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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Scoping Comment

To whom it may concern:

I greatly appreciate having the opportunity to submit my comments in support of the Citizens' Wilderness Proposal and the GMUG forest plan revision.

The Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forest area is a magical place. As a mountain trail runner, I often run long stretches of the amazing trails in this area during the summer months and backpack and snowshoe in and around Crested Butte and Gunnison year-round. The forests in this area provide more than just a place for outdoor recreation, however. They act as a carbon sink to combat climate change and, as the Forest Service describes on its website, provide important habitat for a wide range of wildlife, including Gunnison sage grouse, Mexican spotted owls, boreal owls, bald eagles, peregrine falcons and many other avian species. Insect infestation, climate change and drought are already threatening the GMUG's forests and robust safeguards should be a part of the Forest Plan.

The GMUG is home to some of the most extraordinary wilderness in all of Colorado, such as the Kelso Mesa, lands proposed for wilderness in the San Juan Mountains wilderness, and many others as reflected in the conservation community's recommended wilderness proposal. I encourage the Forest Service to take this opportunity to address the growing need for protection and expansion of wilderness, Wild & Scenic Rivers, and other designated areas in the GMUG.

Sincerely,

Brett Wyker

Longmont, CO