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Comments: I am writing regarding the Wild and Scenic designation/recommendations regarding drainages on the Uncompahgre Plateau. I have hiked the North Fork of the Escalante as well as the Middle Fork of the Escalante so am personally familiar with their spectacular nature. I would like to add my support for your recommendation of Wild and Scenic for the North Fork of Escalante, as well as Kelso creeks due to their ORV: the unique presence in the State of green lineage Colorado River cutthroat trout.

I have two concerns, however, of omissions with regard to Wild and Scenic.

Firstly, in 2005, sections of the Dry Fork of the Escalante were included in the inventory due to their ORV of a biologically unique riparian zone including evergreens which was found worthy of W and S designation. Nowhere in the current plan does the Dry Fork of the Escalante exist, with no reference as to why it was excluded.

Rationales for excluding other stream segments, however, reference the same 2005 plan analysis.

Secondly, regarding that 2005 plan analysis of W and S eligibility, the Middle Fork of the Escalante, among numerous other streams, was determined to have no remarkable ORV. While the reference cited in the current plan points back to those eligibility discussions among Forest Service personnel there is no data to back up exclusion of the Middle Fork or any other stream segment. I have hiked the Middle Fork of the Escalante numerous times, and can attest to the presence of cutthroat trout, although I can't say what lineage they are. I also believe portions of it have a high recreational ORV, that it is free flowing. It is relatively easier to access this creek than the North Fork and Kelso due to its proximity to Love Mesa Road. Its red sandstone cliff walls and its unique ability to access the many non motorized trails at higher elevation, and further into this last largest unspoiled section of the Plateau, should qualify it for reconsideration for Wild and Scenic river status. The lack of transparent reasoning in the plan requires another look at the Middle Fork.

Thank you for consideration of my comment.