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Comments: I have lived in Montrose County for 34+ years. I enjoy hiking, birdwatching and backpacking in the GMUG. I am most interested in quiet, non mechanized recreation. This allows me to see birds and other wildlife, identify and appreciate wildflowers, recharge my mental health, and enjoy the outdoors with small groups of family and friends. I have a BS in Ecology and MS in Environmental Health so I have some background in the role of National Forests, and all public lands in addressing climate change.

I appreciate that the Forest Plan contains some guidance about forests being resilient the face of climate change. However, the US Forest Service and the GMUG need to be leaders in defining and managing forests in tackling climate change. President Biden at the Climate Change COP26 said the following: "Preserving forests and other ecosystems can and should play an important role in meeting our ambitious climate goals as part of the net-zero emissions strategy we all have. The United States is going to lead by our example at home and support other forested nations and developing countries in setting and achieving ambitious action to conserve and restore these carbon sinks."

I did not see the publication "Considering Forest and Grassland Carbon in Land Management" referenced in the Forest Plan or DEIS. This Forest Service publication makes the case that Forests, such as the GMUG, should be addressing the carbon sink ability of forests. As the publication states, "Recognize carbon sequestration as one of many ecosystem services (One of Many Services). Carbon sequestration is one of many ecosystem services provided by forests and grasslands. Strategies for including carbon in forest and grassland management must consider the suite of resources and outcomes desired from management actions. A balanced and comprehensive program of sustainable management will consider many ecosystem services, including carbon sequestered in biomass, soils, and wood products." The Final GMUG Forest Plan should include a discussion of carbon sequestration as an ecosystem service. Janowiak, M.; Connelly, W.J.;Dante-Wood, K.; Domke, G.M.; Giardina, C.; Kayler, Z.; Marcinkowski, K.; Ontl, T.; Rodriguez-Franco, C.; Swanston, C.; Woodall, C.W.; Buford, M. 2017. Considering Forest and Grassland Carbon in Land Management. Gen. Tech. Rep. WO-95. Washington, D.C.: United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 68 p.

<https://doi.org/10.2737/WO-GTR-95>)

I realize that almost daily there are always publications and websites that come out with climate change information. I urge the GMUG to look at the following two newer resources as they develop stronger climate change sections of the Forest Plan. Conservation Science Partners. 2021. Ecological value of lands in the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests. Final Report. Truckee, CA. https://www.csp-inc.org/public/CSP_GMUG_EcoValue_PressRelease_20211026.pdf and The Climate Atlas at <https://www.theclimateatlas.org/>