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First name: Jerry

Last name: Unruh

Organization:

Title:

Official Representative/Member Indicator:

Address1: 225 Earthsong Way

Address2:

City: Manitou Springs

State:

Province/Region: CO

Zip/Postal Code: 80829

Country: United States

Email: jerryunruh42@msn.com

Phone: 7196853084

Comments:

When it appeared that the Roadless Rule would be overturned, the states were asked to produce their own rule and, unlike most states, Colorado complied. As it turned out, the Roadless Rule was not overturned but Colorado was stuck with its own - the Colorado Roadless Rule. The most egregious part of that rule was the establishment of the the North Fork Coal Mining Area. This exemption allowed temporary road construction for coal exploration. Of course in semi-arid Colorado, road building simply is not temporary. This exemption was overturned by the courts but now the USFS wants to reinstate it. This absolutely not be allowed. Had Colorado not made its own rule, there would be no such exemption.

Coal is the dirtiest fossil fuel and produces the most carbon dioxide. With climate change being the most serious problem the whole world faces, it is ludicrous to mine more coal. What we must do is reduce the use of fossil fuels as rapidly as possible while meeting our energy needs with renewables and efficiency/conservation. I recognize that small communities dependent on coal mining will struggle without the ability to mine coal. However, the seriousness of climate change is vastly worse than the difficulties these communities will face. While we should help these communities adapt, we cannot allow more coal mining.

It should also be clear by now that climate change is not some nebulous problem in the future - it is happening now and is accelerating. We have already built considerable climate change into the earth's climate system and it will take serious efforts to dramatically reduce our carbon footprint. A perhaps small but important step is to NOT reinstate the North Fork Coal Mining Area. I urge you to do the right thing for and not reinstate this horrid rule.