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Comments: ol strongly oppose the requested special use permit (SUP) and related Categorical Exclusion (CE) for geotechnical investigations in connection with Homestake Partners' proposed trans mountain diversion of water from Homestake Creek in the Holy Cross Wilderness for the Whitney Reservoir project.

oThe United States now has over 320 million human inhabitants. It would be foolish to ignore the virtually permanent impact on nature and the environment from human activities and construction. It behooves us to give priority to conservation, rather than exploitation, in order that our future generations will be able to enjoy our natural areas and have a healthy environment.

oThe requested SUP/CE would allow for up to a year of drilling, road construction, and cross-country travel by vehicles and equipment within the White River National Forest in support of the proposed reservoir and diversion project.

ol oppose both the SUP/CE and the underlying proposed Whitney Reservoir project.

oDiverting even more water out of the headwaters of the Colorado River is a terrible idea. The water use from the Colorado River is critical for the livelihoods of millions of people in cities, farms, and individual residences.

oThe proposed work also is a critical step in advancing the Whitney Reservoir project, which would require making a Wilderness boundary "adjustment" to reduce the Holy Cross Wilderness by almost 500 acres. I oppose the reduction of any federal Wilderness Areas, and especially the unique Holy Cross Wilderness which is already being dewatered by the Homestake Partners.

ol am deeply concerned about the Whitney Reservoir project's impact on the environment and the complex fen wetlands. These wetlands are some of the finest of their type in the entire White River National Forest. Reclamation and restoration of complex fen wetlands have not been proven to be possible.

oThe communities of Aurora and Colorado Springs should take action to reduce their water needs, and not destroy our Wilderness and rivers.