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Comments: Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the GMUG draft plan. I live at Trout Lake and am on the Trout Lake Land Company board of directors. I am going to start with my local requests and then I will address GMUG-wide requests and suggestions. Our land is surrounded by Forest Service land, so this plan and resulting actions by the Forest Service will have a direct impact on my/our community and way of life. Our view and backyard are the north slopes of Sheep Mountain and the west slopes of Vermilion, Pilot Knob, Golden Horn and Yellow mountains. The forests around Trout Lake are beautiful and thriving and are healthier than any other forests in the region, if not the state. I was appalled to see these forests included in the suitable timber maps and strongly request, no demand, that these forests be left off those maps and not be logged nor thinned in the name of wildfire mitigation--please leave the forests from Ophir turn-off to the boundary with San Juan Forest at Lizard Head Pass alone--actually I think the Forest Service needs to fund research of these forests to learn about forest health and how to maintain it. Please also stop motorized traffic on the Galloping Goose from Lizard Head Pass to North Trout Lake Road--feet, bikes and skis only! Also, it would be great to ban open fires in any camping on the Galloping Goose and Hope Lake Road as this would be seriously effective wildfire prevention!!

Now for overall comments:

Fire and Fuel Management:

The section of the plan on fire and fuels management is based on a number of flawed theories--1) not all forests in the GMUG regularly burn--many, especially in the alpine zone, have not burned in centuries and this is not due to fire suppression but rather the type of forest so prescribed burns are not indicated in much of GMUG forests; 2) not all forests are "overstocked" (if this does not show the thinking that forests are warehouses I don't know what does! They are not!) due to fire suppression and, therefore, "thinning" forests to "mitigate" for wildfire is a flawed idea and not supported by science but rather quite the opposite has been shown to be true--protected (aka not logged or thinned) forests do better--please see this research paper:

<https://esajournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/ecs2.1492>.

Really it is just plain common sense that if you open the canopy of a forest in a high desert ecosystem, which all of GMUG is, you are going to dry out the forest which is going to make the forest more likely to burn and to do so hot, fast and furious! If you are not clear on this fact just go to the edge of a forest on a hot sunny day and stand in the sun for a bit until you are good and hot and then step into the forest and notice the drop in temperature and the rise in humidity...it's a no brainer. Forests and the trees that make them up know what they are doing and do better if we let them do their thing with minimal impact from humans. To that end I request that the GMUG plan not include an across the board fuels management plan, but rather change objective FW-OBJ-FFM-02 to say that each forest setting will be evaluated with careful research, not linked to the logging industry, and decisions will be made based on the type of forest and with the top priority being overall forest health even in forest-urban interface areas. Please also delete the listed acres for treatments--110,000 in first decade and 150,000 acres in second decade--as these numbers have not been thoroughly assessed and will likely decrease with time and new information, ie, the research referenced above.

Lastly, there is no evidence that the Firewise program the Forest Service has embraced has worked--quite the opposite--I interviewed an eye witness to a test burn and the plot that had followed the Firewise prescription ripped, burning much faster and hotter than the plot that had been left alone. Please learn this lesson before it is too late!

Logging:

The numbers of acres identified as suitable timber production in the various options are all too high!! Please decrease these numbers drastically with the vast majority of forests designated NOT suitable.

The number of acres identified as suitable timber flies directly in the face of the proposed protections for wildlife habitat, riparian areas, and watersheds as logging drastically negatively impacts all of these. Please stick to the commendable parts of the plan protecting the forests and all the beings who depend upon it by undoing this

contradiction by greatly increasing the amount of acres designated as wilderness, roadless, protected and greatly decreasing the number of acres for the timber industry. We need to keep as many live trees alive as possible as they are carbon sequesters and we need them to keep doing that! Instead of cutting down trees, please plant more!

#### Recreation:

In August 2021 the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change issued a code-red warning for human-driven global heating. We are very close to the point of no return and need to STOP burning fossil fuels NOW!! The Forest Service as a federal agency has a duty to make these needed changes and as employees of the Forest Service you have the direct ability to be part of these crucially important changes!! With this in mind, please make these changes to the recreation sections of the GMUG plan:

- no motorized recreation--feet, bikes, horses and skis only!
- require ski resorts on Forest Service lands to go fully, truly green--renewable energy sources only!! There is lots of wind and sunlight on those mountains and the resorts can catch it to run lifts, electric snowcats, snowmobiles, etc.
- run shuttles (electric from renewable sources) from cities and towns to popular trailheads as the only way to access them--no traffic!!
- put a permanent open fire ban in place for all GMUG lands--no one really needs a campfire, which adds to the carbon problem, and campfires are the number one cause of forest fires so this ban would be actual, effective fire prevention!

Thank you again for the opportunity to be part of the GMUG planning process and for all you do to keep our forests intact and thriving! Be brave and do the right thing for the trees, animals, plants, fungi we are blessed to share this planet with and who do not get to make their comments heard in this way. Our choices affect them all.