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Dear U.S. Forest Service,

I am writing to urge your organization to oppose the Arch Coal mining proposal in southwest Colorado.

When burned, coal from the West Elk Mine (Arch Coal's mine) is estimated to produce 2.8 tons of carbon dioxide emissions per 1 ton of coal. Thus, if 347 million tons of coal is mined, as estimated by the Colorado Roadless Rule, it would result in an additional 972 million tons of carbon dioxide pollution, only contributing to climate instability. Furthermore, the methane vented from the North Fork mines is 56 times more potent than carbon dioxide as a greenhouse gas over a 20-year period.

This is catastrophic pollution we are potentially facing if the Arch Coal project goes forward.

In addition to climate change impacts, Arch Coal's mining proposal is in a roadless area. The Colorado Roadless Rule is key to conserving large areas of land for future generations, as it applies to 4.2 million acres of National Forest roadless areas in Colorado. The area under consideration is one of the last intact wildlife habitats in the lower elevations of the North Fork, and is in the headwaters of the Colorado River. A wide range of wildlife will be threatened by the carve-out including black bear, Canada lynx, beaver, elk, mule deer and Colorado cutthroat trout. Furthermore, adverse impacts on wildlife will in turn hurt local economies.

There are an almost endless number of reasons to oppose this project. The above are some of the most important. Please keep Colorado beautiful!

Respectfully,

E. Borg