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Submitted via ePlanning: <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2018400/510>

Ashley Phillips, State Office Planner
Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Colorado State Office
2850 Youngfield St.
Lakewood, CO 80215

Re: Colorado Big Game Corridor Resource Management Plan Amendment (DOI-BLM-CO-0000-2022-0003-RMP-EIS)

Dear Ms. Phillips and the Bureau of Land Management Colorado State Office,

The Mountain Pact, a coalition of local elected officials from nearly 100 Western mountain communities including over 50 Colorado communities, urges the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to maintain, conserve, and protect big game corridors, migration corridors, and other important big game habitat areas on Colorado BLM lands from drilling and development.

Many of our western communities are located near BLM lands, where our residents and visitors recreate, camp, view wildlife, and hunt and fish. Yet many BLM lands are at risk. In Colorado, BLM lands make up one-third of the federal public lands in the state, but only 8% of these lands are protected, significantly less than the amount of public lands managed by other agencies.

Millions of acres of these BLM lands in Colorado also constitute high-priority seasonal and migratory habitats for big game animals like elk, mule deer, pronghorn, and bighorn sheep. These animals are important for many reasons and hunting, fishing, and watchable wildlife contribute \$5 billion to Colorado's economy and support 40,000 jobs.

With climate change impacts and more energy development on public lands, suitable habitat for these animals is dwindling and they are forced to migrate and adapt. We urge you to identify and protect additional Lands with Wilderness Characteristics; and to increase and use conservation designations like Backcountry Conservation Areas, Wilderness Study Areas, and Areas of Critical Environmental Concern across the state to protect more important wildlife habitat and migration corridors. Additionally, please limit oil and gas drilling and include closures and limits to development in sensitive wildlife areas. These actions will better protect big game wildlife for the future and wildlife viewing, hunting, and productivity of species on already stressed lands.

Colorado Bureau of Land Management lands are tremendous assets to our communities and wildlife. We urge you, as the largest land manager in the nation, to use more conservation designations as well as to reconsider, reduce, and alter oil and gas development on BLM lands to better prioritize the conservation of important wildlife habitat and migration corridors across the state.

Sincerely,

*Anna Peterson, Executive Director
Durango, Colorado*