Gunnison's prairie dog (*Cynomys gunnisoni*), Lewis's woodpecker (*Melanerpes lewis*), Pacific marten (*Martes caurina*), Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis canadensis*), Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*), Virginia's warbler (*Leiothlypis virginiae*), black swift (*Cypseloides niger*), boreal owl (*Aegolius funereus*), ferruginous hawk (*Buteo regalis*), flammulated owl (*Psiloscoops flammeolus*), flannelmouth sucker (*Catostomus latipinnis*), fringed myotis (*Myotis thysanodes*), hoary bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*), loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*), northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), northern leopard frog (*Lithobates pipiens*), olive-sided flycatcher (*Contopus cooperi*), pinyon jay (*Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus*), purple martin (*Progne subis*), river otter (*Lontra canadensis*), roundtail chub (*Gila robusta*), spotted bat (*Euderma maculatum*), white-tailed ptarmigan (*Lagopus leucura*).

**2. Habitats and their Values:** What habitats are present and how important, productive, or pristine is the wildlife habitat in the project area?

- Describe habitats that are present and others that are adjacent to them

The project covers most of the Columbine Ranger District excluding the Weminuche Wilderness, other wilderness areas and roadless areas. Predominant habitat types are: Spruce-Fir, Aspen with Conifer, Mountain Shrublands, Alpine, Ponderosa Pine, Warm-dry Mixed Conifer, Cool-moist Mixed



Conifer, Riparian, Aspen, Pinyon-juniper, Mountain Grasslands, Sagebrush, Desert Grasslands, Lodgepole Pine, Desert Shrublands, and Upland Willow

- Existing development or human impacts to the proposed project area?

This application focuses on maintenance and management of motorized trails. As a result, all activities associated with the project will be collocated with existing development.

- Critical habitat for a particular species, or an area with high value for nesting, feeding, or calving

This could occur in habitats that are used for or adjacent to nesting, feeding or calving. However, activities will all occur within a baseline of a motorized system. The baseline of disturbance should not increase as a result of any part of the project in any of these sensitive areas. In addition, public education components of the proposal would aim to minimize impacts caused by motorized users.

The project will not impact critical habitat designated by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

3. **Potential Impacts:** List, in bulleted form, the proposed project activities. Then, describe how the project activities will, or potentially may, impact vegetation and/or wildlife. Include both short-term (during project activities) and long-term (impacts to habitats) effects.

Potential Impacts

- Use of motorized equipment on motorized trails
  - Trail crews being present on motorized trails
  - Vegetation removal along trails
  - Use of chainsaws on motorized trails
- Disturbance of sensitive species

The project may disturb any of the sensitive species listed above. Impacts would be temporary in nature and short in duration and occur in areas with existing motorized disturbance.

- Impacts to species during rest, feeding, or reproductive cycles  
Project activities will adhere to all seasonal closures that occur on Columbine RD. Work would still not raise the baseline of disturbance because work would be collocated with open motorized trails.

- Encroachment, loss or reduction of habitat(s)  
This project will not result in additional encroachment of any habitats because it will all occur on existing trails.

- Intrusion into areas with little existing human impacts  
See above.

Continued next page . . .

**4. Mitigation:** How will these impacts be addressed?

Mitigations for this project would be:

- that work would occur only on existing routes, during periods when trails are open to other users and a baseline of disturbance already exists.
- Education of the public would additionally mitigate impacts to resources.
- Closing non-system of illegally constructed trails would also occur.
- if any bird nests are discovered during project activities, work would avoid the nest and a temporal and spatial no work buffer, applicable to the nesting species, would be applied by a wildlife biologist.

**5. Benefits:** List habitat improvements such as restoration of wetlands, river corridors, and trail areas; restriction of recreationalists from sensitive areas; environmental or recreation education efforts.

- Education of users through environmental education programs would occur and trail maintenance would help minimize erosion and runoff of sediment as well as preventing disturbance footprints to existing trails.
- Some reroutes would occur during project implementation. When they do occur a wildlife biologist would be consulted to determine if there is any improvement to be made to the section that would improve conditions for wildlife. Most reroutes under the scope of this project are minor and would only include short reroutes that would occur directly adjacent to or in the original disturbance footprint of the existing route.

**6. Environmental Compliance:** Describe regulatory compliance, applicable permits and/or agency concurrence procedures that are, or are not required, and why.

