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Comments: As a 30 year resident of the Gunnison Valley/Crested Butte area and lifetime resident of Colorado, 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 draft EA demonstrates big benefits for water quality and wildlife and documents broad community support for the withdrawal. Hardrock mining and coal bed methane gas removal create lasting damage to the landscape and water and displace wildlife on our public lands.

Growing up near Durango I have seen the lasting impacts of gas wells, roads, and equipment on public lands first hand and it isn't a pretty sight. Drilling on private property is more controlled, does not impact public property negatively, is much more dispersed and benefits landowners so they can keep open space/ farming lands in tact. Drilling on public lands doesn't have any positive benefits for the public.

This is an exciting moment in our push to keep Red Lady forever mine-free. Critically, the withdrawal area includes lands surrounding Red Lady and will protect this special area from new mining claims while our community works towards permanent protections through the passage of the CORE Act.

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.