

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/26/2021 9:30:41 PM

First name: Laura

Last name: Martineau

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello-

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Forest Plan. Like so many, I believe that the GMUG national forests are a treasure, not only for those who live nearby, but for the entire nation.

With ongoing climate change making Colorado drier and warmer, it is more important than ever to look far into the future and make sure that decisions implemented through the Forest Plan will protect the forest and not cause future degradation of the environment. The increase in timber production in Alternative B concerns me greatly and is not sustainable. I hope that in its final plan, the Forest Service will drastically scale back the amount of logging proposed in Alternative B.

With some caveats, I believe that Alternative D makes the most sense for the GMUG. I ask that the Forest Plan include the increased Recommended Wilderness in Alternative D and the lands identified in the Gunnison Public Lands Initiative. This will benefit not only humans who seek to recharge and enjoy the forests, but sensitive and endangered species, and wildlife migration areas. It will also help to mitigate climate change.

As our state becomes more crowded, it is harder for people to find quiet places to hike, bike and ski. I hope that the Forest Plan ensures that there are plenty of places in the National Forests for people to experience this solace and to get a break from the motors and noise of everyday life. With so many stresses on us in the 21st Century, these quiet experiences in nature are crucial for our physical, mental and emotional health.

When I moved to Crested Butte 40 years ago, I often skied up toward Kebler Pass. While there might have been an occasional snowmobile, most of the time the track was peaceful and quiet. In the following decades the trail became increasingly crowded and motorized over the snow vehicles became common, sometimes almost constant. Today I wouldn't consider skiing up the Kebler Road in the winter. It would be a noisy, exhaust-filled dangerous experience. Now motorized winter travel is increasing in many of the surrounding valleys, as well. I am concerned that increased motorized and hybrid users will make all of the valleys around Crested Butte difficult or even off-limits to quiet users.

We have learned from studies like Western Colorado University's Data Collection Initiative that the vast majority of winter recreationists in the valleys around Crested Butte are quiet users. While I believe it is appropriate for motorized recreationists to have places to go, it is also appropriate for quiet users to have places where they can recreate and have a quality experience. Unfortunately, that isn't the case when they have frequent encounters with osvs.

I am particularly concerned that the final Forest Plan not restrict or skew the future Winter Travel Management planning process in the Gunnison valley and that final ROS settings result from that process, not the Forest Plan. The WTMP is long overdue in the Crested Butte area; please mandate that it start within a year of the Forest Plan Record of Decision.

To summarize, I believe the Forest Plan should prioritize the mitigation of climate change, biological diversity and quiet recreation, while it minimizes extractive industries and timber production. Thank you.