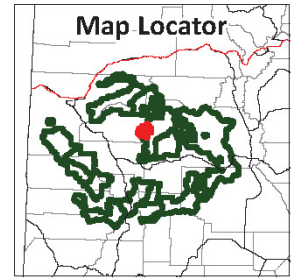


# Lamborn Special Interest Area

**Proposed Special Interest Area  
Gunnison National Forests  
Paonia Ranger District**

*14,100 acres*



## *General Description*

The Lamborn special interest area is located directly south-southeast of Paonia, east of Hotchkiss, and north of Crawford and contains a large portion of the Mount Lamborn Roadless Area. The remainder of this roadless area is adjacent to the proposed 15,200-acre Coal Mountain recommended wilderness area, which is contiguous with the 176,412-acre West Elk Wilderness. High priority BLM landscapes are contiguous with this special interest area to the north, northwest, and west.

This area is very diverse, ranging from about 6,300 feet to above 11,000 feet near the Mount Lamborn summit. Mount Lamborn and Landsend Peak to the south are the most prominent features near the eastern boundary of this unit. These mountains and the saddle and slopes between make up the majority of this unit's upper tier roadless area. Landsend Peak is the westernmost peak in the West Elk Mountains.

Vegetation in this area transitions from Gambel oak, serviceberry, and mountain mahogany shrublands up to mixed aspen and spruce-fir forests at higher elevations, where large areas of snowberries can also be found. There are also many areas of exposed bare rock on the steep slopes of Mount Lamborn and Landsend Peak.



The proposed SIA contains many seeps, springs, creeks, and reservoirs. Many of the creeks' headwaters begin from the slopes of Mount Lamborn, including Sams Creek and Bells Creek. Reservoirs include Todd reservoir in the western portion of the unit and Lone Cabin Reservoir and Beaver Reservoir in the north-northeast section of the unit.

The wet meadows, springs, seeps, and reservoirs contribute to a dependable water supply for farms, ranches, and communities in the North Fork Valley. There is a private inholding in the western section of the unit where many springs are located and have been tapped with infrastructure. There is also motorized route infrastructure to other springs and reservoirs within the unit.

The Lamborn special interest area provides important wildlife habitat and migration areas due to the low-elevation meadows and riparian areas, which provide valuable connectivity for mule deer and elk herds between summer and winter ranges. This area also includes critical winter range for mule deer and winter range for elk.

### *Recreation Values*

The Lamborn special interest area is located in a large, mostly undeveloped roadless area. The dense vegetative cover, topographic variety, and untracked wild portions of the unit provide outstanding opportunities for solitude and respite. Despite its proximity to the town of Paonia, the area sees limited visitation at all times of year, with primary visitor use consisting of limited hunting and grazing access, along with motorized use along permitted corridors.

The Lamborn special interest area also provides excellent opportunities for unconfined and primitive recreation, including hunting, fishing, hiking, biking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, photography, hiking, and scenic viewing. The abundance of wildlife and habitat in this unit make this a high-valued area for hunting, the area located within prized CO game management unit 53.

This unit contains several designated motorized routes for full-sized vehicles and motorized vehicles under 50 inches wide. This route infrastructure mostly serves to access reservoirs and springs; nevertheless, it provides opportunities for a variety of motorized recreation.

### *Biological Values*

Lamborn includes portions of two Potential Conservation Areas identified by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program. The Landsend Peak PCA is located on the southeast slope of Landsend Peak. It is rated as B4-Moderate Biodiversity Significance for supporting a small population of adobe beardtongue (*penstemon retrorsus*), a globally vulnerable species.