- Migratory Bird Treaty Act (i.e., nesting habitats will not be impacted by the project due to the project's timing or, surveys for nesting birds will be conducted prior to activities and, activities that may impact active nests will be postponed).

Very little vegetation removal, an activity that could impact migratory birds, would occur as a result of the project. All nests would be avoided during vegetation removal that does occur.

- Concurrence from USFWS for effects determinations (or rationale for why no such concurrence is required)

No new disturbance would occur as a result of the project therefore project impacts to all threatened and endangered species would result in a "No Effect"

- US Army Corps of Engineers 404 permits  
No water resources would be impacted as a result of the project.
- Compliance with raptor guidelines recommended by Colorado Parks and Wildlife  
SJNF plan raptor guidelines and CPW raptor guidelines would be followed if nests are discovered.

**Principle source of information:** (e.g., Colorado Parks & Wildlife, Colorado Natural Heritage Program, local agency, staff biologist, consultant)

Columbine District Staff Biologist, San Juan National Forest

**Printed name, title and telephone number of person consulted:**

Michael Schmidt

Michael Schmidt

Digitally signed by Michael Schmidt  
Date: 2023.12.01 16:51:12 -07'00'

**Signature of person consulted:**

# D-1

## **PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA**

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*Carefully read and provide answers to each of the following four criteria (four page maximum):*

All applicants must respond to the following selection criteria questions. You are allowed the space below each question to fill in your answer. If you have an answer that does not fill the entire page, do not feel obligated to fill the space. This application will be scored on a 100 point basis. The maximum number of points that can be awarded for each question is shown in parentheses. Each project will be reviewed by outside reviewers and State Trails staff, and projects will be ranked according to reviewer and staff scores. Failure to provide a response to any question (unless otherwise noted) will reduce your project's score. Please reference all attachments.

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### **1. Need for & Benefit of the Project (25 points):**

*Describe the objectives of your project and how it will benefit, and protect riding opportunities while protecting resources in the project area.*

Unlike many of our forest system trails, funding for OHV specific trails and motorized routes is well established and translates directly to positive impacts and improvements for the systems they reside in within Colorado. This project will have a large impact on the quality of our trails and systems as a whole by continuing to fund critical maintenance measures as well as help us plan and work towards improving trails and critical infrastructure such as signage, parking, trailheads, etc. By inherently creating a positive user experience through critical maintenance and delivering appropriate education to all users, this project will improve riding opportunities by fostering more respect, as well as keeping trails open and useable to everyone. The district has had a strong history of utilizing OHV program funds to support maintenance and improvements to our recreational infrastructure, specifically those that surround our motorized trails and community. This history continues as it is a priority for us to maintain presence and continue work each year on our OHV systems, less we lose traction and fall even further behind on our deferred trail maintenance as an agency.

All user types will be affected by our program work including motorcycles, ATVs, UTVs and full-size vehicles such as jeeps. Though I can't at this time provide a succinct quantitative assessment of users, trails such as the Hermosa Creek Trail and the surrounding spurs offer critical access to a huge swath of our public lands and provide that access to a wide variety of user types, even beyond the motorized community. Given the variety of OHV trail types and terrain we have on the district, and the fact that our strategy is to work on each system to a degree each year, the collective and consistent impact this funding has on all OHV users in the community is significant. Even our motorized routes and roads that facilitate access to non-motorized trails are impacted positively by this program, making it one of the most important funding sources that the district can pursue.

One critical addition to this project that is included in this application is the use of more technical machinery in the maintenance of our motorized trails. Mini-excavators in conjunction with motorized support and hand crews have proven to be one of the most cost and energy efficient ways to build and maintain natural surface trails, and are particularly effective on our larger motorized trail corridors. This machinery will allow us a more technically apt approach to heavy maintenance on our system trails, of which has been hard to accomplish with hand crews alone. Given that machinery experience and staffing have been severely limited in the last few years on the district, this will also be a critical component to our plan of developing a more robust and resilient OHV trail crew and program.

### **2. Partnerships, Support and Leverage (25 points):**

*Provide evidence of support for this project from trail users, agencies, local governments, community groups, or individuals and attach letters or petitions to your application packet. Applicants need to demonstrate that the project has a broad spectrum of support. Letters from the following entities are encouraged: relevant*

*political subdivisions with jurisdiction over the project area, conservation organizations, user groups who frequent the area, and community organizations. The program places a higher value on the quality of supporting correspondence submitted rather than the quantity of support letters received.*

Given the importance of our OHV trails, especially for motorized and mechanized users, we plan to try to coordinate early season activities with groups such as San Juan Trail Riders and Durango Trails to clear out downed trees on our system trails. This is a huge issue on the District as we start to see the cascade of trees begin to fall from beetle kill, and several larger fires that have occurred on and around our OHV networks, such as the 416 fire in the Hermosa Special Management Area (SMA).

