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Comments: GMUG Forest Plan - Assessment Comments

Dear GMUG Forest Planning Team:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments during the assessment phase of the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison (GMUG) National Forest plan revision process. As an avid outdoor enthusiast, I enjoy recreating on the GMUG and hope to preserve opportunities for human-powered backcountry travel, solitude, challenge and exploration throughout the National Forest.

In reviewing the Recreation Assessment, I was disappointed to see this important topic receive a fairly cursory overview with limited detail included in the assessment. The narrative was incomplete without maps to portray the recreation amenities, trails, high-use areas and visitor use data.

Conflicts between human powered and motorized winter traffic are increasing in the San Juans. Areas that have been historically used for backcountry skiing are now being used by snow machines. The tracks left by machines on backcountry ski slopes are dangerous to skiers. Snowmachiners are usually oblivious to the presence of skiers and other human powered traffic, and present an immediate danger to those backcountry users. Snowmobile traffic needs to be restricted to designated roads only in areas that human powered backcountry user access. There is plenty of off road access for machines that isn't backcountry ski terrain. These areas need to be mapped out more clearly.

I hope you will consider updating the information in your assessment report to provide a more detailed picture of Recreation on the GMUG forest prior to the scoping period.

Sincerely,

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