The Little Coal Creek PCA is located in the southeast section of the unit and is rated B2-Very High Biodiversity Significance owing to an excellent example of the globally imperiled Rocky Mountain thistle (*Cirsium perplexans*). The site also includes good quality examples of two riparian forests, *Pseudotsuga menziesii*/*Cornus sericea* and *Populus tremuloides*/*Pteridium aquilinum*. (CNHP PCA Report, 2015)

The Lamborn area aspen woodlands and Gambel oak shrublands would significantly enhance ecosystem representation within the wilderness preservation system. The area includes several thousand acres of Rocky Mountain Aspen Forest and Woodland, an ecosystem type with less than 20% representation within wilderness on the forest. It also hosts several thousand acres of Rocky Mountain Gambel Oak-Mixed Montane Shrubland, which is sparsely represented within existing wilderness and exists at less than 5% representation on the forest. (TWS ecosystem representation report, 2016)

This Lamborn area provides an important elk migration corridor in the lower elevation areas and into the mountains of the Coal Mountain recommended wilderness. The areas below Mount Lamborn and Landsend Peak also provide elk winter range and concentration area from the West

Elk Wilderness to the east. The low elevation area includes critical winter range for mule deer. Potential lynx habitat is mapped for the forested cover at higher elevations. The steep rocky and rugged cliffs also make for great raptor habitat, including the bald eagle.

### *Boundary, Size and Access*

The Lamborn special interest area consists of 14,100 acres, and is adjacent to the west of the 15,200 acre Coal Mountain recommended wilderness, with which it shares the Mount Lamborn Roadless Area. The 125,000 West Elk Wilderness is contiguous with Coal Mountain to the east.

The eastern boundary of the unit, adjacent to the Coal Mountain recommended wilderness, is comprised of motorized routes USFS 883, 835.1A, 890, 798.2B, and 798.2B1 as well as the upper-tier roadless boundary as it wraps around Landsend Peak and Mt. Lamborn. Private property borders the unit to the north, south, and portions to the west. The remainder of the unit boundary, to the north, northwest, and west is contiguous with high-priority BLM lands.

This unit is easily accessible from Paonia, with a few of the routes entering into the unit, including Minnesota Creek Rd (USFS 710), Lone Cabin Rd (USFS 798), and Bell Creek Rd (USFS 894). There are a few designated motorized routes that begin from these roads, most of which are for motorized vehicles under 50 inches in width. Most of the motorized routes are rough and rocky and require high-clearance four-wheel drive vehicles or all-terrain vehicles on forest service land.

### *Proposed Management*

There are several designated motorized and mechanized routes that exist within the Lamborn special interest area, as well as infrastructure for springs and reservoirs.

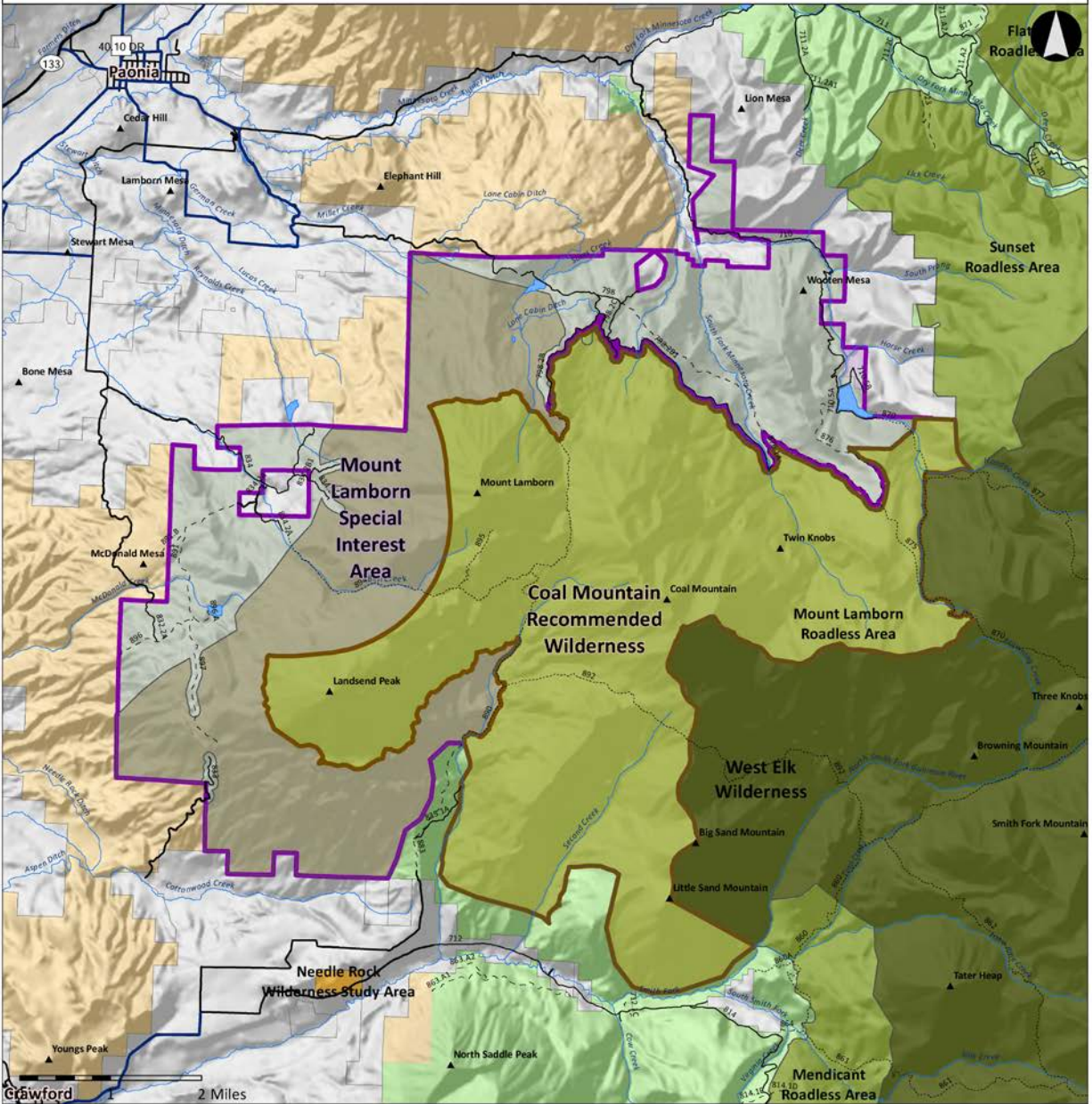
Recommended management direction in the Forest Plan includes:

