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Comments: I support the 261,000 acres of wilderness area recommendations in Alternative D and strongly, firmly believe that those be included in the final plan. Alternative B's 34,000 acres of recommended wilderness is a small reflection of lands that should be recommended. I support the 246,000 acres of Special Management Area recommendations in Alternative D. Alternative B includes no Special Management Area (SMA) recommendations, which is outrageous. Furthermore, the protection of big game habitat is critical. I very strongly and firmly support the protections for big game and wildlife habitat that are most pronounced in Alternative D. According to the draft plan, "Alternative D would likely provide the most connectivity benefit due to providing the greatest extent of recommended wilderness, special management areas, and wildlife management area categories." These connectivities are crucial to our area.

I strongly support the concept of Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) in the revised forest plan and asks that those be retained and strengthened. We need healthy habitats for the entire valley to thrive. This important management area designation could help protect habitats for a variety of wildlife species. However, in places where Alternative D's wilderness and SMA recommendations overlap with the WMA-base identified in Alternative B, I support the stronger management prescriptions that Alternative D's wilderness and SMAs provide. Every alternative in the draft plan posits a significant increase in suitable timber, which is a designation that interferes with the consideration of responsible management of the forests for uses other than timber production. The draft plan's timber suitability analysis seems designed to maximize the possibility of future timber harvest, even though the GMUG National Forest is much more valuable for conserving biological diversity and recreation than it ever could be for timber production. The health of our forests is in such a fragile balance. Our ecosystems are rich with so much life and absolutely need to be protected. The fallen timber must go through its proper life cycle of decomposition within its original fallen place in order to reinvigorate and regenerate the nutrients in the soil. Finally, I very strongly support eligibility findings for all the stream segments included in the revised draft forest plan, including the following in our geographic area: Oh-Be-Joyful Creek and tributaries; West Elk Creek; Upper West Soap Creek; Copper Creek, Copper Lake, and tributaries; and Anthracite Creek. There are several streams in the Gunnison Country that were previously found eligible but have been left out of the revised draft forest plan, and those should be included: the Taylor River; the Slate River; Daisy Creek, Poverty Gulch, and the East River. All of our watersheds are extremely precious as the flows carry water downstream to so many places. The views, the recreation, the inherent nature of the water... These things are invaluable and without a doubt must be preserved. Thank you for your consideration of my input.