Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Rocky Mountain Region Trails Strategy. Great Old Broads for Wilderness is also grateful for your offering the two webinars. You may recall Great Old Broads for Wilderness is a national grassroots organization, led by women, that engages and inspires activism to preserve and protect wilderness and wild lands. We appreciate your considerations of our comments emphasizing the need to protect ecological values, minimize habitat fragmentation and avoid wildlife corridors.

Goal 1

Strategy 1.2 - The “establishment of flexible trail standards” is concerning as standards should not be reduced without analysis of impacts using best available science. Often “adaptive management” or “flexible standards” result in negative impacts being mitigated rather than sensitive areas being avoided in trail planning. The adoption of non-system trails should be avoided unless they truly benefit the trail system following analysis. Too often the official adoption of non-system trails encourages users to create unauthorized trails in hopes they will eventually be adopted. Under no circumstances should new trail construction or adoption of non-system trails be permitted in Wilderness

Strategy 1.3 – Please do not authorize the use of chain saws in Wilderness as such use degrades Wilderness Character.

Strategy 1.4 – The word “resources” is rather broad and vague. Please specify protection of “ecological resources including riparian areas and wildlife habitat and corridors.” Thank you for prioritizing front country trails close to population areas.

Goal 2: We support these DEI goals.

Goal 3

Strategy 3.1 -  Please modify to read “Relocate *or decommission* trails where. . .”

Again, thank you for your consideration of our comments. Please don’t hesitate to contact me if you have need for further input and our local chapter of Great Old Broads for Wilderness looks forward to our collaboration as the USFS works toward the goals outlined in this document.