

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/26/2021 7:59:58 PM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am an active sportsman who grew up hunting and fishing on the western slope all over the GMUG and surrounding public lands. I am also a member and Regional Director for Backcountry Hunters and Anglers (BHA) and a member of the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP).

The GMUG has been my playground and way of life since I was very young and is a destination for so many who hunt and fish and plays a vital role for our local economy. The economic benefits of hunting and fishing are estimated to be over \$110 million annually and almost 2000 jobs.

The GMUG planning area accounts for approx. a fifth of all mule deer and elk populations in the state of CO. As hunters and anglers we are concerned about the long-term capability of terrestrial and aquatic habitats on the GMUG to sustain our mule deer, elk, and bighorn sheep herds, and well as our native and sport fish populations.

Items that I/we support in the Draft Forest Plan:

Designation of Wildlife Management Areas with focused management. CO BHA/ TRCP strongly support the WMAs identified by the USFS in "Alternative B" and the plan components proposed for their management. These WMAs in Alternative B compromise nearly 25% of the GMUG and are pivotal to the mapped big game seasons habits and corridors mapped by Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW). Providing special management for these areas that limits the density of both motorized and non-motorized routes is critical for maintaining the habitat connectivity necessary for the unrestricted big game migratory movements between mapped seasonal habitats across the landscape.

Plan components we support include:

- A standard limiting the density of permanent motorized and non-motorized routes on WMAs to 1 linear mile per square mile (Standard MA-STND-WILDF-02)
- Objectives that require improving habitat connectivity through vegetation management and eliminating redundant routes to reduce route densities (MA-OBJ-WLDF-03 and FW-OBJ-SPEC-03).
- Desired Conditions that recognize the need to maintain large blocks of security habitat and undisturbed migration and movement corridors for big game (MA-DC-WLDF-01 and FW-DC-SPEC-12)

Areas for improvement in the Draft Plan

- Connectivity - More focus on habitat and landscape connectivity with respect to limiting route densities.
- Big Game Population Objectives- Work closely with CPW to achieve population objectives and sustainable harvest that meet or exceed average big game success rates across Colorado.
- Bighorn Sheep- Bighorn sheep need to be identified and managed as a Species of Conservation Concern on the GMUG.
- Colorado Roadless Areas- The USFS should incorporate specific plan components consistent with Colorado Roadless Rule. that protects the roadless values of these lands by setting limits on new trail development in these areas. Not doing so now will only preclude the opportunity for us and the next generations to maintain their roadless character in the future.

Thank You