

RE: The Forest Plan and DEIS

Along with thankfully many others who are writing letters and dozens more for whom I am representing in my comments, we hold significant concerns regarding the GMUG Forest Plan.

I stand with the major objections and well thought out suggestions mentioned by my Gunnison County Commissioners, Town of Crested Butte and High Country Conservation Advocates, all of whom have submitted excellent facts, science based suggestions, and "boots on the ground" descriptions of what is really happening for our citizens, public lands, wilderness, and wildlife in these times of obvious climate change, and drought emergencies. These conditions require immediate and rapid action in THIS Forest Plan.

We all appreciate the innumerable hours, months and years of addressing the important Forest Plan and of course, our right to comment. Thank you for your service, doing your jobs thoroughly and for acting on our concerns. Thank you for your time to read.

The final plan must include significantly more wilderness recommendations.

The Forest Service does not adequately consider the designations in the Gunnison Public Lands Initiative (GPLI) or Community Conservation Proposal. These must be better reflected – and incorporated – in the final plan.

The draft plan posits a significant increase in suitable timber, which is a designation that interferes with consideration of responsible management of the forests that allow uses other than timber production. The draft plan prioritizes logging over conservation.

Many species are imperiled and the Plan does not provide ecological conditions and protective plan components to maintain their viability. Several vulnerable species deserve this designation, such as the American marten, bighorn sheep, northern goshawk, boreal owl, Lewis's woodpecker, flammulated owl, and imperiled bats. The draft plan does not adequately protect the diversity of imperiled species that occupy the GMUG.

I as well as Gunnison, Ouray, San Miguel, and Hinsdale Counties cannot support the pre-Draft plan and Preferred Alternative B as presented.

There is yet the lack of expanded wilderness recommendations, massive increase in lands suitable for timber harvest, the poor protection for rare wildlife species, and other issues.

I'm in agreement on all of the issues mentioned by Matt Reid of HCCA and in the letters submitted by Sue Navy. Forgive me if my letter repeats these issues.

I couldn't be more sincere.

We need more wilderness area designations in Gunnison County. The Gunnison Public Lands Initiative (GPLI), recommendations were not followed and absolutely should be after impressive community/public effort. Federal land managers must not reject the public's input. Give deep consideration to the Community Conservation Proposal and designate more wilderness areas on the GMUG.

Include stronger standards and mandates for forest protection, wildlife, Gunnison sage-grouse (where they exist on forest land), and waters that the Forest Service manages.

This must be done in THIS Forest Plan before it is too late for the survival of all life in our concerned counties, human, and otherwise. Recognize that we are in an emergency situation. Create protections and restrictions to control or curtail all contributors to climate change, including those of oil and gas extraction. Plus make no plan to exacerbate anything negative to our to the health and restoration of our environment.

I am a River Lover with the greatest respect for all that lives in our precious waterways. Water is undoubtedly the most critical and threatened system in question for the GMUG attention and in this Forest Plan; Water being the ultimate responsibility of the Forest Service. The "Liquid Gold" in our times.

I ask to see these rivers chosen for inclusion as Wild & Scenic in the Forest Plan:

1. Oh-Be-Joyful Creek-in Raggeds Wilderness
2. East River-scenic meanders, recently conserved by Trampe Ranch
3. Copper Lake and Copper Creek-important for research at RMBL, boreal toad population
4. Slate River-flows by Crested Butte, supports fragile heron rookery

5. Brush Creek and West Brush-free-flowing trout streams
 6. Cement Creek-home to a rare iron fen
 7. Anthracite and Ruby Anthracite-mainly in Raggeds Wilderness
 8. West Soap Creek-very scenic area with wilderness qualities
 9. Roubideau Creek-important lower-elevation, scenic and historic area
- ... And all headwaters of the Colorado River.

Certainly the exquisite letter of comments submitted by Lynn Cudlip, as well as so many others, offers vital concerns about the Riparian areas, Native Species, Aquatic Systems, plant species and the threats from invasives, the importance of dead snags and debris to insects, birds and habitats.

We have huge concerns about our pollinators and the use of pesticides. Also, note erosion and facts that do not support clear-cutting of timber. Be specific about conserving our Soil Resources as these are life saving and life giving issues.

Please reread the letters of my friends whom I mentioned. Our time to express our most urgent worries about that which threatens our survival, of all species, and our adamant request to prioritize actions that focus on ending if not slowing down climate change for the sake of generations to come, must be respected. There is no time to waste.

Create a Forest Plan that is NOT political and that does NOT destroy our forests by giving nods to industries that have little concern for the health and welfare of species that live on these lands and in these skies and waters. Our Forest Plan must not begin with business profit interests for this could lead to our End.

Thus I conclude my letter and comments for your immediate consideration.

I wish you clarity and expediency in regard to the Forest Plan revision.

Suzanne Pierson

Crested Butte, CO