

My name is Scott Hudson, and I am a resident of Colorado and use the Thompson Divide area for hiking and backpacking. I fully support the USFS withdrawal of the Thompson Divide area and agree with the findings in the Environmental Assessment.

- The Thompson Divide area contains a unique and fragile ecosystem with a wide range of flora and fauna. This area is easily damaged through overuse and can't be easily restored. Therefore, withdrawing this area for further development for the near future is warranted.
- The impact of the withdrawal on other uses allowed under Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) is minimal. Under the withdrawal, the resources of the area are preserved and can be used at a future date if warranted.
- Colorado currently has an area along the front range that is in non-attainment for ozone. Although the non-attainment area does not include the Thompson Divide, oil and gas development in the area proposed for withdrawal could contribute to air pollution issues along the front range either directly or through indirect effects.
- Development of the Thompson Divide area will also require more roads in order to reach resources. Recent research indicates that roads with any traffic isolate wildlife and will cause long-term changes to their migration routes. (See Ben Goldfarb, *Crossings: How Road Ecology is Shaping The Future of Our Planet* (2023)). Therefore, withdrawal of the area from development will assist in preserving the current animal migration and transportation corridors.