



TOWN OF RICO
INCORPORATED OCTOBER 11, 1879
2 North Commercial Street
Post Office Box 9
Rico, Colorado 81332
Office # 970.967.2861
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www.ricocolorado.gov

March 24, 2023

VIA EMAIL ONLY

SAN JUAN NATIONAL FOREST HEADQUARTERS

David Neely, Forest Supervisor

15 Burnett Court, Durango, CO 81302

RE: STA Case No. 2020

Dear Mr. Neely:

As stated in our March 22, 2021, letter and supported by the majority of our residents' comments submitted to your office, the Town of Rico's Board of Trustees and many citizens of Rico disapprove of any sale of public lands within the Rico Growth Boundary area that surrounds us. This area includes the parcel 0.2 miles north of Rico, which the Forest Service proposes to sell to Atlantic Richfield Company ("ARCO"), referred to as STA Case No. 2020.

The current description of STA Case No. 2020 on the Forest Service's website project page has no description or map of the 20.9 acres proposed for sale to ARCO. The April 4, 2022 scoping letter and maps included on the project page reference the sale of 39.99 acres. The scoping letter also fails to point out that Public Access rights to the subject property have been gained through historic use and Atlantic Richfield has not confirmed or even identified any specific locations for continued public access.

We understand that the Forest Service's formal decision approving the proposed sale will be made some time this April. The Rico Board of Trustees, as well as our residents, business owners and property owners, would like the opportunity to review (with sufficient detail) and comment upon the altered (20.9 acre) proposal before your final decision is made.

Respectfully,

Digitally signed by Nicole Y. Pieterse
DN: cn=Nicole Y. Pieterse, o=Town of Rico, ou=
Nicole Y. Pieterse, Mayor

Ec: ARCO



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March 22nd, 2021

USFS Mancos/Dolores Ranger District
29211 Highway 184
Dolores Colorado, 81323
Attention Derek Padilla
Via Email

Dear Mr. Padilla,

The Rico Board of Trustees disapproves of any sale of public land to private entities within the Rico planning area, which includes lands in the East Fork of the Dolores River within three miles of the Town boundary. The Town would like to be notified of receipt of small (and large) tract transfer applications within our planning area when received by the USFS.

The Board understands the need to keep the public away from reclamation activities, however much of the hillside portion of the proposed small tract sale is not needed for reclamation work. The Board is also concerned about future transfers of portions of the small tract property to third party speculators and developers.

Accordingly, the Board would like to see the portion of the small tract that does not include the reclamation work area and associated safety buffer surveyed and a permanent easement be deeded to the town for open space and access corridors that will preserve access to public lands and open space for recreational uses, and expressly allowing trail improvements. Please see the attached map that illustrates the historic access corridors that the Town would like to preserve delineated in yellow.

Sincerely,


Barbara Betts, Rico Mayor

USFS - Atlantic Richfield

Historic Mining Roads actively being used for recreation

Legend

 Historic Mining Road being used for recreation

