DENVER, CO (May 25, 2012)--Recreation advocates today welcomed news that a federal court in Colorado refused to grant a motion to immediately close 14 popular trails near the Rico-West Dolores area in southwest Colorado.

Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, Colorado Chapter, have filed a lawsuit challenging motorized access in the Rico West Dolores area of the San Juan National Forest. Earlier this spring they moved for a preliminary injunction seeking a court order closing 14 trails to motorized use. According to their papers, the injunction was needed in early June to prevent irreparable harm that would be caused by resumption of historical use of the trails after snowmelt. Plaintiffs therefore requested a hearing on their motion before early June. The preliminary injunction and voluminous associated filings were vigorously opposed by the Forest Service and intervenors Colorado Off Highway Vehicle Coalition (COHVCO) - Trail Preservation Alliance (TPA) – San Juan Trail Riders (SJTR) – Public Access Preservation Associational (PAPA) -BlueRibbon Coalition (BRC).

On May 24, 2012 the Court held a hearing to consider "the request for a preliminary injunction hearing." After considering statements from counsel for all parties, the Court minutes state "(n)o hearing will be set at this time." The Court set a schedule for presentation of the merits of the case, under which the final brief will be filed on August 17, 2012. The minutes further state "f the Court deems oral argument necessary, it will set that hearing."

As a result, it is apparent that no injunction preventing continued motorized travel on the 14 trails will be entered at this time. Access on those trails and other portions of the Rico West Dolores area will be continue to be managed by the Forest Service under existing regulations.

Selected documents from the court file are located here
http://www.sharetrails.org/legal/rico-dolores

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PAPA is a regional recreation group that supports and champions access and responsible use of public lands, and encourages individual environmental stewardship. PAPA's Mission is to promote balanced, unbiased, responsible use of public lands in collaboration with recreational users of all interests, advocating respect, education and conservation of the environment. Learn more on the web: http://www.papatelluride.org/

The mission of the SJTR is to improve opportunities for off-highway vehicles and assure the best care of the land. SJTR promotes active participation in OHV trail management and other civic activities and maintains a focused and ongoing dialogue with the San Juan National Forest and other public land planners. SJTR educates OHV users about "Tread Lightly" conservation practices and other trail use issues. Learn more on the web: http://sanjuantrailriders.org/

The Trails Preservation Alliance is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the sport of motorized trail riding, educating all user groups and the public on the value of sharing public lands for multiuse recreation, while protecting public lands for future generations. Learn more on the web: www.coloradotpa.org

COHVCO is a nonprofit organization whose member enthusiasts, organizations and businesses collectively comprise over 200,000 Coloradoans and regular visitors to Colorado and other western states who contribute millions of dollars and thousands of hours annually to off-highway vehicle recreation through registration fees, retail expenditure, project participation and related support. Learn more on the web: www.cohvco.org

The BlueRibbon Coalition is a national recreation group that champions responsible recreation, and encourages individual environmental stewardship. With members in all 50 states, BRC is focused on building enthusiast involvement with organizational efforts through membership, outreach, education, and collaboration among recreationists. Learn more on the web: www.sharetrails.org