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Organization:

Title:

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Forest Plan Revision. I've lived in the Crested Butte area for over thirty years. I am a passionate user of our National Forests, Natural Areas and Wilderness Areas. I hike, climb, backpack, camp, picnic, snowshoe, walk, run, kayak, mountain bike, nap, read, photograph and ski on our public lands several times a week, each month, year-round. The activity depending on the season. All non-motorized. I prefer to leave no trace, no noise, no pollution, no damage on our wonderful public lands.

My main concerns with Forest Management are: 1) Climate Resiliency, 2) Phasing out Fossil Fuel Extraction, 3) Leaving Roadless Areas roadless, 4) Protecting Wilderness Areas and Wildlife Corridors, 5) Limiting Timber extraction and new roads, 6) Protecting and preserving currently designated non-motorized use areas, 7) Mitigating over-impact and human/vehicle abuse of popular roads, trails and trailheads.

The Assessments are notably silent on climate change pollution and its relationship to activities on the GMUG. The Forest Service must present climate pollution information from fossil fuel development in an Assessment. The GMUG should use the Social Cost of Carbon and Social Cost of Methane to inform and improve its policies and management. The Assessment should consider Forest-wide standards with stipulations for coal leasing that limit uncontrolled methane venting from coal mines.

There is a need and opportunity for additional Wilderness and Wild & Scenic Rivers on the GMUG. The Draft Assessment for Recreation states that the public wants more motorized trails, but this is unsubstantiated. I see more and more cars arriving in Crested Butte with Mountain Bikes and SUPS, not dirt bikes.

Dispersed campsites need better management, especially those around Crested Butte in the Slate River, Washington Gulch and Gothic drainages. Popular trailheads, lakes and scenic view areas need, at the very least, a pit toilet. I'm not a fan of paving paradise and providing more parking for the masses in our wildest places, in fact I'd like to see less accommodation for vehicles. But a toilet is needed at West Maroon Trailhead.

Timber production and coal or gas extraction should not be allowed in roadless areas. Period. Designated roadless areas should remain just that, roadless.

Likewise, Winter non-motorized designated areas, such as the Gothic corridor, should remain non-motorized. That includes snowmobiles, snowbikes and snow-grooming vehicles. I've witnessed an alarming increase in snowmobile use in this drainage. All with fat skis on the back of their sleds. Many of them claim to be property owners, but in fact they own just mining claims, without structures and are clearly not mining, but abusing access to just ski. This along with fat bike grooming vehicles are setting a precedent in this drainage and changing the one and only quiet-use, non-motorized drainage at this end of the valley.

I am opposed to fat bike grooming in quiet-use, non-motorized areas such as the Gothic Corridor and on Snodgrass Mountain for the reasons above. There are very few places left at this end of the valley, with winter access, where you can enjoy a quiet, non-motorized outing in our beautiful backcountry.

I advocate for more NON-MOTORIZED summer trails and winter recreation areas. I also advocate for a forest-wide climate resiliency plan.

Thank you very much for accepting the public's feedback on their public lands.

Michele Simpson
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