

# SAGUACHE COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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October 19, 2010

San Carlos Ranger District, Attn: Mike Smith  
3028 E. Main Street  
Canon City, CO 81212

Dear Mr. Smith,

The Saguache County Board of County Commissioners appreciates the invitation to comment on a proposal to initiate a permit and fee system for recreational access to South Colony Basin and the surrounding 14,000-foot peaks in the Sangre de Cristo Range. As you know the western slopes of this range lie in our County, and their use and protection are important to Saguache County citizens and the many Colorado recreationists who visit.

We are keenly aware of the issues associated with increased trail use, and inadequate funds to provide for commensurate trails maintenance, education, safety, sanitation, enforcement, and restoration of already degraded ecosystems and roads. And we understand that these issues must be addressed, to protect the forest environment and the very qualities that the public comes to enjoy. We respectfully submit the following comments to the current draft proposal.

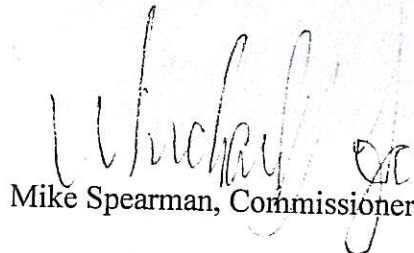
It is evident that the changes made over the last few years, to manage heavy use of the South Colony Basin trail systems has displaced recreationists to our side of the Sangres. The Forest Service here is no better equipped or funded to deal with increased usage, which is already resulting in all the same issues South Colony Basin suffers. This is further complicated by impacts to private properties adjacent to public lands.

We urge you to revisit the current proposal, and ask that any future iteration addresses impacts and mitigations for both sides of the Sangre range and is coherent across both effected Forest Service Districts. In addition, the current proposal does not include much on alternatives considered.

Given the many letters of opposition we have received, and the concerns mentioned above, we encourage that the current proposal be reworked and further developed, to better address them. Please continue to keep us informed, and let us know if we can be of assistance in that process.

Respectfully,

  
Sam Pace, Chairman

  
Mike Spearman, Commissioner

  
Linda Joseph, Commissioner

Saguache County Commissioners

Sam Pace, Chairman

Mike Spearman

Linda Joseph