Given that the scope of this project is largely focused on continued annual maintenance strategies across the district, I don't anticipate any controversy with the proposed project or scope of work. That said, history on the district does show an interesting push back on mini-excavator use that we don't totally understand – in 2021 Forest Service staff leveraged funding to put a mini-excavator on Lower Hermosa Creek trail to try and re-establish the bench to our existing Trail Management Objective (TMO) standards. Local (in-formal) comments put forth a concerning story that seemed to be mis-guided and mis-informed regarding the trails original purpose and span of use (which was up to 50" for the first few miles, as it is from the Upper Hermosa Trail as well). The exact location of use of the mini-excavator rental is to be determined as we more closely approach 2025 – hopefully we can get more of an understanding of this issue and work to educate and inform the public more effectively prior to implementation.

List of additional funds, resources, etc. that will be leveraged for this project:

- The USFS has been establishing seasonal and full time salaries within a modernized budget strategy that will allow us to more consistently fund positions from year to year and throughout the season. This means that numerous positions will be working on OHV related projects (to varying degrees) in support of this funding to magnify its impacts, including a GS-11 Recreation Staff supervisor, GS-9 Recreation Specialist, GS-7 Trails Foreman, and a couple of other GS-6 lead positions within our frontcountry recreation shop, and the small crews they lead.
- We received \$2,400 in OHV related signage from the "Stay the Trail Education & Stewardship Alliance" to supplement our larger signage inventory, replacement and maintenance strategy.
- Regular USFS program funds will also be utilized to fill in any gaps for supplies, equipment, etc. for the trail program at large.
- Fleet vehicles are all managed regionally within the USFS, so that allocation of funds for vehicles is a fixed cost that is now built into our budget at large and will not need be supplemented in any way from this grant or others.
- We have existing equipment through grant cycles such as this from previous years, as well as fleet and program purchasing that will already be in place to ensure that there is at least a solid baseline of work that can be accomplished on the District. Equipment includes an older Ditch Witch SK650, trailers, ATVs and smaller machinery such as chainsaws and jackhammers. In FY24, the Columbine Recreation Program has also been working towards acquiring equipment such as a UTV from our fleet services, as well as e-bikes for less experienced users to travel more effectively on motorized single track trails.

And of course, a critical component to this application are letters of support – please see attached letters in Section G. (additional ones may come in as part of the public comment period).

### **3. Resource Protection, Enhancement and Restoration relative to eligible OHV grant activities (25 points):**

*Describe the principal objectives that will be accomplished by this project (e.g., new trail construction, trail relocation or major re-route, trail maintenance, restoration/rehabilitation or any other grant eligible activity). Include as many components as are applicable. Show how the project aids in the protection or improvement of the environment by addressing existing problems, and avoiding or minimizing impacts through the implementation of the project.*

The bulk of this project is to support regular maintenance of OHV trails and motorized routes. This includes erosion control of existing trails through means of installation or maintenance of small structures within the trail corridor such as drains, rolling grade dips and grade reversals, retaining walls and raised tread as applicable. Even corridor work, trail clearing and trail tread delineation can reduce erosion through concentrating use into the designated zone of impact – the trail tread itself, reducing braiding and social trail establishment. Additional work surrounding the trail systems may include erosion control work such as check dam installation in rutted areas of non-use or old tread zones, as well as use of Geotech fabrics and larger structures such as turnpikes if found to be necessary. Small reroutes or establishment of better alignments that do not require Environmental assessments may be utilized, especially in areas where the trail tread itself has crept into disarray – often just bumping the bench above the rutted or wet trail section is all that is needed.

Work will heed all wildlife closures put forth by CPW and partner agencies, including any limitations requested due to sensitive areas or reproductive windows. These closures will be communicated out to volunteers and partner organizations in order to contain any impact this work may have on sensitive species. Given the erosive nature of machine driven wheeled traffic, all OHV trails are high priorities for erosion control as they can all effect the surrounding landscape. Seeding and/or revegetation will take place post work to encourage regrowth, especially when machines are used to do heavier maintenance on existing trails. The sensitive nature of burn areas especially requires diligence in retaining soils and encouraging regrowth – many of these burned areas that have trails have struggled to contain that erosion and the trails themselves are often subject to unsustainable conditions in these zones. The Hermosa Creek SMA in particular is a hot-bed of erosion and trail issues post fire, especially in light of sensitive trout species in the watershed and the extensive work that has been done to protect and in some cases reintroduce them.

