



COLORADO

Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

Southwest Region Office
415 Turner Drive
Durango, CO 81303
P 970.375.6702 | F 970.375.6705

February 2th, 2024

MEMORANDUM

To: State Trails Program and Committees

From: Cory Chick, Southwest Regional Manager

Subject: Wildlife Impacts Review, 2024 Motorized Grant Cycle

There are thirty (30) motorized grant applications within the Southwest Region requesting funding from the State Trails Program for the 2023-2024 process. These applications were sent to the CPW Area Field Staff (Area Wildlife Managers, District Wildlife Managers, and Biologists) for review and comment. In addition, the comments were reviewed and discussed by SW Region Staff including Regional Manager Cory Chick, Deputy Regional Manager Matt Thorpe, Regional Land Use Coordinator Peter Foote, and Regional Trails Coordinator Josh Stoudt.

New Construction

13, Shavano Gateway Recreation Area (Montrose County): CPW appreciates the involvement and cooperation with Montrose County on the Shavano Gateway project. Staff would like to highlight the importance of administering the discussed seasonal closures and the importance of their implementation for big game on that winter range habitat area.

Good Management

GM05, Good Management Trail Crew 21 (Dolores Ranger District): Staff recommends thoroughly cleaning machines and equipment before and after use to prevent the spread of noxious weeds.

CPW also requests as part of regular maintenance that staff identify illegal trails and off trail use and take action to remedy the problem. These unsanctioned routes degrade habitat and have a negative impact on wildlife.

GM06, GV Good Management Trail Crew (Grand Valley Ranger District): CPW staff would like to remind trail crews of the seasonal wildlife motorized closure on the Long Canyon Trail #621 and CPW recommends that work be conducted from July 1 to Labor Day if motorized access is needed.

GM14, 2 Person OHV Trail Maintenance Crew (Pagosa Springs Ranger District): Staff recommends thoroughly cleaning machines and equipment before and after use to prevent the spread of noxious weeds.



Staff also request that USFS staff identify illegal trails and off trail use while performing regular maintenance and take action to remedy the problem. These unsanctioned routes degrade habitat and have a negative impact on wildlife

GM16, GJFO Good Management Grant (Grand Junction BLM Field Office): Local staff would like to suggest the BLM Office look to do maintenance on BLM trail's 826 and 826E due to their importance of providing connectivity for public access to the Manti LaSal National Forest on the north side of Sinbad Valley.

GM25, Divide Good Management Trail Crew (Divide Ranger District): CPW staff would like to thank the Divide Forest Service District for their considerations to avoid and minimize working in Game Management Unit (GMU) 76 during hunting season and providing tree clearing and trail maintenance between hunting seasons in their Field Work Plan.

Maintenance

2, East Fork Trail Project (Dolores Ranger District): Staff recommends thoroughly cleaning machines and equipment before and after use to prevent the spread of noxious weeds.

Lastly, staff request as part of regular maintenance that staff identify illegal trails and off trail use and take action to remedy the problem. These unsanctioned routes degrade habitat and have a negative impact on wildlife.

3, Dozer 25 Project (Dolores Ranger District): Staff recommends thoroughly cleaning machines and equipment before and after use to prevent the spread of noxious weeds.

Staff also request as part of regular maintenance that staff identify illegal trails and off trail use and take action to remedy the problem. These unsanctioned routes degrade habitat and have a negative impact on wildlife.

8, Farris Creek Bypass Trail Reconstruction (Gunnison Ranger District): Local CPW staff support this reconstruction and restoration work of this project. This trail falls within mule deer and elk migration corridors and this trail work will protect the natural resources while also allowing users to utilize designated trails. The education plan and travel management implementation are key for the protection of wildlife habitat and natural resources in this high use area.

37, USFS-SLVGO! OHV Major Reroute Projects (San Luis Valley Great Outdoors): CPW staff recommends the West Lost Trail and the Pole Creek Reroute work be completed prior to September 1. If not feasible, CPW requests that work in September be restricted to the lower 1/3 of the trail. This would limit conflicts with big game hunters in GMU 76.

There is a mapped rocky mountain bighorn sheep summer concentration area to the southeast of the proposed project site. CPW requests that work not begin in the project area until July 1 to avoid impacting the lambing season.

CPW staff acknowledge the needed work in this area, especially on the Lower Groundhog and La Garita Stock Driveway trails. We would like to bring attention to those areas to be assessed for potential maintenance.

46. Columbine OHV Trails Program 2025 (Columbine Ranger District): Staff recommends thoroughly cleaning machines and equipment before and after use to prevent the spread of noxious weeds.

Staff also request as part of regular maintenance that staff identify illegal trails and off trail use and take action to remedy the problem. These unsanctioned routes degrade habitat and have a negative impact on wildlife

48. Divide Heavy Maintenance Trail Crew (Divide Ranger District): CPW staff would like to acknowledge the need for maintenance work on the La Garita, Bear Creek, and Tewksberry trail. If these are unable to be repaired prior to the 2025 field season, staff suggest that work be done to address the trail width restrictors on the La Garita SD (#787) trail in the Little La Garita trailhead and near the Pool Table access point. Full-size vehicles and side-by-sides are going around and causing resource damage to riparian areas. Staff can provide more clarification if needed.

Secondly, staff recommends that work that falls within GMU 76 be completed prior to September 1. If that is not feasible, we recommend that work in September be restricted to the lower 1/3 of the trail.

No wildlife comments were received for the following:

- 6, GV Heavy Equipment Trail Crew (M)
- 10, Ouray Trail Dozer Maintenance Program (M)
- 11, BLM Gunnison OHV Crew Motorcycle Replacement (E)
- 15, COHVC0 2024 Workshops (2) (S)
- 18, GJFO Equipment Ops. (C, M)
- 19, BLM Statewide (OHV) Law Enforcement (S)
- 38, BLM-SLVGO! OHV Trail Crew (M)
- 39, Stay the Trail Education & Stewardship Alliance (M,S)
- 40, Travel Management Signage (S)
- 49, Supply & Equipment Grant 2024-25 (E)
- 50, Trail Dozer 2024-2025 (M)
- 51, Subcontractor Trail Maintenance 2024-25 (M)
- GM02, OHV Statewide Trail Crew (ALL)
- GM04, OHV Gunnison Trail Crew 2025 (M)
- GM07, BLM Gunnison OHV Trail Crew 2025 (M)

GM11, OHV Ouray Trail Crew 25 (M)

GM17, GJFO NCA Good Management Grant (C,M)

GM20, Uncompahgre Field Office GM Crew (M)