

Re: GMUG Draft Wild & Scenic Eligibility Evaluation

Thank you for considering my comments on Wild & Scenic River planning for the GMUG.

I want to express my support for rivers you have already identified as eligible in the Gunnison District including Oh-be-Joyful, West Elk, West Soap, and Copper Creeks. I also encourage you to consider other rivers in the Gunnison District including the East and Slate Rivers, Brush, Curecanti, and Coal Creeks, and lakes such as Copper and Lamphier. These are all wild, unspoiled aquatic ecosystems which I hope can be protected for future generations.

Since I live in CB South, I'll focus my comments on my own "back yard", Cement Creek. Cement Creek is free-flowing and has many Outstandingly Remarkable Values. The scenery looking up the Cement Creek valley is spectacular! There are beautiful views of Italian Mountain, Crystal Peak, Star Peak, and Taylor Peak. The Cement Creek corridor is habitat for beavers, bear, elk, deer, moose, grouse (all of which I've seen) cougars and lynx. I've included some photos of this beautiful valley for your reference.



Cement Creek – Summer



Cement Creek - Winter



Upper Cement Creek Trail, Looking Up the Cement Creek Corridor



One of the Many Beaver Ponds in the Cement Creek Corridor

The Cement Creek corridor attracts visitors from throughout the U.S. looking for backcountry recreation opportunities to mountain bike, fish, hunt, hike, view wildlife, and sightsee. The campground located along Cement Creek is very popular all summer. I myself enjoy the beauty, solitude, and opportunities to see wildlife. Please identify Cement Creek as eligible for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System.

Thank you!

- Deidre Witherell