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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Wilderness: below are my comments from 11/25/21:

The recommendations of the Gunnison Public Lands Initiative should be incorporated in the Draft GMUG Plan, except that a future trail between Gunnison and Crested Butte, on the west side of Whetstone Mountain, should not be a part of the GMUG plan because this is one of the few elk habitat areas that is not impacted by people.

Objection:

GPLI's recommendations are one of the alternatives proposed by the agency, but it is not the preferred alternative. I ask that GPLI's recommendations be included in the final plan, especially the recommendations for land suitable for Wilderness designation. I do not support the GPLI's recommendation for a trail on the west side of Whetstone Mountain between Crested Butte and Gunnison, as discussed in my comment above.

Timbering: My comments on 11/25/21 were:

"Alternatives B and C indicate that timbering is suitable throughout most of the Coal Creek watershed, above Crested Butte. In the early 1980s, the Town of Crested Butte adopted a Watershed Ordinance, in accordance with Colorado State law, to maintain water quality for the residents of, and visitors to, Crested Butte. Despite the use of best management practices, the production of timber and other forest products invariably reduces the quality of soils and watersheds and water resources to some extent (e.g., DEIS at pages 118, 120, and 127). These impacts also influence the condition of riparian management zones and groundwater-dependent ecosystems. Because timbering throughout the Coal Creek watershed, as depicted in Alternatives B and C, is inconsistent with the Town's four decade old Watershed Ordinance, which endeavors to maintain water quality, timbering suitability as indicated in Alternatives B and C should be discarded."

Timbering Objections

1. I appreciate that the land south of Coal Creek has been eliminated from "Suitable for Timbering" in all alternatives, but I object to having the Preferred Alternative and Alternatives C and D show land north of Coal Creek identified as suitable for timbering. The south facing aspect of this area and the steep hillside would make it very difficult to prevent erosion from entering Coal Creek. The impacts to the drinking water sourced from Coal Creek could overwhelm the ability of the Town of Crested Butte to provide clean drinking water to its residents.
2. I object to showing lands suitable for timbering so close to the Iron Fen and Gossan. The Gossan is already the single largest contributor of Heavy Metals to Coal Creek, the drinking water source for the Town of Crested Butte, and timbering in the area would make that situation worse. All Alternatives presented in the Final GMUG Forest Plan show lands north and west of the Iron Fen as suitable for Timbering. The Gossan, north of the Fen, burned about 40 years ago and still has not revegetated.
3. Timber harvesting Maps label the "Lake Irwin Rec Emphasis Area," around Lake Irwin, although the lake is not shown on the map. Those maps also indicated the area east and north of the Lake Irwin Rec Area as suitable for timbering. Those two uses are incompatible and Lake Irwin is already a recreation emphasis area with the Lake Irwin campground and many trails on Forest Service lands.