

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 12/12/2023 5:48:26 PM

First name: Laura

Last name: Yale

Organization:

Title:

Comments: To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Laura and I've lived in the upper Gunnison Valley for 15 years. This is a most special and unique place where we can set a precedent to prioritize wildlife and water over extractive industry, which is vital now more than ever.

I support the proposed action (Alternative A) because it removes over 224,000 acres from potential oil and gas and hardrock mineral development for 20 years, protecting the natural resources and economy of the Thompson Divide and Gunnison basin

The withdrawal would prevent mining in an area that hosts 84 occupied river miles of Colorado River cutthroat habitat, 63.2 miles of stream that have been designated as Outstanding Waters, primary habitat for the federally threatened Canada lynx, and critical migration areas and winter concentration areas for deer and elk

The economic analysis shows that tourism and agriculture provide far more jobs in the impacted counties than mining; grazing, hunting and fishing, and other recreation specific to the Thompson Divide amounts to \$30 million dollars annually

Approximately 14,584 acres of Colorado Roadless Areas in the GMUG have potential for future oil and gas exploration and development because these areas are currently available for leasing and do not have a no surface occupancy stipulation. The proposed 20 year withdrawal would help keep roads out of these areas by foreclosing oil and gas development in those areas.

We need intact wildlife habitat and watersheds, and we can't make more of it. But we can make decisions to protect it, which is why this withdrawal is so important, and why I whole-heartedly support it.

Thanks for your time and consideration.

Best,

Laura