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Comments:

January 15, 2016

Dear U.S. Forest Service,

I am writing today as both a Colorado resident and a county commissioner from Boulder County to respectfully urge you to reject the proposed coal mining exception to the Colorado Roadless Rule.

Climate change is the urgent challenge of our generation and we are already feeling its impacts here in Colorado through more frequent and intense droughts and wildfire and extreme weather events. It is imperative that we significantly and immediately decrease fossil fuel emissions - both CO<sub>2</sub> and methane - in order to prevent more severe climate impacts.

Allowing expansion of the Arch Coal mine would have significant climate impacts, including:

- \* The addition of 130 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> to the atmosphere over a 10-30 year period, about the same amount as all the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from all human activities in Colorado in a year;
- \* The addition of 170 million tons of coal into the marketplace -- enough to displace 40,000 gigawatt hours of clean, renewable energy;
- \* A ventilation system that would release more methane into the air than is saved by the entire Colorado oil and gas methane rule (which is significant since methane is 86 times more damaging to our climate than carbon dioxide over a 20 year period); and
- \* Up to \$13 billions of dollars in damages to the world's economy and environment.

In addition, this proposal would allow nearly 70 miles of new roads to be constructed into the pristine roadless forests in the North Fork Valley, degrading important wildlife habitat and recreational wilderness areas.

This proposal is counter to the critical goal of cutting U.S. carbon emissions by 26 percent in 10 years as well as the president's goal of reducing emissions from federal agencies by 40 percent in the same time period. President Obama and climate scientists agree that to avoid raising global temperatures more than 2 degrees C above pre-industrial levels, we must keep 80% of the world's known fossil fuel reserves in the ground.

For all of these compelling reasons, please keep the Colorado Roadless Rule intact and reject this coal mining exception.

Sincerely,

Elise Jones  
Boulder County Commissioner  
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