

September 23, 2025

Pike-San Isabel National Forests & Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands
Supervisor's Office, in care of the Grasslands Plan Revision Team,
2840 Kachina Drive
Pueblo, CO 81008

Grasslands Plan Revision Team:
Comment Number 4

Concerning Urbanization, the Draft Assessment states: "The expansion of agriculture and urbanization across the Great Plains and the area surrounding and within the Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands area have resulted in pollution, hydrologic disturbance, and physical modification of streams. The Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands riparian area and non-playas wetlands are affected by upstream and upslope activities that occur on and off National Forest System lands due to mixed ownership within the project boundary." CCNG Draft Assessment, p. 38

If the definition of urbanization is the process by which large numbers of people become permanently concentrated in relatively small areas, forming cities, the Draft Assessment should specifically state where the damaging urbanization has occurred. Does urbanization mean one house on forty acres, one barn, or a whole subdivision. What is the context that defines damaging urbanization?

Having lived in Rocky Ford since June 2008 and travelled extensively in the counties surrounding the Comanche Grasslands, I have not seen the damaging urbanization referred to above. As compared to urban growth in Weld County to the north, there is hardly any urbanization in southeastern Colorado. Most counties in the region have lost population since 2010. Furthermore, the Covid Pandemic of 2020-2021 demonstrated the vulnerability of tourism to conditions that affect visitation to the region (recession, weather, cost of fuel, and closure of federal government properties due to lack of maintenance and pandemic policies mandating closure.)

Travel via Highways 109, 160, and 350 through the Comanche Grasslands hardly reach the volume of traffic found closer to the I-25 corridor and hardly support the notion of urbanization stated above.

The Draft Assessment addressed climate change in great detail, using that term 76 times, which is no longer an immediate priority of the current presidential administration. The Draft published projections of increased temperatures for the period between 2071 and 2090, which have nothing to do with proposed plan for use in 2026.

Respectfully

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