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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Sportsmen: Colorado Roadless Rule on the right track

Hunters, anglers vow to press for higher level of habitat protection

DENVER, Colo. — The latest version of the Colorado Roadless Rule, announced today at a joint news conference between the U.S. Forest Service and the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, will protect 4.2 million acres of Colorado backcountry and ensure quality hunting and fishing for future generations of Coloradans.

David Nickum, executive director of Colorado Trout Unlimited, said the rule was a good balance between top-tier protections for 1.2 million acres and allowances for local communities, noting that wildlife related recreation brings Colorado \$3 billion in annual revenue. Nickum and Colorado TU have been major players in the effort to protect Colorado's backcountry.

"We were looking for a rule as strong as or stronger than the 2001 Roadless Rule, but with reasonable considerations to protect Colorado communities," said Nickum. "While we still see room for minor improvements, we are confident that the Forest Service framework will protect Colorado's backcountry."

TU President and CEO Chris Wood said the collaborative process worked to build a reasonable and workable rule for Colorado.

"While this is not a final decision, all indications are that the Forest Service is making good on Secretary Vilsak's commitment to develop a Colorado rule that is as strong as the 2001 Rule," said Wood, who was an architect of the 2001 Roadless Rule. "Sportsmen and women in Colorado should celebrate the Forest Service and the state of Colorado's recognition of the value of backcountry areas to fish and wildlife habitat and hunting and fishing."

Nickum said TU members are particularly interested in the rule's emphasis on cutthroat trout conservation and noted that this was a direct result of TU's advocacy for cutthroat trout throughout the process. TU will be closely reviewing the language in the Rule and working with the Forest Service to ensure that it provides an adequate level of protection for Colorado's native trout.

Sinjin Eberle, president of Colorado TU, said while he was pleased with the rule, Colorado TU will continue working to improve protections important to Coloradans.

"We'll be working with the Forest Service to strengthen the final rule, because it's not just fish and wildlife habitat that will benefit from a stronger rule, but the many small communities in the state that depend on hunters and anglers for jobs and strong local economies."

Trout Unlimited is a private, non-profit organization with more than 140,000 members dedicated to conserving, protecting and restoring North America's trout and salmon fisheries and their watersheds. Follow TU on the [TU blog](#), on [Facebook](#), and Twitter [@TroutUnlimited](#).