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Comments: I would like to comment on the GMUG Draft Forest Plan. I appreciate the opportunity to be a part of the GMUG planning process, and recognize and appreciate the amount of work that has been invested by the USFS in the plan. I'm a full-time resident of Ouray and frequent user of hiking, skiing, and snowshoeing routes in the area. My family has lived in Ouray since the early 1900s. My comments focus on the plan components in and near Ouray County.

In making these comments I would like to highlight that outdoor recreation, especially non-motorized recreation, has exploded in our area year round. My comments focus on how to manage human traffic and its impact to preserve our scenic integrity, wildlife habitat, and the quiet recreation escapes we still have from the noise and intrusion of human society. Although my grandfather was a hard rock miner with a claim on the Dexter creek drainage that he worked for many years, our future lies in preserving our forests and land, not in extraction from them.

I would like to recommend that the Forest Plan include all the elements of the CORE Act related to the GMUG. Those Wilderness areas and Special Management areas are broadly supported by the community, the localities and have been years in the making. In addition I would recommend the addition of Bear Creek and Baldy parcels as designated in Alternative D and would also add Turret Ridge in the Cimarrons to the Uncompahgre Wilderness. Wilderness designations will help preserve the existing remote feeling, wildlife habitat and scenic values of these spectacular areas.

In general I would favor Alternative D over Alternatives B and C for Scenic Integrity Objectives. Tourism is a main driver of Ouray County's economy and keeping Very High and High scenic designations are important for us. Specific examples: the entire Iron-ton basin (Hayden, Abram, the valley basin) are spectacular scenery and should be High Scenic Integrity as in D, not moderate as in B. In addition, areas such as Corbett Creek, Dallas, the Amphitheater and the 550 corridor through Iron-ton to the south are special scenery that deserves to be protected from development or timber harvesting.

I greatly prefer the Summer and Winter Recreation Opportunity maps for the Hayden and Iron-ton areas in Alternative D with nearly all areas managed as Semi-Primitive non-motorized or Pristine. These are areas of great scenic beauty and keeping motorized travel restricted to existing roads will help preserve their beauty for current and future generations. This designation will also help our remaining wildlife - there are Canada Lynx, Moose, Elk and other big game in these areas that need the area preserved from more motorized routes. Similarly, I'd encourage you to keep Alternative Ds mapping for Summer and Winter ROS for the Cimarrons - please don't manage the Middle Fork and West Fork as Motorized semi-primitive.

Timber - please remove all slopes over 40% from your areas considered as suitable. Although the ground based machinery would be prohibited from these areas, aerial extraction or other means will be incredibly disruptive to the wildlife, community and scenery of our area. None of the slopes on Hayden mountain are suitable for timber production. Similarly, the Dallas Creek area should be removed from Timber suitability based on Scenic value since it provides the foreground view for the Sneffels range and the Wilderness.