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First name: Jovielle

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear State Director Doug Vilsack, I grew up in Crested Butte under Red Lady mountain as we called her, aka Mt. Emmons. Tourists visit, and people live in this area, because of their love of pristine nature at the end of the road. Every year growing up the people of the Crested Butte and a Gunnison would gather to do what they could to protect the prisoner wilderness of Red Lady and the surrounding area from miners and other threats. This is the next chapter in an ongoing threat to destroy The Thompson Divide which is an important wildlife migration corridor connecting the wildlands near Grand Junction to the Rockies in the Elk Mountains. Many people in this valley, including Upper Gunnison River watershed, rely on well water which would be compromised by mining and fracking for fossil fuel. There is an important environmental center in Gothic, Co called Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory which studies the migration of animals and has collected and provided crucial data to climate scientists who have been able to retroactively look back at data to understand the effects of climate change. Please do whatever you can to protect this area. Please make steps as a team, the Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service to adopt a 20-year mineral withdrawal to ban mining and drilling in the Thompson Divide and the lands surrounding Mt. Emmons, known as Red Lady. Also, the area to be withdrawn surrounding Red Lady should be expanded to ensure that the Upper Gunnison River watershed isn't compromised by hardrock mining. I strongly support protecting this special ecosystem with a mineral withdrawal that removes these lands from all forms of entry, appropriation and disposal under the public land laws; location, entry and patent under the mining laws; and operation of the mineral leasing, mineral materials, and geothermal leasing laws. Sincerely, Jovielle Gers