### ***Large Equipment Purchases, Maintenance and Disposition:***

Not applicable for this Application

### **4. Travel Management Plan Implementation, Education and Enforcement (25 points):**

Active and effective OHV management is based upon the implementation of travel management plans, broad public awareness, compliance, enforcement and providing adequate recreation opportunities. Describe how the project will promote active OHV management and improve OHV use for the benefit of public land visitors. To receive a full score of 25 points for this category the project must incorporate at least one of the following components.

#### ***Travel Management:***

Large gaps exist currently in regard to signage and visitor information on the Columbine District. The fragmented nature of staffing here over the last couple of years has ultimately led to the deterioration of these aspects, especially as it pertains to infrastructure on motorized routes, trailheads, parking and area information kiosks. In 2023 we began employing more effective survey measures for our field going personnel to collect this critical data so we can start to use it in a more effective manner to install, replace and maintain signage and associated infrastructure. In addition, we have a robust dataset of system routes and a large amount of data showing existing social trails (motorized and otherwise). With more concrete staffing in place, we hope to begin planning more effectively on the closure of these routes based on impact as a part of our program scope each season.

#### ***Education***

Core educational components to this project include USFS staff awareness of projects and funding at large, in order to more effectively interface with and inform the general public as well as inform motorized users of rider ethics. Additionally, USFS staff work to meet with and encourage partners and volunteer groups to spread the right information to their membership and constituents so as to create a larger awareness around the multi-use nature of the Forest Service's mission. It is the goal of current recreation staff to foster collaboration between user groups and host regular meetings to make sure that priorities, feedback and information are passed into our communities effectively. In addition, and where feasible, signage and informational resources will be utilized to reinforce what is being vocalized directly.

#### ***Enforcement and Compliance Activities:***

Provided Forest Protection Officers (FPOs) are available within our staff ranks, we plan to utilize them to help reinforce regulations and ensure compliance through issuance of citations, if necessary. Even in lieu of the absence of FPOs at times all forest staff have an obligation to inform educate and if necessary

document any interactions that would warrant follow up through law enforcement channels. The best time to make these interactions and checks are when the crews are out on the ground and able to directly interface with users while working on projects. On occasion, and during peak periods of use (weekends, holidays, hunting seasons, etc.) the District has directed staff to go on patrols with these aspects being a main priority. Another strategy we are hoping to try is to stagger recreation program schedules so that we have a more consistent presence on the landscape – encouraging more patrols on weekends especially by coordinating a more thorough schedule amongst our program as a whole.

Currently our Dispersed and Developed recreation crew does a lot of these patrols on our motorized routes and roads as they work to clean and maintain facilities such as toilets, campgrounds, parking areas, etc. These visitor contacts are not quantified currently but amount to dozens on most days.

