



August 25, 2019

Dear Governor Polis,

I write as the volunteer leader of the Northern San Juan chapter of the national organization Great Old Broads for Wilderness whose mission is to preserve and protect wilderness and wild lands through education, stewardship and advocacy. Our regional supporters of over 400 individuals and businesses thank you for signing SB-181 and for crafting the recent executive order to protect wildlife corridors and big game winter range. Extractive development on public lands and wildlife conservation are two of our organization priorities and of great concern to our members.

We write today to urge you to use the power vested in you as Governor of Colorado during the 60-day Governor's consistency review process to intervene regarding the final EIS of the BLM Uncompahgre Field Office Resource Management Plan (UFO RMP.) In many ways, the proposed Alternative E does not resemble any of the 4 alternatives put forth by the BLM in the preliminary draft EIS nor is it consistent with the preferred alternative selected during the NEPA planning process. Our members engaged in the BLM UFO RMP process by hiking landscapes, analyzing designations and map boundaries, meeting with BLM staff, and commenting on the draft EIS. Given how drastically different the proposed Alternative E is from the alternatives outlined in the draft EIS, this proposed final EIS has not undergone any public review required by the planning rule.

Among many concerns, the most egregious in the final EIS are outlined below:

- The elimination or extreme reduction in acreage of Lands With Wilderness Characteristics (LWC,) Area of Critical Environmental Concerns (ACEC) and Ecological Emphasis Areas (EEA.)
- The failure to protect critical Winter Range and Migration Corridors for big game species.
- The omission of adequate protection for Gunnison Sage Grouse – a species listed as threatened on the Endangered Species Act.
- The opening of 95% of the UFO landscape to oil and gas leasing – particularly of concern is the North Fork Valley whose agricultural lands are critical to food production in the region
- The lack of consideration of a no-leasing alternative for the North Fork Valley
- The negative impacts to watersheds, air quality and carbon emissions
- The increase in authorization of motorized use across the UFO.

- The disregard for FLPMA 103(c) citation “BLM multiple use mandate does not require all uses be allowed on all lands” as evidenced by the allowance of oil and gas development on nearly the entire UFO, while designating almost no BLM acreage to LWC, ACEC, EEA, wildlife habitat protection, or non motorized recreation.

Visitors and residents alike rely on these BLM lands for their natural values, ecological services, agricultural production, and recreation opportunities. Our public lands are critical to the economic prosperity of our region. Governor Polis, we ask you to do everything within your authority to stop this final EIS/RMP from being adopted and implemented. Thank you for your consideration of our comments. We are counting on you!

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