

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 4/25/2018 10:07:16 PM

First name: Erica

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: GMUG Scoping Comments

Dear Forest Service Planning Committee for the GMUG NF:

I would like to submit my comments for the scoping process for the revised forest plan for the Gunnison, Grand Mesa and Uncompahgre Forests.

I strongly support the conservation community's alternative plan, envisioning additional wilderness areas as the area supports a wide variety of wildlife including the american white pelican, burrowing owl, columbian sharp-tailed grouse, ferruginous hawk, gray vireo, Gunnison sage-grouse, greater sandhill crane, and the bald eagle. Many imperiled fish reside here as well: the Colorado River cutthroat trout, the roundtail chub. Mammals such as the kit fox, river otter and the white-tailed prairie dog live in this area too! Several plants that are rare are also on my mind: the Cathedral Bluff meadow-rue, Colorado desert parsley, the cushion bladderpod, the Debeque milkvetch, the Rocky Mountain thistle, and the Rollins twinpod.

I strongly discourage the Forest Service to encourage any more oil and gas leasing in the GMUG National Forest, I was highly disheartened by the decisions to expand the Arch Coal mine with zero methane capture - I visited the Raggeds Wilderness as well as the West Elk, and have also spent time in the Sneffels Wilderness - the Gunnison Gorge, as well as many areas around Palisade.

I support expansion of recommended wilderness areas including: Dominguez, Kelso Mesa, Unaweep, Elk Park, Electric Mountain, Chalk Mountain, Coal Mountain, Whitehouse Mountain East, East Beaver Creek, Hayden Mountain, Bear Creek, Matterhorn, Cataract, Crystal Peak, Lake Branch, West Baldy, and Sawtooth.

I support the expansion of special interest areas to include the Cottonwoods, Battlements, Flattops, Salt Creek, Priest Mountain, Currant Creek, Turner Creek, Mount Lamborn, the CDNST, Abrams Mountain, Hope Lake, Lone Eone. I also would like to expand protection to the Cochetopa Hills area, and the Kannah Creek watershed protection area.

The two proposals that outline these areas in greater detail are outlined in the Citizens' Wilderness and Designations Proposal (gmugrevision.com) and the Gunnison Public Lands Initiative Proposal. Strong standards are absolutely imperative to both the democratic process to protect lands for all species that presently exist as well as giving species much room for adaptations due to climate change.

I am also very concerned with the impacts of climate change and the effects that additional development in GMUG will have on expediting climate change.

Thank you for considering my comments!

Sincerely,
Erica Prather

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Campaign Assistant

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