



Dana Gardunio  
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Via e-mail: [comments-rocky-mountain-gmug@usda.gov](mailto:comments-rocky-mountain-gmug@usda.gov)

September 9, 2020

Dear Ms. Gardunio,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Scoping Letter (SL) of August 11, 2020 regarding the Baldy Landscape Resiliency and Habitat Improvement Project, and thank you so much for presenting this project to Ridgway Town Council at our August meeting. We appreciate your agency being proactive about wildfire mitigation and habitat improvement and resilience. Unfortunately, Council has not had time to delve deeply into the details of this proposal and discuss them fully, however with limited review we have the following comments.

Given the multiple treatments proposed over several different areas and diverse landscapes coupled with the limited details in the scoping letter, Ridgway Town Council would greatly appreciate the opportunity to comment on the future draft Environmental Assessment (EA) before a final EA is released. We would appreciate your draft EA addressing the following concerns in order for Council to adequately evaluate this proposal. This list is not exhaustive.

1. How this proposal will impact roadless character of the Baldy Roadless Area (RA) and specifically if this project will negatively impact the GMUG Community Conservation Proposal to add the Baldy RA to the Uncompahgre Wilderness. The Town of Ridgway supports this wilderness addition. See attached letter from 2018. We oppose any deleterious effects on the qualities that make the Baldy RA eligible for recommended wilderness in the revised forest plan.
2. We have concerns about the F9 prescribed burn and the portion of F3 in the RA. Specifically, the six-plus miles of fire buffer seem potentially excessive given the roadless character of the area—does safely conducting a the burn require this much disturbance?
3. Though your presentation and the scoping letter outline some general goals, specific desired outcomes for individual treatment areas is lacking



4. Beyond the road improvement identified on the proposal map, what other access routes will be utilized or built to implement the treatments described?
5. How will recreation be impacted before, during, and after treatment?
6. Wildfire is always a concern of our rural mountain community. How will the USFS ensure in these drought conditions that the prescribed burn is controlled and does not impact the adjacent Uncompahgre Wilderness and our nearby community that possesses limited fire fighting resources?

Again, we appreciate the opportunity to share our concerns and would welcome the ability to review a draft EA in the future. We are grateful to the Ouray District and USFS for managing our public lands. As you know our local economy – both tourism and agriculture – depend upon them.

Respectfully,

John I. Clark  
Mayor  
Town of Ridgway