## **D-2**

### **Land Acquisition Grant – Supplemental Criteria**

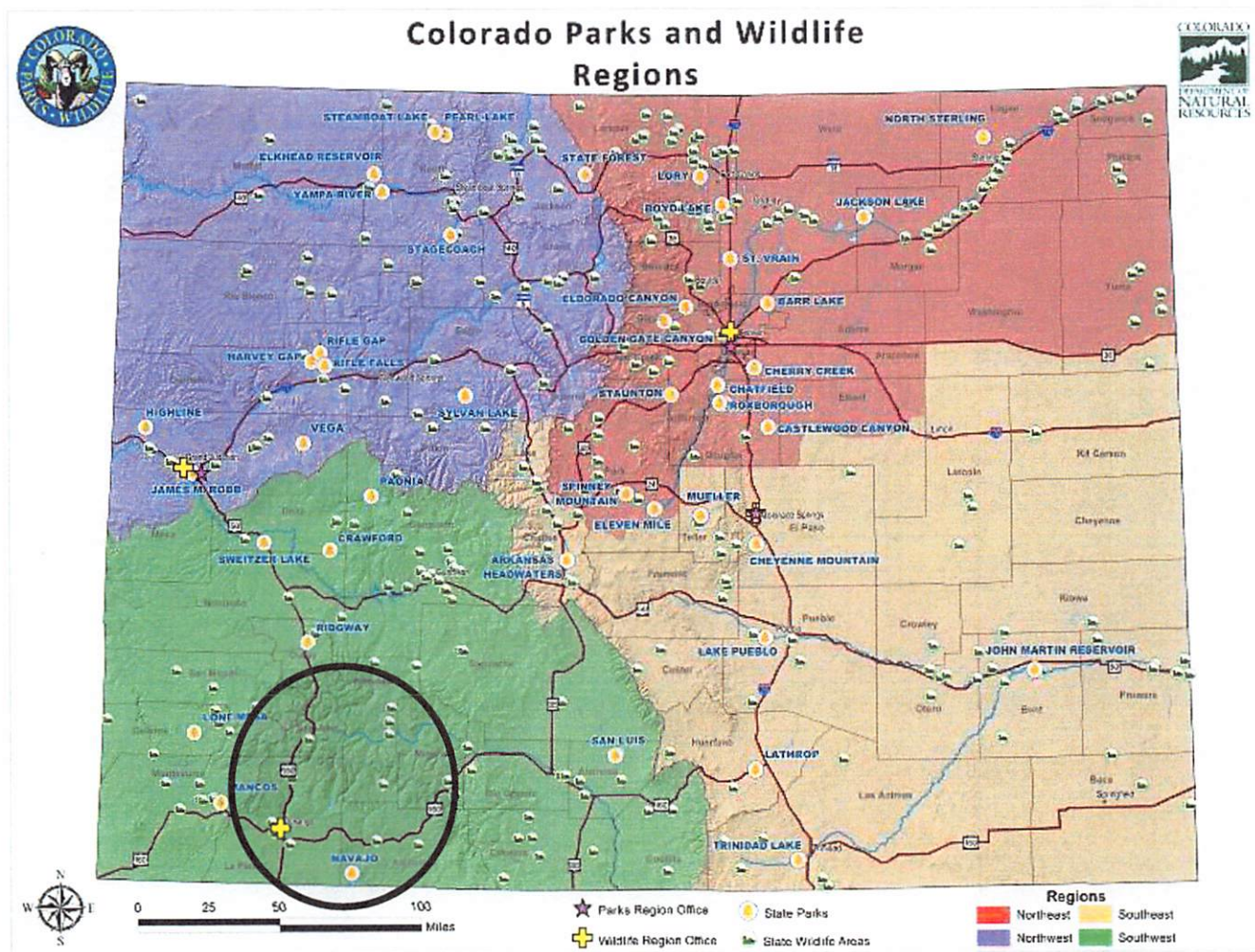
Not applicable to this application.

## E-1 Vicinity Map & E-2 Project Site Maps

Maps being requested include:

- “General area” (vicinity) map. (E-1)
- A drill-down of that map that shows the *specific* “project vicinity”. (E-2a)
- Another drill down map showing specific trails and/or work area (highlighted). (E-2b)

