

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 5/31/2018 3:08:30 AM

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Comments: Forest Service Plan

Comments for GMUG Forest Service Plan

The plan for Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forest is very important and below I have listing several issues that are critical in making this plan for multiple use opportunities in the Forest.

As you have just seen by the latest economic impact study done by the federal government OHV recreation has surpasses all other economic impacts in CO. This includes all other recreation and Oil and Gas. The reason I'm bringing this up is because the OHV community deserves a plan that shows the need for increased opportunities. I also want to remind the people putting this plan together that the OHV community is the only user group that has it's own fundraising program (OHV registration managed for over 27 years by CPW and the volunteer OHV sub committee) that generates over \$4.2 million dollars per year. These funds go through a grant process and fund volunteers and land managers in maintaining multi use trails and an educational program (Stay The Trail) to educate users to proper trail etiquette in CO. Many millions of dollars have been spent on the GMUG in the past 27 years

There has been an effort by the mountain bike community to build trails just for their use and to add insult to injury they want these trails to be paid for with land manager fun that are intended for multi use. No one user group is entitled just their use on public lands.

Please keep the management standards to a minimum applied at the landscape level. This will ease future site specific planning and allow public to be involved in a more effective way.

No new wilderness programs.

A huge portion of the GMUG has been inventoried and specifically released by Congress. The USFS recommending Wilderness in planning after Congress has specifically said "no" to Wilderness in these areas makes no sense.

There is no support for many of the citizen Wilderness and proposed Legislation designating Wilderness on the GMUG such as the San Juan Wilderness Legislation, as this proposal has been proposed for more than a decade and was not even proposed for the 5 years before reintroduction this year in Congress. This is evidence of the lack of support for the San Juan Legislation.

The poor forest health on the GMUG is degrading all habitat for wildlife and addressing this issue can only be

done with active management and treatment of these areas and such treatment must be prioritized in planning. Poor forest health is a major challenge to the recreational community as fallen trees must be removed and can create major safety concerns.

There should be no exclusionary corridors around the Continental Divide Trail or other National Trails System designated routes as this would be a violation of federal law, violate the CDT trail plan and could not be brought into compliance with multiple use planning requirements.

Throughout the assessments the importance of expanding current motorized opportunities is recognized and this must be supported. This is critically important to good planning and balanced planning in the future.

Land managers always ask for communities to come together on issues and bring them a collaborative solution. Colorado did this decades ago on many of these Wilderness boundaries. We are asking that land managers not upset the consensus position that was brought to them decades ago regarding the management of many of these areas.

Managing poor forest health in an effective manner must be a landscape level goal for the GMUG moving forward and any management standards that would complicate these efforts must be looked at very closely to insure there is a good basis for the restriction.

Generally, existing management of recreation is highly effective and as a result concerns about user conflicts driving management decisions should be minimal.

Any planning efforts must comply with the best available science on whatever the management issue is in the area. Any citizen science or unpublished research must be viewed very critically by land managers.

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