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Comments: Hello, we would like to recommend that the Manti-LaSal National Forest be managed in a way that optimizes protection of biological and ecological attributes and processes. Having hiked and backpacked many parts of the Forest, we have grown fond of the various ecological areas of the Forest. For instance, the Ponderosa forests of the Adobe Mesa and the upper reaches of Arch Canyon. In addition, the much overlooked and minimally appreciated Gambel's oak and Juniper/Pinon pine areas.

We have taken a great interest in this particular National Forest because it encompasses one of our most loved regions. We love the juniper forests of the lower elevations all the way to the alpine slopes. Such a great contrast!! A particular hike we did was from Castle Valley lowlands to the top of Mineral Peak in the LaSals and back. So many different distinguishable environments and a joy to experience as they changed as we hiked. And of course, the surrounding views.

We have reviewed a Conservation Alternative for the Manti-LaSal National Forest and find it a very thoughtful and viable proposal. We urge the Forest Service to include it as a recommended alternative in the Draft Forest Plan. It contains informative data, maps and compelling reasons for the preservation of additional Wilderness in the Forest.

In addition, we recommend that the Forest Service propose as Wilderness, the Pinhook Valley. This area contains a nice healing expanse of the Gambel's Oak ecosystem as well as a lower elevation in a spectacular setting. We oppose management of this area as a fire management zone to protect the vested few who have multiple residences disguised as out buildings in the community of Castle Valley. Rugged individualism is the name of the game and those who built structures in Castle Valley should have thought of the consequences of building in a fire dependent area. The taxpayer should not pay to protect the investments of the vested few. Protect water, wildlife migration routes and habitat; not adjoining investments.

Further, we recommend that the Forest Service restrict use as well as reduce areas available to off road vehicles. There has been an explosion not only in the amount of vehicles being used on the Forest and surrounding public lands, but an explosion in the size and capacity of the vehicles. The resultant destruction of the landscape is very apparent on this Forest.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment!

Cliff and Pearl