

Greg Warren <nstrail@comcast.net>

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Rio Grande Objection Meeting Answer Clarification

To jeffrey.vail@usda.gov Copy G. Warren <nstrail@comcast.net> •

Molly - FS Hanson <molly.hanson@usda.gov>

I need to clarify my answer to your question today where you asked if any forest had established a Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDNST) Management Area. I answered that no forest has established a CDNST MA. This response wasn't correct; however, the correct and complete answer is a little complicated as explained below.

The 2015 Shoshone NF revised forest plan established a Management Area (MA 3.6A) for the CDNST. However, the revised Shoshone NF plan direction/plan components do not protect the nature and purposes of this national scenic trail. Without protective plan components, extensive timber harvest, road construction, and motor vehicle use continue to occur on the CDNST travel route and within the described CDNST MA.

In 2019, to help remedy the situation, the CDNST travel route in the vicinity of Lava Mountain was informally relocated from the Shoshone NF to the Bridger-Teton NF as approved in a Bridger-Teton NF Decision Memo.* The Lava Mountain section of MA 3.6A corridor persists on the Shoshone NF, but it is no longer considered as the location of the CDNST route. After this Bridger-Teton NF change, approximately 3 miles of the CDNST travel route continues to exist within Shoshone NF MA 3.6A.

In my comments today, I stressed the need to establish a CDNST MA. It is equally important that supporting plan components be associated with this MA so that the purposes for which the CDNST was established are protected. In my objection on pages 6 and 7, I offer considerations for establishing a CDNST MA and identify supporting plan components.

The policy direction to establish a CDNST MA is found in FSM 2353.44b(1), as referenced in FSH 1909.12 24.43, which describes that FSM 2350 has more information about national scenic and historic trails.

Please let me know if you have any further questions.

Thank you,
Greg Warren

* https://www.fs.usda.gov/nfs/11558/www/nepa/108822_FSPLT3_4638078.pdf