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Comments: As a homeowner in the East River valley with a long history of work and recreation in the area I am writing to ask that you keep two particular issues in mind when constructing the new forest plan.

First, I urge you to work closely with the Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory, both by making use of the expertise and long-term data available at the RMBL, and by creating a special management area prioritizing research and education in the area near the lab. The RMBL is a leading international research facility that brings substantial federal and other funding to the area. The RMBL is also a key educational and tourism resource for the Crested Butte area, where the lab provides science education for children, adults and visitors both at the lab and through talks in town and work with local schools. Supporting the lab by coordinating with lab staff and protecting core research areas on the forest near the lab is good not only for the forest, but for the local community. Making use of the expertise and data of scientists at the lab could be an efficient way for local Forest Service employees to get valuable information to support wise management decisions. It is particularly distressing that the long-discussed special management area near the lab is not prominently included in the draft plan. Please make designation of a special management area a priority.

Second, I urge you to work harder to reduce the impact of recreation in the East River Valley to reasonable proportions; impacts of greatly increased visitation are obvious throughout the valley and other valleys near Crested Butte and the Forest Service clearly doesn't have the funding to manage all these people. There is clear resource degradation from vehicles and from visitors leaving trash and human waste by roads and trails. As only one sad example, I found a pile of human feces with toilet paper right on a trail only a few hundred meters from my cabin last summer. As another example, we often have to redirect lost tourists driving up our long driveway or parking on our property or (literally) trying to camp in our driveway, and have watched the steady degradation of meadow edges along the dirt road (old county road) to the Deer Creek Trail from people driving and parking off the road and driving the road when it is far too wet. The limitation on dispersed camping has helped a lot (it was far worse previously). The busses are also an excellent idea; please consider limiting vehicular traffic in the East River Valley during peak season, now that busses are available as an alternative. I believe we are to the point where a permit system may need to be implemented during the peak season to maintain the beautiful areas that all these people are coming to see and the quality of the resource.

Thanks for your hard work, and for considering the input of the public!