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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I live in the front range of Colorado currently, but I spend a lot of time in central, northern, and western Colorado as well because I love to fish, trail run, ski, snowboard, hunt, camp, and hike. I therefore appreciate the opportunity to comment on this Forest Plan, and appreciate you considering public comments.

I grew up in California where residential, commercial, and recreation development seem to have pushed wildlife far into the mountains or towards ever-smaller population numbers. When I go back to visit I am amazed and saddened that I see so many fewer birds, big game, bugs, fish, and wildlife than I'd expect considering the terrain and climate. I fear this will happen in Colorado if Colorado's public lands are not carefully and thoughtfully managed. As Colorado's population increases I know there is a lot of pressure to expand recreation opportunities, but I do not believe that means we must expand our footprint across the landscape or disrupt more and more crucial and/or sensitive fish and wildlife habitat. It seems wise to restrict development to 1 linear mile per square mile in most places, at least while wildlife biologists continue to study the impacts of route density on wildlife and habitat.

I strongly support Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) proposed in the GMUG Forest Plan draft, particularly under Alternative B. The more WMAs, the better. If anything, please add more WMAs. I appreciate that WMAs allow the Forest to employ a variety of options to treat or thin Forests, if and where it's needed. Hunters and anglers (of which I am one) want fish and wildlife to thrive for generations to come, and prioritizing fish and wildlife needs on public land habitat is the responsible, forward-thinking thing to do in my opinion.

I also strongly support prioritizing seasonal closures and wildlife security areas across the entire forest. It seems like over the last 10 years or so we've learned how devastating human activity and development can be to wildlife populations when it disrupts them in certain areas and/or life stages, so I'd appreciate the USFS prioritizing wildlife security areas and seasonal closures in the final plan. Furthermore, committing to removing barriers in migration corridors that are important to both big game AND native trout would demonstrate the Forest's commitment to supporting wildlife throughout their life cycles. This is especially critical as the climate changes and fish and wildlife's ability to migrate and find suitable habitat will make all the difference in their ability to survive.

When I first moved to Colorado 6 years ago I used to think if I went about 1.5 miles from the trailhead, I'd soon have the trails all to myself, or close to it. This doesn't seem to be the case anymore. People are going farther and sometimes doing so in bigger groups. Siting trails, roads, and/or other development away from sensitive fish and wildlife habitat is wise, and is necessary if we wish to support our remaining fish and wildlife populations. New recreation should be developed near urban areas and/or along highways, or in established recreation corridors, not in more pristine, quiet Forest.

Streams and lakes where wild and native trout thrive should be afforded the strongest protections, especially native trout, since native trout have been pushed out of the majority of their historic range already. What remains of their range should be protected from degradation and non-native, competing fish. At the same time, allowing for responsible water recreation like boating and rafting builds connections between people and nature, and between people and their communities, so that's important to me as long as the fish, wildlife, and Forest resources are protected.

Lastly, please do not allow drones to fly over trails, recreation sites, or wildlife habitat unless they're given a special permit to do so for a specific reason. I've had drones fly over me and hover near me on USFS and county land in Colorado when I've been running and fishing and it really makes me uncomfortable and creeps me out. I

feel like I'm being spied on for no good reason and believe it's an invasion of my privacy. Drones are also so loud that they make what would otherwise be quiet, peaceful, relaxing recreation instead feel stressful, noisy, annoying, and agitating.

In conclusion, I support Alternative B with some modifications. I'm a member or supporter of Trout Unlimited, Backcountry Hunters & Anglers, and Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership and would also surely support their more in-depth comments as well.

I really hope fish and wildlife are prioritized in this Forest Plan Revision and in any future planning, especially if travel management planning will follow. As much as I love to run, ski, drive, hike, and camp wherever I can, I really care more that there will still be strong populations of fish and wildlife in Colorado in 50+ years when I'm finally too old to go out and find them myself. By then, hopefully I'll have kids who can hike and run around out there and report back on healthy animals, thriving wildlife populations, and limited, well-planned recreation infrastructure.

Thank you very much for considering my comments.

Liz R.