

Study Group Theme Comments for HDs and Beaver Meadows Columbine Meeting 5/24

Theme Area #: A

Draft Theme Designation: 3

Comment

Good Theme 3 area- people enjoy it for it's natural setting. There is grazing abundant wildlife (which may be impacting vegetation). People like to snowmobile, hunt and fish there.

Consider this area for Theme 1 because there is no current access.

The theme should be changed from 3 to 5 because of the timber resources available.

Theme 3 works with the grazing and recreation use in this area.

Theme Area #: B

Draft Theme Designation: 5

Comment

The reforestation of past clear cuts in this area has been difficult and not very successful. Members at the table expressed concern about timber commodity production in this area—how it looks, how the harvesting is done and how the area returns after ha

Clear cut aspen in this area is good.

Wildlife corridors cut across the ridge in this area.

All of this Theme 5 area has huge recreation potential and will be one of the next "popular" areas.

There is a fair amount of recreation in the area that needs to be considered and managed for along with the other uses of the area.

Consider putting a buffer Theme 3 area between the Theme 1 and Theme 5 areas

Suggest that this area be a Theme 3 in order to de-emphasize timber production in the area and to emphasize more preservation and reclamation of the area, as well as maintaining the recreation use of the area. (Three table members supported this statement)

Manage this area to hold wildlife in so they don't move onto the highway.

Theme 5 is appropriate because of the active management.

Support theme 5 since it's been logged in the past and may be good to log in the future.

This area should be winter-road-closed (no wheeled vehicles) to protect wildlife. Other motorized winter use should be allowed off-road.

Theme Area #: B1

Draft Theme Designation: 5

Comment

Make this area a Theme 1 because it has the same roadless characteristics as the adjoining area.

The theme 3 area discussed above and the eastern strip of the Theme 5 area to the south should be Theme 1 because it is relatively roadless and adjoins the Piedra Wilderness.

Expand Theme 1 into this area because of topography and association with adjacent area (which is Theme 1).

Do not make this area a Theme 1 – manage it as connected to the remainder of the landscape to the east. We have enough Theme 1 areas.

Theme Area #: B2

Draft Theme Designation: 5

Comment

Suggest that the east side of this area be changed to a Theme 1 to be managed more like the adjacent Piedra Area (Theme 1) because it is more wild with less roads than the rest of the area.

Change this to a Theme 1 to be consistent with adjacent theme 1 areas.

Some felt that Theme 1 could restrict current recreational use with includes lots of snowmobiles and bicycles.

Theme Area #: C

Draft Theme Designation: 3

Comment

The viewscape is important—Theme 3 works.

Theme Area #: C1

Draft Theme Designation: 3

Comment

Consider this area for Theme 1 because it's part of the roadless area.

Theme 2 should cover entire fruitland outcrop. No future leasing on the outcrop.

Do not allow any mineral leasing in this area (north of the outcrop).

Fruitland outcrop area is good Theme 3 area. People are concerned about oil and gas development.

Theme Area #: D

Draft Theme Designation: 7

Comment

There's lots of wildlife in the area, it's important winter range and very important low elevation wildlife habitat and movement area—desire to have the current wildlife management & closures kept in place. How do we manage for “urban influences” and stil

Suggest a Theme 3 to emphasize wildlife habitat over other uses of the area.

Keep this a Theme 5 to keep it as wild as possible.

Could be a Theme 5 due to the mix of uses in the area.

Support theme 3 to encourage wildlife habitat management and gas well reclamation (i.e., natural landscape).

Use a Theme 5 rather than a Theme 7 to reduce emphasis of management on residential uses located at the fringe of the USFS. This area is not as urban in character as other Theme 7's on the public lands. There is a weed intrusion problem in this area.

Desire to retain current access for gas development in the area.

Would like to maintain what we have now: habitat, access/uses, & natural landscape.

Would like to see gas wells reclaimed and interim reclamation (not disputing the well pad size, but wanting what is in it reclaimed.)

Theme 7 is appropriate but motorized use should be on designated routes only.

By making this a 7 and managing to increase recreation capacity, we could take pressure off of other natural areas.

Theme 7-urban influence is correct, but the heart of this polygon is not "residential" only the periphery. The area has recreation, mountain biking, oil and gas wells and includes a big archeological area.

Theme Area #: E

Draft Theme Designation: 2

Comment

How do you incorporate valid existing lease rights within a Theme 2? A FS representative responded that you identify and consider the "desired future condition" of the area and mitigate lease development to assist in retaining or achieving the desired fut

The roadless area is steep and would seem to have terrain that would strain gas development and be costly for even prospecting in the area.

Entire area needs to be inventoried for archeological resources

Possibly more important archeological resources than Mesa Verde

If the vision is "roadless" can you prohibit road development? A FS representative answered that to prohibit road development it must be based on compelling resources that would be impacted by road development or impact to resources that are protected by

Concerned about road development and changes in vegetation structure that could potentially increase the speed of run off water in the area and reduce water infiltration ability (i.e., snow melting faster due to reducing the veg coverage). Hastening the s

The HD mountains are special because you don't often find a pristine, rugged low elevation ecosystem with roadless character, critical habitat, north and south orientations providing different ecosystem and lots of different wildlife.

