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First name: Cynthia

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear National Forest Management Folks,

I am writing you as a frequent user of our public lands. We love to ski, both downhill and cross country, camp, fish, hike, canoe, and love every aspect of our beautiful 'back yard'. I have raised my children making treks up to the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests to hike, ski, and camp. I can't imagine the Western Slope without these pristine places.

My grandchildren are coming this weekend from Denver. We plan to take them camping on the Grand Mesa. I was raised in Denver. It takes my breath away to see how completely overwhelmed with people, cars, pollution, and development it has become. I am so glad to be taking my 'grands' to a place where we can breath, and watch nature. These beautiful areas should be preserved for all children to come. As my great uncle once said, 'they ain't making more land, we have to protect what we have'. The land we have that is unspoiled must be protected at all costs or we simply cannot continue to be sane humans.

The new forest plan does not have enough mandatory provisos to protect the GMUG National Forests. Some of the language indicates voluntary provisions. There are not strong enough mandates to prevent more road building, more logging, and more oil and gas exploration. With the new plan, we could see much more deforestation via 'management' for fire mitigation which many believe can cause fires to burn hotter and be more devastating.

Some of the forests of GMUG are over 100 years old. Wildlife is currently struggling to stay alive and well. There has been a 90% decrease in many migratory birds as flyways are being destroyed daily by continued road building, logging, and increasing encroachment by development. Where does this end? Will future generations be able to enjoy the outdoors if we do not protect our National Forests for wildlife habitat? This new plan needs to ensure those areas can be preserved and even revived in some areas due to current overuse.

I implore to you to think past this year, or ten years or 24 years. Once a natural area is spoiled, it is rarely brought back to it's former beauty. A habitat for wildlife is worth preserving. Colorado depends economically on these unspoiled areas. Outdoor recreation generates twice the revenue of oil and gas. Our brand as Coloradans IS the 'Outdoors and Nature'. As our world becomes more populated, these natural, unblemished areas will become even more revered.

This is a tough time for folks like you working for our public lands. There are too many people in Washington calling more uses of our public lands. They see our public lands with a price tag...and are ready to sell to the highest bidder. I remind you that you decided to get into your field of work as you love nature as much as I do. Please fight to save our public lands from further destruction. Preserve it for future generations. Simply put, it is the right thing to do.

On a less serious note, I am going to share some favorite photos of the GMUG National Forests; our most cherished places with some of our most treasured friends.

Thank you for reading my letter.

Most Sincerely Yours,

Cindy (Cynthia) Sims

