

Deputy Forest Supervisor Edwards,

Today's kids spend an average of seven hours a day staring at electronics. We moms are having to work harder than ever to get them outdoors. Outdoor play has many benefits for our kids including physical and emotional development, lower stress, fostering a sense of independence and strengthening social skills. As a mom, it is important to me that there are numerous and varied opportunities to get my children outside for outdoor play.

We need places like the Thompson Divide that offer opportunities to see our spectacular Colorado landscapes, a chance to hike, spot wildlife, climb, and experience a sense of wonder. They also need clean air and clean water for their health. For all these reasons, I support the proposal for the Administrative Mineral Withdrawal for the Thompson Divide. Thank you to the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management for working to provide protection of these important public lands in the White River and Gunnison National Forests.

Protection of Thompson Divide enjoys tremendous local and statewide support. Families, local governments, recreationists, business owners, ranchers, and community members have long supported efforts to permanently safeguard the area.

The withdrawal proposal will provide meaningful protection for Thompson Divide while we work toward permanent protection. As you know, the area consists of prime, mostly roadless, wildlife habitat. It is known to be an important migration corridor for lynx, moose, elk, deer, bear, and mountain lions, linking wildlands near Grand Junction to the Elk Mountains. The area also includes many watersheds that provide clean water.

Thank you for the foresight of protecting this critical area for future generations.

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