

Date submitted (Mountain Standard Time): 9/8/2020 12:00:00 AM

First name: Sam

Last name: Toulmin

Organization:

Title:

Comments:

Dear Ms. Huey,

I am a Colorado resident, and I am writing to you to submit a comment on Whitney Creek Geotechnical Investigation 58221. I strongly urge you and the Forest Service to not permit this investigation.

The people of Colorado cherish its remaining wild areas. The concept of wild and scenic, protected, publicly accessible land forms a substantial is critical to the identity of this state. Unfortunately, many of our beautiful landscapes and ecosystems historically do not receive the protection they deserve, contrary to public perception. The Holy Cross Wilderness, among the most pristine wilderness areas in this state, is a terrible place to continue that trend. The cities of Colorado Springs and Aurora, as well as all other cities in the Front Range, have ample room to make dramatic strides in water conservation. Mandatory and voluntary conservation campaigns, water pricing mechanisms, further investment in re-use and treatment plants, and restrictions on development may reduce the strain of Colorado's population growth on our depleted water resources. Another reservoir, however, is only a temporary stopgap to unchecked increase in water demand, with lasting damage to ecological and recreational value. While I recognize that this permit is only for a feasibility study, such a study should not be permitted; it places fragile ecological value at risk in the form of extremely rare, carbon-rich Colorado wetlands, to conduct a study on a stopgap solution. While other regions of the United States rethink water management, Colorado's desire for new reservoir capacity demonstrates an archaic approach. We must be better.