

State Director
Bureau of Land Management
2850 Youngfield St.
Lakewood, CO 80215

Via e-mail: BLM_CO_Thompson_Divide@blm.gov

January 4, 2023

RE: proposed withdrawal of the Thompson Divide area from mineral leasing laws and other laws, per the Federal Register notice (the notice) at 87 Fed Reg 62878 et seq., October 17, 2022

Dear BLM,

I strongly approve of the proposal to remove the Thompson Divide area, as described in the notice, from:

all forms of entry, appropriation, and disposal under the public land laws; location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and operation of the mineral leasing, mineral materials, and geothermal leasing laws.

Notice at 62878.

The area proposed for withdrawal is highly valued for its wildlife, intact watersheds reliably delivering clean water, backcountry recreation, and scenery. The strong public desire to protect this area has been demonstrated every time there has been a proposal for oil and gas leasing in the area. Interests supporting protection for the Thompson Divide's beautiful landscape include ranchers, hunters, and various recreationists.

Any kind of activity to develop mineral or geothermal resources would be incompatible with these important values, and would damage or even destroy them. Similarly, it would be inappropriate to dispose of any such lands, as having them in public ownership provides a high level of public benefit. Therefore, withdrawal of these lands as proposed is entirely appropriate and necessary to protect them.

It would be helpful to have a map of the area proposed for withdrawal. It would be very difficult and time consuming for anyone to plot out the detailed description of lands proposed for withdrawal provided in the notice.

Please notify me when the BLM has made a decision on the proposed withdrawal.

Sincerely,

Rocky Smith