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First name: Lynn

Last name: Cudlip

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am generally in support of Alternative D, which incorporates the work of the GPLI with one particular exception. West of Gunnison, north of Hwy 50, forks of Beaver Creek flow south through the West Elk Wilderness and into currently non-designated wilderness on National Forest Lands. There is a trail that is accessed from Colorado Parks and Wildlife land that heads north to join the April Gulch, Beaver Creek and Little Mill Creek trails. This trail, though not marked on the maps has been in the past an incredible horseback and hiking trail. Currently downed timber on the trail makes travel difficult, though individuals have tried to keep it open. My concern is that a future wilderness designation in this area would preclude clearing of the trail and its continued use. I appreciate the proposed wilderness designation for this general area, but fear that use and maintenance of the trail would be precluded with such a designation.

While I am generally in support of Alternative D, I do think that timber management associated with Alternative B allows for latitude in managing our national forests in light of climate change. Having listened to presentations and discussions by fire ecology professionals and forest scientists, I understand that it is very important to identify sufficient suitable production areas, with enough harvested timber and fuel treatment goals to deal with a warming and drying climate. I mention this with respect to the noted increase of extreme fire events in the west, to which our forests are not, by any means, resistant.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.