Cultural resources in the area are important especially since they have not been researched and hold many unanswered questions, e.g., why was this area so densely populated and then left?

Change this to a Theme 3 because 2 is too restrictive.

Theme 2 is too restrictive because of the possibility of change in historic uses – 3 would be better.

Ignacio Creek should be should be an RNA (Research Natural Area) because it has un-logged stands of ponderosa pine and it's wild, rough, and rich in archaeology.

HD Mountains are an important watershed for Bayfield, Ignacio and small towns and agricultural uses in the area. Important to maintain and protect water resources and these watersheds for communities, ag use and wildlife.

Protect water rights of ranchers and residents. Concerned about springs drying up since the EIS states that water in the Fruitland formation are tributaries, but there is debate on where and how much. Development of gas could result in a spring drying up

The area needs a complete archaeological survey before choosing a management theme.

There are valid and existing gas lease rights, but do not want those rights to include putting roads in the roadless area; use horizontal drilling.

The HDs should require bonding to cover the full cost of restoration (re-contouring, reseeding) including provisions to cover long term inflation.

Keep the cows on the HDs to control underbrush in what is a dry fire prone area.

Protect and retain the old growth Ponderosa Pine.

Provide parking for recreational users of Armstrong Canyon and Spring Creek.

Protect every spring and seep on the landscape – with global warming, we won't have the same runoff (it will take place earlier) and we will need all the water.

Keep the area as it is: multi-use.

Maintain wildlife corridors.

Theme 2 would be appropriate for this because gas seeps threaten the area.

Support this as a Theme 2 – it is full of special characteristics.

Theme 2 is appropriate – not too restrictive – it wouldn't change historic uses.

Cultural resources, wildlife, water and old-growth forest make Theme 2 appropriate. This is one of the last types of these areas.

Theme 2 is appropriate to maintain stock ponds and allow a mix of uses while maintaining the area's primitive character.

Theme 2 is right because of wildlife and cultural resources – the same as the adjoining Theme 2 area. Continue to allow grazing and forest-thinning.

Theme 2 could work provided there are no new roads in the roadless area. Use horizontal and directional drilling to avoid new roads.

Support Theme 2 because of the flexibility and restrictions that can be stated in a prescription.

Support for Theme 2 for reasons described in the purple handout at the SG meeting.

Themes 2 and 5 are appropriate for these landscapes.

If the parameters on the purple paper (5/24/05 Special Interest Area Working Draft) are followed, Theme 2 is O.K., otherwise Theme 2 could be too restrictive.

Lang Canyon (1st FS road west of Yellow Jacket)—Desire to see motorized use including 4WD restricted in this area.

Motorized routes should be on designated routes only.

The HD's should have a non-motorized mountain biking facility/access point.

Theme Area #: E1

Draft Theme Designation: 2

Comment

Leave roadless area roadless. Use directional drilling, not roads.

Management activities (fire break in this case) can unintentionally introduce undesirable travel routes that can turn into roads.

Road impacts from drilling will not be completely reclaimable.

If this area is roadless, it should be a theme 1.

Re-assess the extent of the roadless area and use this info in defining theme boundaries.

HDs should be Theme 1 in roadless area

Change this to a Theme 1 because it is roadless.

Keep this as pristine as possible. Designate a Theme 1.

Keep the roadless area roadless. Don't let Theme 2 open the door.

Revise Theme 2 to prohibit drilling.

Important to keep the roadless area roadless. It is special because it is low elevation roadless, critical for wildlife habitat and protects the "potential world class" archeological resources.

A Theme 1 wilderness designation will draw too much use (e.g. Chicago Basin)

Theme 2 is more flexible to future intent, Theme 1 to restrictive to accommodate likely uses in the near future.

Theme Area #: F

Draft Theme Designation: 5

Comment

Theme 5 is okay, but if it includes roadless areas, then remove them from the Theme 5.

Managed timber harvest can be a good thing. Support theme 5 to make way for that use.

This 5 area should a least be changed to Theme 3 and possibly Theme 2. The unroaded part should definitely be a Theme 2.

Theme Area #: G

Draft Theme Designation: 2

Comment

Theme 2 is an appropriate application here. Pay special attention to cultural and paleontological resources.

Theme 2 is appropriate because of the archaeological resources.

Theme Area #: Gen

Draft Theme Designation:

Comment

Surface occupancy should be prohibited in the roadless areas of the HDs.

Drilling activities instigate undesirable, and sometimes unanticipated, effects such as introduction of noxious weed via roads.

The soils in the HDs will not support reseeding

Complete reclamation of oil and gas activities in the HDs is not possible.

In the HD's Keep grazing allotments as they are or reduce them