

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/26/2021 11:15:48 PM

First name: Nancy

Last name: Darkis

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for this opportunity to submit feedback on the Draft Revised Plan of the Grand Mesa Uncompahgre Gunnison National Forest.

I am a 31 year resident of the area at large, the last 20 years residing in the Ophir Valley and raising two children here. I am writing in support of the comments and recommendations submitted by the Town of Ophir and Sheep Mountain Alliance.

This forest plan revision is a pivotal moment to shape the future and long-term health of not only our forests, but also our state, and our carbon footprint on the earth.

I do NOT support the Draft Revised Plan Preferred Alternative B as presented.

I implore the policy makers of the future of the GMUG to choose Alternative D which affords the greatest protection to wildlife values. All other choices go nowhere near far enough to ensure adequate protection of our forests. Even as the preferred choice it still falls short in many regards and already affords many compromises to the long term health of the forest for other interests.

It is imperative to see the Winter ROS of the east side of the Ophir valley changed to Semi-Primitive Non-motorized. Motorized over snow travel disrupts wildlife in the east end of the Ophir valley. Motorized travel negatively impacts the non-motorized recreational enjoyment of these lands, creates noise, additional avalanche hazard, and poses additional hazards to other non-motorized users.

The substantial increase of suitable timber proposed in all alternatives is unacceptable. Given the nature of the steep slopes found in the Ophir valley specifically, it is almost a confounding proposition?! The GMUG National Forest is invaluable for conserving biological diversity, and it is paramount to sequestering carbon to help counteract climate change. I hope that policy makers will take a longer, larger view of this bigger picture and not fall prey to short-sighted small goals. Lets not miss the forest for the trees, as they say. Please do not consider the GMUG as merely a resource for increased timber extraction.

Please include the Wilderness Area recommendations in Alternative D in any final plan.

The concept of Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) are vital to a new forest plan. Please keep and strengthen these. As so many other areas are being impacted/destroyed, the importance of the GMUG becomes even greater.

I am also in support of the 246,000 acres of Special Management Areas (SMAs) in Alternative D.

Thank you again for the opportunity to be part of the GMUG planning process.