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First name: Marsha

Last name: Soriano

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear District Ranger Woodbridge,

My name is Marsha Soriano. I have lived in Routt County for 8 years and have spent my entire life recreating and enjoying the richness and beauty of our National Parks, Monuments, Forests and BLM lands, including in the Yampa Valley. I'm very concerned with the implications of this proposal, and I stand in strong opposition to it. At a time when our watershed is already under threat from a warming climate, opening this area up to drilling and development would be devastating.

Routt National Forest is one of my favorite places in the world. Its beauty is truly unrivaled, and I have spent countless hours in every corner of it, feeling like the luckiest person alive to be able to experience its grandeur. So many others who live in the area feel similarly: this is a sanctuary, this is a chance for people to connect with our land, and this is what makes Northwest Colorado so unique and beautiful. Opening this area up to potential development projects is waging violence and destruction on peaceful land.

Furthermore, the headwaters of the Yampa River provide critical wildlife habitat, recreation opportunities, municipal water and agriculture support, and foster an essential part of the Colorado River system. We should be making decisions in the interest of protecting this area, not destroying it.

The parcels of land under consideration are invaluable both culturally and environmentally. As Coloradans, we want to protect and nourish the land, not open it up to extractive processes. Per Colorado College's 2026 Conservation in the West Poll, 78% of respondents preferred that our leaders emphasize protecting our habitat, water, air, and recreation instead of making land available for mining and drilling.

I urge you to reconsider this proposal and to do the right thing.