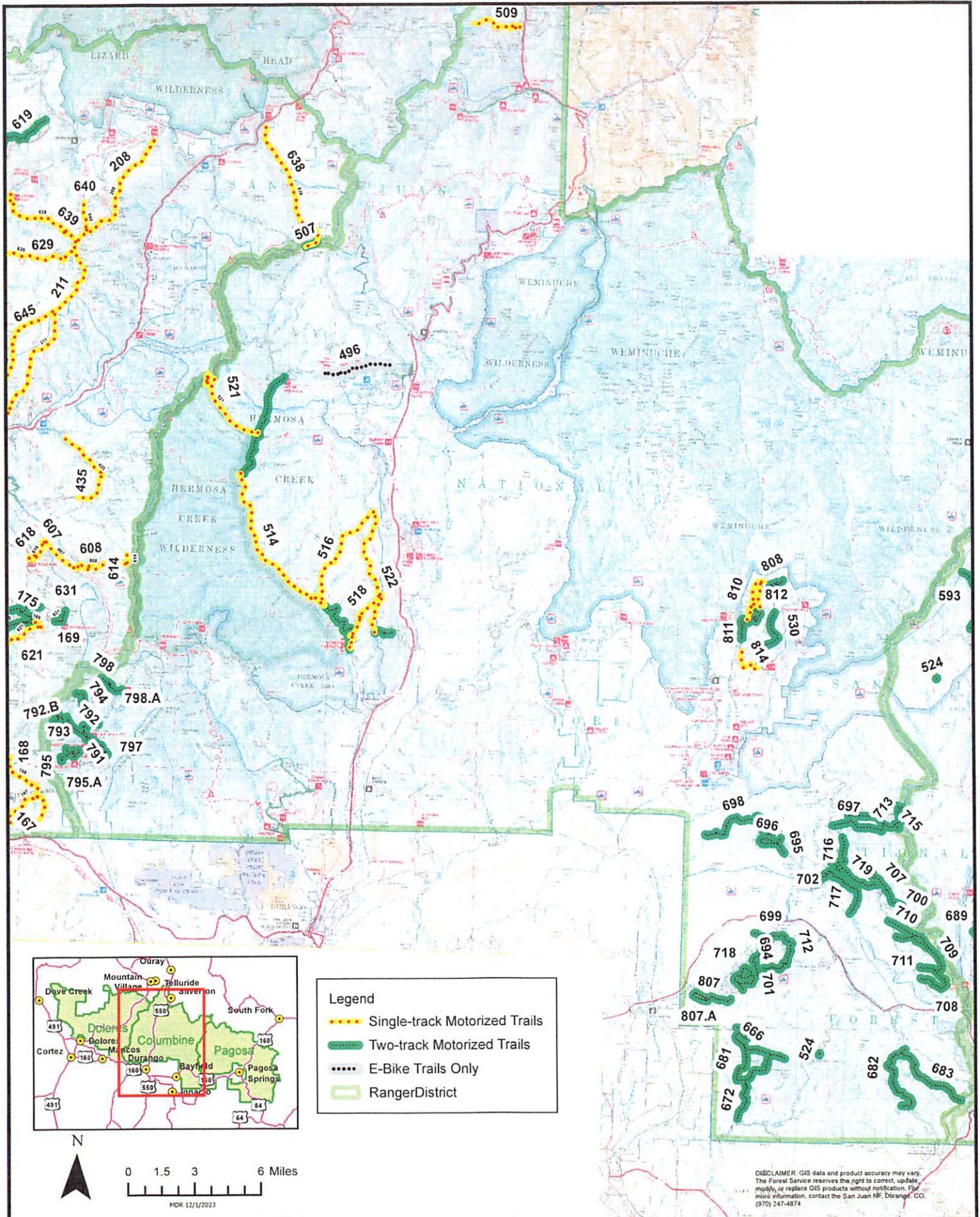
**E-1** Vicinity Map: Please mark the vicinity where the project is located on the map below.



**E-2** Project Maps: Please provide a map identifying the specific trail-work area or project site.  
(Make 12 copies to include in your application packet)

1:24,000 scale map OR a Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM)  
That clearly shows roads, trails, streams, management area boundaries, and other significant natural and developed features in the vicinity of the project.

# Columbine Ranger District Motorized Trail System San Juan National Forest



**Legend**

- - - Single-track Motorized Trails
- - - Two-track Motorized Trails
- . . . . . E-Bike Trails Only
- Ranger District

DISCLAIMER: GIS data and product accuracy may vary. The Forest Service reserves the right to correct, update, modify, or replace GIS products without notification. For more information, contact the San Juan NF, Durango, CO. (970) 247-4874



## (F) Project Illustration

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Photographs, Drawings, Engineering Plans, Diagrams

Provide project illustrations or photos to further demonstrate the needs of the project.

Some photos of work from 2023 that are likely still relevant for 2024 and 2025.



Trail Scouting was a big part of this year as we were working with minimal data – the high water levels and snowpack highlighted a lot of issues. Getting out fast on trails to see what the seasons issues/priorities are will be a regular early season task.



Training and working with sawyers to clear trees on all of our trails was a big task – the record snowpack and timing since big fires and beetle kill infestations have started to cause a lot of trees to come down. This will continue to be a task each year.



A Large crater formed on the Hermosa Creek trail when a ponderosa fell – the crew ultimately filled this in, but spring of 2024 will bring another visit to add more soil as it has compacted so much.



We collaborated with Southwest Conservation Corps crews and staff, as well as a local trails volunteer and our Range staff to pack in the SCC crew for 2 weeks near the Dutch Creek Crossing on the Hermosa Creek Trail. This horse support was critical as we begin to work deeper into the Hermosa drainage – establishing safe campsites in these remote, burned locations is challenging. We hope to do something similar at a blowout on the Hermosa Creek Trail about 8 miles in for 2024.



