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First name: Keith

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Organization: Silent Tracks

Title: President

Comments: Silent Tracks is a 501(c)3 nonprofit membership-based organization located in Gunnison County, Colorado. Our mission is [ldquo]to promote, protect and enhance human-powered recreation in the backcountry of the Gunnison Valley[rdquo]. Human-powered recreation includes hiking, backpacking, trail running, cross-country skiing, climbing, snowshoeing, mountain biking, etc. Most of our members participate in multiple human-powered activities.

The Federal Register/Vol. 87, No 199/Monday, October 17, 2022/Notices indicates the Thompson Divide and Mt. Emmons Mineral Withdrawal is proposed for a period of 20 years to protect agricultural, ranching, wildlife, air quality, recreational, ecological and scenic values in the Thompson Divide area of Colorado. Because our members actively participate in a variety of outdoor recreation activities, preserving lands in close proximity to our community which are included in the proposed Thompson Divide Administrative Mineral Withdrawal. Silent Tracks strongly supports the 20-year protection that this mineral withdrawal would secure.

Outdoor recreation is a precious activity that is vital to our community, and protecting landscapes that ensure scenic values and recreational opportunities are values so very important to our members, the local community and our economy.

USDA Forest Service National Visitor Use Monitoring Survey Results National Summary Report Data collected FY 2015 through FY 2019 and the GMUG Visitor Use Report FY2019 (see table 13 below) showing that non-motorized, non-mechanized users collectively form the largest group of users and you can see from the chart below that the hours spent camping, hunting, backpacking and viewing natural features is significant.

Table in attachment: Table 13: Activity Participation

The proposed mineral withdrawal is not only good for our residents and visitors alike, but also for the protection of the wildlife, waters and scenic values this area encompasses.