

**From:** MaryAnne  
**To:** FS-comments-rocky-mountain-san-juan-columbine  
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I'm sure this is a heated issue in the Four Corners area, as there are many livestock ranches still around. Unfortunately, those ranches are far, far fewer than the recreation users in this area. In the long ago past, the ranchers were a majority, but that is certainly no longer true. Since there are far more recreational users and tourists in our area now, it would seem likely that the government-based land management would recognize this and cater to the majority. Most of the money to our area comes from tourists, and the impact of the sheep grazing and sheep dogs have been negatively felt by local tourist businesses. The products that the few ranchers provide are now provided by ranchers in other, non-mountainous areas of the world. Unfortunately, for the few ranchers left in this area, theirs is a dying business.

I have seen the irreplaceable foliage and water damage at high altitudes from grazing sheep. A beautiful field of wildflowers will be decimated as the sheep graze on by to another field. Plus, their feces in the water makes it unacceptable for other wildlife. Also, the sheep dogs are a worry for any hiker, climber, biker, walker or recreational user in an area with the sheep. Unfortunately, the website put up last year did not work completely, and recreational users still ran into the sheep and guard dogs.

The impact on our high altitude environment by sheep should not be acceptable. If there are low-lying areas for the sheep to graze on, perhaps those should only be considered. We need to preserve our mountain habitat for the majority of the people who use our government's lands. Even charging more for the grazing does not solve the environmental problems.

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