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Organization:

Title:

Comments: comments on the GMUG Working Draft of the forest plan

Please accept my comments even though I have missed the date for submission. my father passed a few weeks ago and I forgot about mostly everything for a time, but this is very important to me. thanks, Holly Annala

GMUG Working Draft of the Forest Plan Comments August 14, 2019

Please consider my comments concerning to the Working Draft of the GMUG Forest Plan Revision. Thank you to the forest service planning group for working through this large project and thank you for taking my comments.

I think the plan should have stronger, enforceable standards for protection of important resources such as wildlife and birds, forest, water, air, soil and plant communities; and stronger implementation and enforcement. We need enforceable mandates for protecting Gunnison Sage-grouse as well as voluntary guidelines are weak and only a few people follow them. Our elk herds are disappearing in the San Juans, this should be a big red flag to planners. The plan proposes to establish protection of watershed networks to protect water and sensitive species like trout and the boreal toad, but provides no detail on how these networks would be applied and maintained.

There is no land in Gunnison County recommended for wilderness in the Working Draft and only 22,400 acres across the entire GMUG, and yet there are thousands of acres found to be worthy of wilderness recommendation. This is absolutely not acceptable. I fully support as many new wilderness areas that are of wilderness quality as I have stated in earlier comments, including but not limited to those in the Community Conservation Proposal and Gunnison Public Lands Initiative. It is my sanctuary in this increasingly crowded and noisy state, and often the only safe place for wildlife and plant communities, and the undisturbed lands protect our climate, water, air quality and sanity.

It appears that about 100,000 more acres would be "suitable" for timber production under this plan versus the 1991 amended plan. This means more timber could be cut during the life of the new plan. Logging is not a sustainable use due to the fact that it releases stored carbon from the trees and soil and it is an eyesore in a tourist economy. We have little in the way of healthy forest in Colorado these days, and with global warming it is a real possibility the trees will never grow back. Under a proposed standard, timber harvest would be allowed in high-quality lynx habitat.

Overall, I don't believe climate change has been addressed well enough in the planning process. This is unacceptable as climate change is our biggest challenge and the forest and undisturbed lands are important carbon storage; if we continue to release it we only make our problems worse.