

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/13/2019 6:00:00 AM

First name: Ray

Last name: Imel

Organization:

Title:

Comments: No More Wild and Scenic, (But Don't Tell the Kids).

Dear Assistant Forest Planner Brittany Duffy,

Dear Ms. Duffy,

My parents were none the wiser when I signed up for a City run kayaking class, at the Scott Carpenter Pool in Boulder, CO in 1975. It changed my life for the better. Finding hidden paddling gems, growing up with friends whose only thing in common was a love of boating, and thinking and dreaming about wild rivers has sustained me. I have one child who I am raising as a boater, but it is for all children that I want the opportunity to grow up around and on, think and dream about boating Wild Rivers. How can we make this happen? I encourage you to review Outdoor Alliance's GMUG Mapping Tool and American Whitewater's National Whitewater Inventory to inform the Final Eligibility Evaluation.

I know Oh Be Joyful from the literature of paddling and dream about running it. I may not get there, but I will be devastated if it's value is lost to others who will paddle it. I thank you for determining Oh Be Joyful creek and its tributaries as Eligible and for recognizing Recreation as an Outstandingly Remarkable Value for Eligible segment 1B. Oh Be Joyful is one of Colorado's most popular challenging creeks, bringing new residents to the Gunnison Valley and bringing in visitors from across the country. However, paddlers don't just come to Crested Butte for Oh Be Joyful - they come to paddle Daisy Creek (i.e., Poverty Gulch), the Slate River, and the Upper East River. Intermediate paddlers flock to the Lower Taylor River and those looking for awe-inspiring views travel farther upstream to the Taylor River above Taylor Reservoir. A section of the Taylor River is forever etched in my boating genome: the first road trip with friends from highschool, this was high adventure. An unknown reach, a long ways from the Arkansas, the Poudre, and the Platte. I live in Alaska now and have hiked my boats miles into to access remote whitewater gems, (and a few that weren't what we'd hoped), so I have no doubt that those hiking their boats miles into the Dark Canyon to paddle Ruby Anthracite Creek and the mainstem Anthracite, are richly rewarded. In the Uncompahgre Forest, paddlers travel to the headwaters of the Uncompahgre and the headwaters of the San Miguel for high-challenge and incredibly scenic paddling experiences. You can't write, read or say Uncompahgre without experiencing chills. Ancapagari, Laguna Colorado, Rio de San Francisco, names that hint and tease about the richness of these reaches. Yosemite and Yellowstone are bold but Uncompahgre is magic.

Each of these rivers are free-flowing and possess at least one ORV and they should be listed as Eligible in the Final Eligibility Evaluation.

Thank you for considering my comments on the GMUG Eligibility Evaluation.

Sincerely,

Ray Imel

Douglas, AK 99824

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