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Comments: Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Forest Plan for the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forest. I have traveled in these areas and value them.

Public lands are our legacy to future generations of Americans, and they should be preserved and protected as such, not exploited for private profit or abused by "wreckreation."

That said, I am pleased to see that U.S. Forest Service (USFS) has increased the size and scale of Wildlife Management Areas and provided a robust level of detail and attention to the impacts that recreation has across the forest. It is critical that we endeavor to protect Colorados wildlife at a time when they are experiencing unprecedented pressure from the climate crisis, recreation use, and continued habitat fragmentation.

There are, however, a number of aspects of the plan that seriously require improvement. Foremost is the paltry level of acreage of recommended wilderness in the plan. In 2007, under the Bush Administration, USFS recommended 125,000 acres as wilderness. Just 14 years later, in Alternative B, or the preferred alternative, USFS is proposing to recommend a mere 34,000 acres in the over three million acre GMUG National Forest as wilderness. That hardly counts as a wilderness protective of the other species that share this land. It is clear as time goes on, that lands untrammeled by man become all the more valuable and irreplaceable, and I urge USFS to recommend a much increased and more suitable acreage figure for recommended wilderness.

Similarly, the massive increase of timber that you deem suitable for logging is unacceptable, particularly in light of the red alert climate crisis we face. Alternative B, the clear preferred alternative, nearly doubles the acreage of timber suitable for harvest from 468,000 acres to 948,200 acres. Designating nearly one third of the forest for timber harvest while deeming just one tenth of the forest suitable for wilderness protection isnt aligned with Colorados values. The potential impacts of logging at such a scale on the climate and the watersheds we depend on are far too great.