- Lamborn should be administratively removed from oil and gas leasing and mineral material sales, and a mineral withdrawal needs to be recommended for locatable minerals.
- Management direction should include a prohibition on timber harvest and new road construction.
- Lamborn should be closed to winter motorized travel, and additional off-route summer travel must be limited to non-mechanized activities. The area remains available for designated motorized routes.
- Historic and existing uses compatible including all grazing activities should be allowed to continue by future management or designations.
- If new management prescriptions or designations significantly limit existing mechanized recreation use or access, then the Western Slope Conservation Center supports reasonable mitigation of access impacts by identifying alternative routes more appropriate for ongoing and future mechanized use within relative proximity to the area. We are actively communicating with mechanized user groups and the local recreation community through an ongoing, and productive, process to address potential conflicts.

*Information Resources*

<b>Item</b>	<b>Data Source</b>
<b>Roadlessness</b>	Colorado Roadless Rule at 36 CFR xx
	Forest Service inventory pursuant to FSH 1909.12,chapter 70, section 71
<b>Naturalness; Outstanding Opportunities for Solitude or Unconfined Primitive Recreation</b>	Forest Service inventory pursuant to FSH 1909.12,chapter 70, section 72
	USDA Forest Service, R2, Profiles of Colorado Roadless Areas 2008
	GMUG Roadless Inventory & Evaluation for Potential Wilderness Areas, 2005
<b>Supplemental Values</b>	
Ecosystem representation	TWS Ecosystem Representation 2016
Wildlife	Colorado Parks and Wildlife All Species Activity mapping data, 2016

# Mount Lamborn/Coal Mountain



**ROCKY MOUNTAIN WILD**
  
**Data Sources:** BLM, CDOT, COMaP v10, SRCA, USFS, USGS, wilderness.net
   
**Map Prepared By:** Alison Gallensky
   
 Rocky Mountain Wild
   
 4/13/2018 18-024 v12

- Legend**
- Major Road
  - CDNST
  - USFS Road
  - Closed USFS Road
  - Trail (snow)
  - Trail (motorized)
  - Trail (non-motorized)

- Recommended Wilderness
- Linkage Area
- Special Interest Area/Other
- Roadless Area (FS)
- Wilderness Study Area (BLM)
- Wilderness

- Land Ownership**
- USFS
  - BLM
  - NPS
  - State
  - Other Public
  - Tribe
  - Private