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Comments: Livestock grazing must be phased out across the High Uintas Wilderness, with immediate effect.

10,000 sheep currently overrun the High Uintas Wilderness. There is nothing natural about their presence. The skewed effect this has on native Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, native predator behavior, and those visitors seeking true wilderness experience is immense.

The recently reintroduced Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep are at risk from diseases carried by their domestic cousins in a limited space, due to the sheer amount of livestock dominating the region. This comparatively tiny population of bighorns will have to compete for resources that should never have been allocated to livestock within a designated wilderness.

Until all domestic livestock is removed from the High Uintas Wilderness, bighorn reintroduction will fail.

This amount of constantly grazing animals has severely impacted the area; compacting and eroding the soil, and preventing trees and shrubs; whose roots help stabilize the soil; from growing. This has hastened the subsequent flow of water, damaged the water table, and the fertility of the land at all elevations.

Whereas bighorns will naturally expand their population, domestic sheep are deliberately placed in the environment by several stakeholders, overwhelming the ecosystem. Waste from these animals washes straight down the bare and compacted soil, contaminating lakes and rivers.

Excessive excrement and algal blooms are not welcoming for visitors who wish to experience crystal clear waters, or for the species reliant on pristine conditions for their survival.

Keystone predators such as bears, mountain lions, and coyotes; and the benefits they naturally bring to the landscape; are also being curtailed. They are inevitably being killed for visiting the buffet, rather than growing and shrinking naturally in reaction to the population size of native prey.

The statistics for predator persecution in the region is likely to be high in order to protect livestock; although conveniently not disclosed by the SDEIS. This will undoubtedly impact the recovery of native wildlife such as mountain lions, wolves and grizzly bears.

Once again, the unnatural deaths of charismatic, ecosystem defining species in order to protect non-native species, comes at a huge cost to those seeking genuine wilderness.

Please protect the native predators and prey, fauna, water, and visitor experiences that are essential to a functioning designated wilderness. No more grazing in the High Uintas Wilderness.