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Comments: Hello,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. The task of revising the forest management plan is huge and extremely important! Thank you in advance for all of your efforts to maintain and manage the GMUG National Forest.

I am a Colorado native and have lived in the Montrose, Ridgway, Ouray area for the past 25 years. The GMUG provides me with multiple recreation opportunities, natural spaces, and constantly beautiful changing scenery. I have seen the impacts of more human visitors to this national forest over the past several years and am hopeful that a revised forest plan will maintain a healthy forest for many more years.

o Overall, the plan provides very weak, and in some cases non-existent, direction for the protection of important resources. More standards, i.e., mandatory limits on action, need to be in the plan. I hope that the new forest plan will establish standards that protect natural resources that are being "loved to death". Blue Lakes, Ice Lakes, Columbine Lake, Bridge of Heaven are several trails and destinations that see LOTS of use in summer months and could use proactive management. The Ironton Park area is also being heavily impacted (summer and winter) with free camping in summer and the parking is very dangerous in winter months with increased use from cross-country skiers, snowshoers, and backcountry skiers.

Keeping wildlife in mind, I would like to make sure that areas that are used for winter range and birthing grounds for big game are protected (mandatory not voluntary). Prospect Bowl area in the Telluride Ski Area comes to mind as an area that needs to be managed as such an area.

o Frustratingly, there is only land in the San Juans recommended for Wilderness, even though many other areas exhibit wilderness characteristics. The Uncompaghre Plateau has several areas that exhibit wilderness qualities that I think should be considered for such a designation. The Tabeguache and Roubideau areas are special protected areas that have outstanding natural values. They are surrounded by other lands that generally are open to a range of impacts from human use. I hope that other areas in the GMUG are also strongly considered for wilderness status. I support new wilderness areas, including those in the Community Conservation Proposal. I also hope that the plan will include ways to monitor and manage wilderness areas with back country rangers, community groups, and ???.

o Under a proposed standard, timber harvest would be allowed in high-quality lynx habitat. This must not be allowed. Timber harvest along the Highway 550 corridor and other areas in the forest is not only high quality lynx habitat, but it is also extremely steep terrain and not reasonable for logging. Another concern I have about timber harvest is the amount mandated on pg. 52; FW-OBJ-TMBR-01: Annually offer 55,000 CCF of Forest Products - The specificity of this amount could force efforts to harvest forest products even under inappropriate circumstances.

o The plan proposes to establish conservation watershed networks to protect watersheds and sensitive species like trout and boreal toad but provides no detail on how these networks would be applied and maintained.

Managing the GMUG Forest for all natural systems, resources, and human enjoyment is vital for all.

Thank you,  
Heidi Nadiak