

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/22/2021 11:00:00 AM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello! My comments here are focused on the area that is above Lake Irwin towards the north, including Mount Owen, Green Lake, Ruby Mountain and upper Robinson Basin all the way up to the Dyke formation and Scarp Ridge. The draft management plan did not include a non-motorized option in any of the alternatives. This should be corrected to include an analysis and decision to designate a Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized designation here.

I am an owner of a mining claim in this area and have spent a lot of time here over the past 20 years. During those years motorized use dramatically increased from the occasional local to a steady stream of jeeps and ATV's heading up to the Green Lake basin. It was unmanaged, or poorly managed by the USFS, resulting in severe habitat destruction and extreme degradation of the road. While the section of road that goes through private land is embroiled in legal controversy, the USFS is free to manage the section ABOVE the mining claims in a way that protects the resources and keeps it accessible and enjoyable for non-motorized users. This area should be designated non-motorized and semi-primitive for the following reasons:

In the years since one of our neighbors gated the driveway I've seen a substantial increase in wildlife, and there are now wildflowers growing where vehicles used to drive. Hikers are very appreciative that they no longer need to move over for motorized users. While there have been significant conflicts between a few motorized users and the landowner with the gate, most users realize that it is no longer tenable to have heavy traffic going up and back on an unmaintained one lane road. There are no facilities or parking designated at the ambiguous end of the road, so people used to park willy nilly all over the tundra.

Winter use is also a major issue here, as snowmobilers have been encouraged to use this area despite extreme avalanche risk and the necessity to trespass over private property in order to access Ruby Mountain.

This fragile and highly scenic area at risk given the heavy use seen at Lake Irwin, which itself is very close to Crested Butte. Even if only a small fraction of users of the lake decide to drive up towards Green Lake the cumulative impact will destroy the very thing people wish to enjoy. Instead, the USFS should work with private landowners to assure nonmotorized access. This area borders wilderness and is fully deserving of strong protections. Please give this due consideration in your next round of analysis of the forest plan.

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