

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/6/2021 3:29:47 PM

First name: Nathan

Last name: Kettner

Organization: Nathan Kettner

Title:

Comments: Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this draft plan. I am an avid hunter, angler, hiker, whitewater rafter, and all around outdoorsmen, but by far the biggest reason I live in CO is because of the abundant, but dwindling, opportunities for solitude. I volunteer with BHA and RMEF which support USFS efforts to keep the GMUG and all of Colorado's national forests healthy for people and wildlife.

I have hunted elk and deer during the archery season just south of Norwood and west of Lizard Head Wilderness and I support BHA's recommended additions to the draft plan's Wildlife Management Areas, specifically, but not limited to the Lone Cone, Cow Range, and Little Cone areas as depicted on BHA's website:

[https://www.backcountryhunters.org/wildlife\\_management\\_areas\\_-\\_gmug\\_report](https://www.backcountryhunters.org/wildlife_management_areas_-_gmug_report). The amount of pressure on our federal lands due to the exploding human population and popularity of outdoor recreation in CO has to be addressed. We need to set aside large, connected tracts of land for wildlife to live and people to recreate quietly or the wildlife will dwindle away and we will never get them back. Besides adding the BHA recommended WMAs, I would like to see the final plan include language that requires closure of existing roads and trails in order to achieve densities of 1 mile per section (1 square mile) or less, which is the maximum density that allows for sustained wildlife populations, in the WMAs and Roadless Areas. Beyond trail/road density reductions, the final plan should include tools like seasonal closures, reduced/modified grazing permits, and habitat restoration/improvements that actually benefit wildlife. Just designating an area for wildlife isn't enough. Those lands have to have forage that is beneficial to the wildlife that lives there - just because cattle can graze there, doesn't mean it's good for grouse, deer, elk, bighorns, etc. Lastly, the plan needs to address the looming destruction of bighorn sheep due to incidental contact between domestic and wild sheep. It will be infinitely harder to restore bighorn herds after they are decimated than it is to protect them now by shifting grazing allotments (timing and/or spacing).

During my archery hunt in the Norwood area I saw hunters, bikers, hikers, wildlife, and herds of cattle on USFS lands. Obviously it is a land of multiple uses. The thought that struck me was that we can raise cattle in lots of places, but most of those places don't have elk or mule deer. If we don't set aside areas for the elk and deer, we won't have them for much longer either.