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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for this opportunity to express my opinion of the GMUG plan. This plan obviously is very important to you, and to those of us who have benefited so richly from the air, water, land and wildlife that makes up the GMUG. Working together, I hope we can come to the best alternative for our North Fork Valley and environs.

I am a five year citizen of Paonia, and have participated in many hikes and restoration projects sponsored by the Western Slope Conservation Center. There are no words to describe my joy in experiencing our natural world here, and thank you for your part in protecting our resources. However, I wish that we ALL could do more than all the Alternatives A,B,C,and D which have been presented to the public. That said, I would ask that you revisit and reconsider the protections and innovations suggested in our North Fork Alternative, as submitted to the Forest Service previously. The Town of Paonia submitted a letter of support for the NFA as well. I feel that these requests are the bare minimum we should expect to protect our resources, mainly through the designation of much more Wilderness.

My primary passion is for the honor of our Indigenous Peoples residency of this area -- The Nuu-agma-tuvu-pu (Ute). In discussing my concerns with your subject matter expert for archeology, Leticia Neal, she assured me that it is an important priority to keep the artifacts, and sacred spaces of the Utes under protection. And when asked which alternative would be best for the preservation of the Ute's archeological remains, she suggested that of the four alternatives, Alternative D would be the most protective option, because the greatest Wilderness designation will assure the least disturbance by humans.

Thank you again for considering my plea for the Indigenous Peoples. Here is the Acknowledgement Statement that I use when enjoying the land that provides me with all the things I need to live an abundant life:

"We gather for this meeting acknowledging the Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation, on whose ancient and sacred land we live, work and play.

We pay our respects to the Ute Elders of the past, present and future and recognize their first rights to this land from time immemorial."

I hope you agree that Alternative D will do the most to respect all that has been taken from the Ute Peoples.