

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/23/2023 6:00:00 AM

First name: Mayor

Last name: Torre

Organization: City of Aspen

Title: Mayor

Comments: June 23, 2023RE: Thompson Divide Withdrawal #63679Elysia Retzlaff, R2 - Rocky Mountain Region All Units Scott Fitzwilliams, White River Forest Supervisor Chad Stewart, GMUG Forest Supervisor 1617 Cole Boulevard Building 17 Lakewood, CO 80401-3305Dear U.S. Forest Service,The Thompson Divide is a largely intact landscape and is highly prized by hunters and anglers, ranchers and recreationalists of all kinds. It provides key grazing allotments, high-value wildlife habitat, and clean water that supplies municipal, domestic, and agricultural users. The area contains diverse, abundant native species and natural communities, as well as extensive, intact, and interconnected habitats. Existing uses in the Thompson Divide support hundreds of jobs and tens of millions in annual economic activity and bolster our towns' recreation-based economies. The Divide embodies the rural and wild character of western Colorado and encompasses more than a dozen inventoried roadless areas. It is well-suited to its current uses, but is threatened with potential oil and gas development and a lack of permanent protection. For many years, the communities surrounding the Thompson Divide have joined together to advocate for the protection of the Divide from the threat of new fossil fuel development - a use that is not compatible with the livelihoods of those that rely on this landscape today. "Unified for Thompson Divide" is a rallying cry that has brought our region's diverse communities together and captivated imaginations nationwide. We the undersigned thank the Forest Service and the BLM for initiating the process to withdraw the Thompson Divide area from new oil and gas leases. We support the proposed 20-year Thompson Divide Administrative Withdrawal and encourage the agencies to work expediently to finalize the withdrawal and ensure it remains a priority.Sincerely,Mayor Torre, City of AspenMayor Bill Kane, Town of Basalt, Colorado, ColoradoMayor Pro Tem David Knight, Town of Basalt, ColoradoCouncil Member Elyse Hottel, Town of Basalt, ColoradoCouncil Member Angela Anderson, Town of Basalt, ColoradoCouncil Member Glenn Drummond, Town of Basalt, ColoradoCouncil Member Dieter Schindler, Town of Basalt, ColoradoCouncil Member Ryan Slack, Town of Basalt, Colorado