



BLM Upper Colorado River District
Attn: Supplemental EIS, 2518H Road
Grand Junction, CO 81506

Dear Mr. Bruce Krickbaum,

This comment argues how Aspen and the Colorado River Valley are vulnerable to climate issues and how the extraction of fossil fuels from public lands is an immediate threat to our continued way of life. Aspen, as a home for 7,700 residents, and thousands of visitors each year, is experiencing climate change impacts at an alarming frequency. These impacts are present in the form of hotter temperatures, shifting rain and snow patterns, and more precipitation arriving as rain rather than snow. The number of consecutive frost-free days in Aspen has increased by forty-six days since 1940 and by thirty days since 1980, representing the loss of over a month of winter in less than a lifetime. These locally observed changes are happening across the Western region, nationally, and around the globe. In our mountain town, climate change is an existential threat to our natural ecosystems, economy, and way of life.

The Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) process needs to consider the catastrophic impacts that burning fossil fuels for energy use has on the climate and on the regional airshed. To offset the worst impacts of climate change, the BLM needs to acknowledge the role the oil and gas industry has played in global heating and how continued operations are not in the public interest. As the BLM begins the scoping process, we ask the agency to consider the following:

- The BLM must ensure that their analysis of the impacts of greenhouse gas emissions produced in the planning decision area thoroughly considers the environmental consequences of downstream combustion on communities like the City of Aspen, who

rely heavily on a healthy snowpack for our robust ski and snowsports industry, water in our rivers for our outdoor recreation-based economy and agricultural uses, and keeping our air clean and community safe from wildfires, which are increasing in scale and intensity due to climate change.

- The regional airshed and Aspen's air quality are key drivers of local economy. Aspen is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions linked to fossil fuels that emanate from building energy use, transportation, and waste.
- In Aspen and the greater Roaring Fork Valley, the BLM lands contain many popular recreation areas, including several Recreation Management Areas like the Crown SRMA, Red Hill SRMA, and Thompson Creek ERMA. These areas provide opportunities for mountain biking, hiking, climbing, fishing, and camping—recreation experiences that are treasured by local residents and visitors alike, and help sustain our local economy. Oil and gas drilling is damaging to quality recreation experiences, and should be kept away from these RMAs and other popular recreation areas on BLM lands in our region.
- In the Roaring Fork Valley, the BLM lands are home to an abundance of wildlife species and provide critical habitat and winter range for species like mule deer and elk. Oil and gas development can cause harmful impacts to wildlife like habitat loss and fragmentation, and should be kept away from areas that wildlife frequent and rely on.

The SEIS is an opportunity for the BLM to take a hard look at the climate impacts of oil and gas drilling and make decisions to minimize and mitigate those impacts. Aspen and the Colorado River Valley are heavily indebted to the natural capital that our region offers. If the BLM decides to approve oil and gas operations on public lands, then it must be able to demonstrate how those activities do not impede outdoor recreation and the outdoor orientated economy, lower regional air quality, and worsen the global climate change crisis for all.

Thank you,



Mayor Torre