

Colorado's backcountry forests need YOUR help!

11th-hour rulemaking threatens Colorado's national forest roadless areas
August 26, 2008

Today, 4.4 million acres of Colorado's roadless national forests are protected by the landmark Roadless Area Conservation Rule. Tomorrow, this backcountry would be opened to industrial development under a newly released Bush administration plan.

Colorado's roadless areas provide critical habitat for deer, elk, lynx and other wildlife, hold vital watersheds that ensure clean drinking water, and provide tremendous recreation opportunities that bolster Colorado's multi-billion dollar outdoor recreation industry.

But, on its way out the door, the Bush administration is moving forward with plans to remove the current protections now in place for Colorado's roadless backcountry forests. The proposed plan creates a second-tier management scheme for some of the state's most sensitive wildlands, leaving them with less protection than any other state in the lower 48.

Under the Bush administration's plan:

- Colorado's most pristine national forests could be open to a wide array of industrial activity, including new oil and gas drilling, pipeline and power line construction, logging and expanded coal mining, making them less protected than any other national forests in the country.
- New roads could be built to access oil and gas leases that were sold after the 2001 Roadless Rule. These leases – which would provide, at most, about two weeks worth of natural gas for the country – are currently blocked from road building, and new roads could irreparably harm important wildlife habitat, watersheds and recreation areas.

The Bush plan does not reflect – or respect – the intent to protect Colorado's roadless national forests, as expressed by the public, the Governor, and in the State Task Force process.

What YOU Can Do

Attend a Colorado Roadless Forests Open House near you...

Grand Junction - Tuesday, Sept. 9, 2008 at 5 – 8:30 p.m.

Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests and Manti-La Sal National Forest
Two Rivers Convention Center 159 Main Street Grand Junction, CO 81501

Gas too expensive to make the trip to Grand Junction? Pay \$8 and ride a bus [complete with entertainment and refreshments] with other WCC members! If you would like to reserve a spot on the bus, contact Bill Patterson at (970) 249-1978 or roccouraycounty@yahoo.com. Space is limited so please make your reservation now. The bus will make the following stops:

Community Alliance of the Yampa Valley • *Routt County*
Grand Valley Citizens Alliance • *Garfield County*
Ridgway-Ouray Community Council • *Ouray County*
Sheep Mountain Alliance • *San Miguel County*

Uncompahgre Valley Association • *Montrose County*
Western Colorado Action Network (WeCAN) • *Mesa County*
Western Colorado Congress of Mesa County
Western Slope Environmental Resource Council • *Delta County*

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<http://www.wccongress.org>

3:00 - 3:15 PM: Leave from lot behind Ridgway Library
3:45 - 4:00 PM: Stop at downtown City Market parking lot in Montrose
4:30 - 4:45 PM: Stop at City Market parking lot in Delta
5:30 PM: Arrive Grand Junction - Two Rivers Convention Center
7:00 PM: Depart for Delta, Montrose, Ridgway

Glenwood Springs - Wednesday, Sept. 10, 2008 at 5 - 8:30 p.m.

White River National Forest
Hotel Colorado 526 Pine Street Glenwood Springs, CO 81601

Steamboat Springs - Thursday, Sept. 11, 2008 at 5 - 8:30 p.m.

Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests; Thunder Basin National Grassland
Community Center 1605 Lincoln Avenue Steamboat Springs, CO 80477-5088

Submit comments on the Colorado roadless rollback rulemaking

Comments may be sent via e-mail to COcomments@fsroadless.org. Comments also may be submitted via the internet at <http://www.regulations.gov>. Written comments concerning this notice should be addressed to:

Roadless Area Conservation—Colorado
P.O. Box 162909
Sacramento, CA 95816-2909
Fax: 916-456-6724.

For more information on this issue, visit <http://www.roadless.net> or contact Mark Schofield at (970) 256-7650 or mark@wccongress.org.