Signage is in pretty poor shape across the district – enhancing and correcting this issue will be key to encouraging more responsible use by visitors and make sure that our existing systems are well understood.



ATV/UTV use will continue to be a big need for future projects – the challenge is always getting people with the experience to take them on all of our trails safely.

## **(G) Letters of Project Support**

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Provide up to six (6) letters of support from entities that are supporting the project in ways other than cash or in-kind contributions. Letters should come from at least three of the categories listed below. Letters must be current, and must document the need and demand for the proposed project. Please note, identically worded form letters do not sufficiently fulfill this requirement. All letters must be included with the application. Letters mailed directly to the State Trails Program will not be accepted as letters of support for the application, rather they will be treated as public comments on the project as proposed.

Letters attached from the following organizations:

- Durango Trails – a local trail organization that advocates for, organizes and works on a wide variety of trails and with a wide range of user types throughout the district. Durango Trails has done a good job at highlighting the importance of our trails within the community and engaging volunteers in working on and funding our trails in unique ways.
- Southwest Conservation Corps – a conservation and education focused non-profit that has deep roots in local workforce development in natural resource related projects for youth, young adults and veterans, and has a strong relationship and work history with Colorado Youth Corps Association, CPW as well as other local and federal agencies, including the Columbine Ranger District.
- The following organizations were in the process of getting us a letter of support, but didn't have the time with the holiday – they will hopefully be submitted as public comment letters prior to Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup> 2024
  - San Juan Trail Riders
  - San Juan Mountains Association



Tom Metsa  
Colorado Parks and Wildlife  
OHV Program Manager  
13787 So. Hwy 85N  
Littleton, CO 80125

Dear CPW Grant Committee:

Durango Trails is a local 501c3 non profit formed more than 30 years ago with a mission to plan, build and maintain trails; educate trail users and create connections. Our long time partners at the San Juan National Forest, Columbine District are requesting grant funding support for three major projects which would be a great service to our area trail system. The projects will provide input from area trail users and accommodate the multi use nature of the trail while maintaining their key characteristics. The projects include:

Hermosa Creek Trail reroute near Dutch Creek Crossing - the District proposes to hire a Southwest Conservation Corps crew for up to 4 weeks of work on this hill climb to the south of the Dutch Creek Crossing (formerly the bridge prior to the 416 fire). This hill section has become quite eroded over the years, especially since the burn and needs heavy maintenance and some realignment. The dedicated crew capacity camping onsite to support the efforts of our smaller crew will be critical for this sizable project.

OHV Trail Crew 2025 - For many years the District has staffed a trail crew who works on our motorized trails using funds from the motorized trail program. This crew is a core component to our trails program and focuses on 150+ miles of motorized trails on the district. Our vision is to begin transitioning this crew to a 2 person model in 2024 utilizing more heavy equipment such as a rented mini-excavator and our ditch witch on local area trails.

Mini-excavator rental - as we transition and modernize our fleet of heavy equipment over the next few years we need to start utilizing a mini-excavator on key projects that would benefit from this versatile machinery. Our goal is to rent a machine from a local business in 2025 to support 2-4 weeks of this more technical work where our current machinery isn't as effective. Initial areas of work may include the Hermosa Creek SMA as well as the Middle Mountain Trail system (Runlett Park, Dark canyon, etc.).

Please consider USFS grant requests.

Happy Trails,

*Mary*  
Mary Monroe  
Durango Trails



**SOUTHWEST  
CONSERVATION CORPS**  
A program of Conservation Legacy

November 16, 2023

Colorado Parks and Wildlife  
13787 So. Hwy 85N  
Littleton, CO 80125

Dear Tom Mesta:

Please accept this letter of support for the San Juan National Forest's (SJNF) request of funding for the Hermosa Creek Trail Reroute near Dutch Creek Crossing, OHV Trail Crew 2025 and a Mini-Excavator rental.

The OHV Trail Crew 2025 and mini-excavator rental directly supports the Columbine Ranger District's trail crew. They are pivotal to ensuring the district's 150+ miles of motorized routes are safe, sustainable, and open to members of the public. In addition to maintaining trails, the Columbine Trail Crew has directly supported many Southwest Conservation Corps (SCC) Crews over the years through technical support, resume workshops and mentorship. The Columbine RD is a great, local place for our top performing alumni to get a job and continue their career in natural resources.

