

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/6/2018 3:29:22 AM

First name: Jon

Last name: Miller

Organization:

Title:

Comments: GMUG Revision Planning

Hello,

I am writing to express my opposition to the overzealous campaign for more Wilderness protections on the Grand Mesa, Uncompagre, and Gunnison National Forests.

Why can't we protect our lands through outreach and education, instead of constantly having to watch out for the next closure? Our National Forests on the GMUG are one of the last large regions that allows for dispersed multi-use recreation for citizens, and certainly already contains plenty of existing Wilderness areas (that I'm happy to know are under the protections that they are.) Why do we need more Wilderness areas?

One thing that has become clear recently is that the many Wilderness groups are unfairly influencing popular Outdoor Industry consumer perceptions through (what I believe to be nationally-distributed) Email surveys that have come from Backcountry.com, Winter Wildlands Alliance and REI via Outdoor Alliance. Some of the surveys intentionally lead the audience (a majority of whom are not representative of affected communities) to believe that there are many user conflicts that exist. I can speak from first hand experience from the Grand Mesa that I have never had a negative encounter with another user over the last twenty years that I have been snowmobiling and taking my family camping up there.

I can appreciate the intention of protecting these lands from things like the active Natural Gas pump houses I discovered a few years ago, scattered south of Sunlight Mountain Resort on White River N.F. (For example.) But why is it ok to decimate the forests for natural gas exploitation, while summer and winter Backcountry RV campers, OHV and OSV users are stigmatized as if we are driving bulldozers through the forest for the pleasure of destroying nature? This is clearly not true. Nobody buys recreational vehicles with the idea that they hate nature. We all love our National Forests, no matter how we get out there and enjoy them!!

The existing management plan maps have been working just fine for many years. Why should we have to give up our lands in favor of more Wilderness, especially when many of these proposed areas have already been deemed unfit to be considered Wilderness in the past?

Is there a way that we can protect these areas (that are being proposed by Wilderness groups), while still allowing for motorized access as it exists today? I've heard of SMA designations. Is that an alternative option to consider here? Maybe this approach could quell some of the need for protections, but calm the overzealousness of the Wilderness proposed? I'm all about protecting the environment, and I believe that can be done without closing more citizens out of the lands they love in perpetuity.

We've lost enough access in Colorado already. Motorized communities feel helpless and stigmatized, and as if we don't have a voice in these matters. This is a threat to our very happiness, and the collective health and wellness of our communities. These lands serve many people, and diverse recreational access should be considered fundamentally-vital to our communities and outdoor recreation lifestyles.

Please keep multi-use access status quo on the GMUG NFs!

Thanks so much for your consideration!

--

Thank you,

Jon

Jon Miller

design/strategy/creative
720.271.7340

powdercowboy1975@gmail.com

<http://powdercowboy.co>

CONFIDENTIAL: The information contained in this email communication is confidential information intended only for the use of the addressee. Unauthorized use, disclosure or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited and may be unlawful. If you have received this communication in error, please notify us immediately by return email and destroy all copies of this communication, including all attachments.