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LETTER OF SUPPORT

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On behalf of the International Mountain Bicycling Association Europe (IMBA Europe), we endorse the mountain bike vision led by Dana Bates and his team with the New Horizons Foundation (www.new-horizons.ro). New Horizons are from an impoverished coal mining region in the Carpathian mountains in Western Romania (Jiu Valley) and have identified mountain-biking as a way to inject new life into the economy and diversify the active tourism industry there.

IMBA's worldwide network includes 40,000+ individual members, 200+ IMBA Chapters, 400+ clubs and volunteer bike patrols, 200+ corporate partners, 700+ retail shops and over 100,000+ subscribers to our messaging. IMBA's members live in all 50 U.S. states, most Canadian provinces and in 30 other countries. IMBA Europe is the umbrella for mountain biking groups and associations in 17 European countries.

This approach is realistic because it piggy-backs on an already existing ski infrastructure that includes three linked areas. Similar examples can be found in other European regions where mountain bike centers had a positive economic impact and created new jobs. The project foresees to develop mountain bike infrastructure in the Jiu Valley, including „flow” trails that can attract mountain bikers of all levels, as well as more technical trails, and an extensive network (500km min) of marked cross country trails. They area also working with www.outdooractive.com to advertise their area, both trails and points of interest.

Having the vision is one thing; it is exciting also that the local community support has been tremendous including financial and equipment such as excavators that allow the work to progress rapidly and to build a team of full time persons dedicated to this project.

The New Horizons Foundation are also the first IMBA Europe member organisation in Romania and members of the team have participated in IMBA trailbuilding schools in Italy. Their team plans to advance the principles of IMBA in Romania as the MTB industry is progressing there.

IMBA Europe is pleased to see the current trail development in the Jiu Valley and recommends the project to other local stakeholders and potential partners.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Torsius
IMBA Europe – General Manager