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Comments: The Thompson Divide in Western Colorado is rich with expansive aspen groves and old-growth spruce-fir forests. With the surrounding areas, the Thompson Divide constitutes one of the largest expanses of unfragmented, roadless forests in the state. Black bears, mule-deer and elk herds roam this wild area.

Developing land for oil and gas drilling can devastate the environment. Drilling operations can lead to tearing down forests to build roads, bringing in heavy machinery and a steady stream of trucks to carry in millions of gallons of water and fracking fluid.

The Thompson Divide is also a favorite spot for biking, hiking, cross country skiing and trout fishing. Oil and gas drilling operations could put all of that in jeopardy.

Attached is a public comment signed by 6,489 supporters of Environment America and Environment Colorado.

I support the proposed Administrative Mineral Withdrawal for the Thompson Divide and thank the Forest Service for working to provide meaningful protection for these spectacular public lands in the White River and Gunnison National Forests. The Thompson Divide in Western Colorado is a landscape rich with expansive aspen groves and old-growth spruce-fir forests. Black bears, mule-deer and elk herds are prodigious because with the surrounding areas, the Thompson Divide constitutes one of the largest expanses of unfragmented, roadless forests in the state. Developing land for oil and gas drilling can devastate the environment. It often requires tearing down forests to build roads, importing heavy machinery, and initiating a steady stream of trucks to carry in millions of gallons of water and fracking fluid. This kind of destructive activity has no place in the Thompson Divide.