The Hermosa Creel Trail Reroute Project would provide 4 weeks of work for a SCC Crew to complete. This steep section of trail has become severely eroded over the years, particularly since the 416 fire in 2018. The proposed work includes heavy maintenance and trail realignment. The Columbine Trail Crew will provide project management and technical support to our crew on a regular basis to ensure trail maintenance standards are held to the USFS specifications.

SCC employs a diverse group of young adults to complete meaningful conservation projects on public lands. Founded as a non-profit organization in 1998 to continue the legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930s, SCC runs conservation and educational projects that are primarily supported by land management agencies and municipalities throughout the Southwest region of the US. SCC and the Columbine Ranger District have had a valuable partnership for over a decade, and we look forward to continuing to grow this partnership and provide ample opportunities for young adults to learn, grow and be stewards of the land.

SCC strongly supports this application for funding the Hermosa Creek Trail Reroute near Dutch Creek Crossing, OHV Trail Crew 2025 and a Mini-Excavator rental. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Lisa Slupianek  
Adult Programs Director  
Southwest Conservation Corps  
970.946.0242 / lslupianek@conservationlegacy.org

## **(H) Trail Crew Work Plan (Good Management or reoccurring crews)**

**Provide a trail crew work plan for the 2024 work season**

### **Goals:**

- Repair, replace or maintain at least 25% of Signage along motorized routes and trails
- Scout and clear all OHV trails and motorized routes of trees to better collect data on follow up projects
- Communicate and Collaborate more effectively with partner groups in regard to trail clearing in early summer
- Do basic maintenance on at least 75 miles of OHV trails and heavy maintenance on at least 2 miles of OHV trails
- Build up 2 person OHV crew model starting with hiring events in early 2024 and retain at least 1 person into 2025

### **Anticipated types of work:**

- First priority will be to clear trails of fallen trees and debris and scout them for maintenance follow up using ATV's, ebikes or UTVs.
- Second priority will be regular maintenance including brush and corridor clearing, cleaning and repairing existing drainage features, installation of new drainage features, social trail deconstruction and trail braid delineation. Tread repair and rebenching as well as user impact mitigations and trail surface hardening.
- Signage and kiosk updating, replacement and maintenance.
- Trailhead and access infrastructure repair such as cattle guards, width restrictors and fencing where applicable.

### **Priority work areas:**

- Hermosa Creek SMA within 416 Burn scar (Hermosa Creek Trail, Jones Creek Trail Dutch Creek Trail, Pinkerton-Flagstaff Trail)
- Dark Canyon Trail and Runlett Park Trails off Middle Mountain Road ear Vallecito
- Mitchell lakes road – scouting, clearing and illegal road closure
- Corral Draw within the Hermosa Creek SMA
- Ute Creek Trail, Reservoir Canyon and Green Canyon trails on the southern part of the district

The bulk of our work will occur from Mid-may to Mid October, with training season starting in mid April (all dependent on hiring of course). We do not have any planned events or volunteer work days at this time, but my hope is to work with a few of the local organizations to get on the same page regarding expectations with trail clearing and basic maintenance that is allowed in their Volunteer agreements – this includes trying to interface more with San Juan Trail Riders specifically. I am hoping to take more of a direct role with helping our volunteer groups get chainsaw trained and stay qualified to run saws on the forest – as a qualified C Faller/Evaluator I can take that on directly without going through our fire shop.

I (Jordan Burningham, Trails Foreman) came on in April of 2023 with a very small crew that didn't have a lot of experience. Though I am a qualified trainer on many fronts, this was my first season in a federal agency appointment and I had to support the crew directly with chainsaw supervision and large project management. Training myself and a wholly new crew in a job with minimal supervision has been the standard this season – there's been a lot of self-learning. Hiring is a big challenge for our programs and is a large priority of focus for myself and other staff to figure out effective ways in ensuring we have people here to do the work. Given the rushed nature of the year due to the aforementioned, it was difficult to get effective meetings in place with the different stakeholder groups and volunteer organizations.

This program has had serious staff turnover and has been in shambles because of it. The district trails program didn't get as much done as I would have hoped for, but we had a safe year, our crew gained a lot of experience, and I was able to get several volunteer groups trained up on chainsaw use for trail clearing in the spring, and begin to establish good relationships with people and groups within our trails community. With a season under my belt and a winter to plan I hope to retain talent by continuing to enhance the reputation of the Columbine Trails program as well as build out a more clear structure for the program to operate within so that we can accomplish more than we have in a few years.