

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 5/30/2018 5:52:38 PM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Tell the Forest Service to Protect Wildlife

May 30, 2018

GMUG Plan Revision Team

Dear Revision Team,

I am an advocate for conserving America's public lands. I urge the Forest Service to include strong protections for wildlife, wildlands, and water in the revised management plan for the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison national forests. I am also a Coloradan, and my public lands are very precious to me. My family and I have spent countless hours, days, even weeks, enjoying the beauty of these lands, including the Grand Mesa and Gunnison areas. We have hiked, camped, bicycled and canoed, reveling in every adventure. I have also watched progress of reintroduction of the Canada lynx and the hard-won bipartisan agreements to protect the sage-grouse and its habitat. How ironic that, after more than 35 years, the U.S. Forest Service is going to revise its management plan under the current administration. I urge you to keep all the species and the habitat, as well as the people who value them, front and center in your deliberations.

Many at-risk species depend on these forests. They provide key habitat for the Canada lynx and Gunnison sage-grouse, which are both threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. Canada lynx need large areas of connected habitat and safeguards from threats such as logging. Oil and gas development should be avoided in Gunnison sage-grouse habitat. Other vulnerable species that need strict management standards and guidelines include the river otter, Gunnison's prairie dog, American white pelican, bald eagle, boreal owl, northern goshawk, Colorado River cutthroat trout, other animals, and many plants.

One of the best ways to protect wildlife and plants in our national forests is to designate special areas dedicated to conservation. This is why I support the Citizens' Wilderness Proposal. The Proposal would provide important management direction for essential places on the forest for at-risk species.

I encourage the GMUG Plan Revision Team to develop and adopt a management plan alternative that maximizes conservation for the wildlife that depend on these forests and their habitat.

Sincerely,

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