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Comments:

It is clear that this issue is a struggle among three different parties:

- 1) the State of Colorado, whose interest is in the state economy and providing jobs for its citizens;
- 2) one or more energy corporations, whose interest is in exploiting coal deposits for private profit; and
- 3) a consortium of environmental organizations whose interest is in preserving as much wild and undeveloped public land as possible for current and future generations

The interests of party #1 are rooted in promoting a course of action that benefits the people of the state of Colorado, the interests of party #2 are rooted in promoting a course of action which financially benefits the executives, employees, and stockholders of the corporations involved, and the interests of party #3 are rooted in promoting a course of action that benefits the entire US population and its descendants.

Since the motivation of two of these three parties is focused on the public good by benefitting the largest number of citizens, rather than private profit for a comparatively small group of individuals, I would like to propose a course of action that could be the best compromise that would suit these two parties.

I do not favor the reinstatement of the exception to the Colorado Roadless Rule for the purpose of the exploitation of coal resources for these reasons

Coal is recognized as the most polluting and dirtiest large scale energy resource we have, and mining of coal is nearly impossible without leaving permanent scars on the land. I live in the mountains west of Boulder, Colorado and the scars left by miners of gold and tungsten of 100 plus years ago are still very apparent on the land. Admittedly this mining was much less regulated than modern coal mining, but it was also on a much smaller scale.

If the exception to the Colorado Roadless Rule were to grant access to the land for the development of cleaner renewable energy (i.e. wind or solar power sources), instead of coal, this would be a better fit for both the state's priority of economic growth, and the priorities of environmental organizations. Wind or solar power generation, while still entailing land development, is much less harmful to the surrounding environment and does not pollute the air near power plants nor contribute to CO2 emissions. Wind and solar development will create jobs, just as coal development would, and this alternative would provide employment further into the future than the coal alternative where jobs would only continue until the resource is depleted.

While I would support an exception to the Colorado Roadless Rule that would allow for solar or wind power development, I do not support the reinstatement of the exception to the Colorado Roadless Rule for coal exploration or development.