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Subtopic G13: Growth

Thirteen public and agency comments were submitted in relation to the G13: Growth subtopic. From those 13 comments, 10 common concern statements were developed. Themes include:

- The PEIS should consider or set broader growth-based issues and policies that might limit growth and buildout and thereby influence project decisions.
- The project is based on accommodating growth in the Denver metropolitan area at the expense of the mountain communities.
- Highway alternatives will increase traffic capacity, leading to more development, which, in turn, will threaten the character of historic communities.
- Transit alternatives will exacerbate the projected increases in population and employment for mountain communities.
- The PEIS should consider how land use would change if different alternatives are implemented.
- The PEIS should consider capacity limitations and how further growth would affect the environment.
- The PEIS should provide a sustainable solution that supports the level of growth and development desired by Corridor jurisdictions because growth affects infrastructure requirements and resources, community character, and quality of life.
- There are questions regarding the growth projections that were used in the Draft PEIS.
- EPA expressed concern that the Draft PEIS does not address how to mitigate growth impacts and suggested that local governments should be involved in developing plans that avoid or reduce impacts through zoning, land use planning, and so forth.

CCS No.	Community Values Common Concern Statements (CCSs)
Subtopic G13: Growth	
G 13-a	Denver Metropolitan Area The entire project is based on accommodating growth in the Denver metropolitan area, at the expense of the mountain communities. If nothing is done, it might slow population growth and, thereby, help Denver's growth problem.
G 13-b	Unrealistic Projections The growth projections used in the Draft PEIS are unrealistic and are not supported by available infrastructure such as water resources.
G 13-c	Limitations There are limits to how many people Colorado can handle. Consideration should be given to discouraging development in suburbs that rely on the automobile, to slowing down the granting of new well permits, to refusing any additional trans-basin water diversions.
G 13-d	Highway Alternatives Endless highway expansion that brings more people to the Corridor cannot be continued without considering limitations on growth. Highway alternatives will increase traffic capacity, leading to more development—particularly around interchanges; this growth will continue to threaten the character of historic communities due to sprawl development at the edge of historic towns. I-70 expansion will lead to further sprawl.

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G 13-e	<p>Transit Alternatives</p> <p>The Transit alternatives are a concern and must not exacerbate the alarming projected increases in population and employment for Eagle County and surrounding mountain communities.</p>
G 13-f	<p>Decision/Adequacy</p> <p>The project alternatives analysis should consider the full impact of transportation patterns on land use, specifically on how land uses would change if different alternatives were implemented. The PEIS should include an effective and improved modeling analysis to assess the overall development impacts in the Mountain Corridor. The PEIS does not consider or set broader growth-based issues and policies that might limit growth and buildout and thereby influence project decisions. There should be some consideration of capacity limitations and how further growth would affect the environment.</p>
G 13-g	<p>Corridor Planning</p> <p>The PEIS lacks sufficient consideration of planning related to growth and sprawl concerns. The PEIS process should result in a sustainable solution that supports the level of growth and development desired by Corridor jurisdictions because growth can affect infrastructure requirements and resources (roads, schools, law enforcement, emergency services, water supply, water treatment), community character, and quality of life. Corridor jurisdictions need to be able to maintain some level of control over Corridor growth. Tourist capacity (facilities, infrastructure) in Summit County would have to be increased to accommodate more tourists.</p>
G 13-h	<p>Mitigation</p> <p>Although the Draft PEIS document takes the indirect or induced impacts of growth and translates them into impacts (on habitat, wetlands, water quality, water supply, and visual resources), it does not address ways to mitigate those impacts. The EPA believes that one of the purposes of a Tier 1 document is to look at big picture mitigation strategies. The EPA suggests that the mitigation could include providing funding to local governments so that they may produce a plan that avoids or reduces these impacts through zoning, land use planning, open space acquisition, etc.</p>
G 13-i	<p>Sustainability of the Ecosystem</p> <p>It is not clear whether the Draft PEIS addressed the sustainability of the ecosystem, given projected growth in the project area. An increase in population, along with the projected increase in day and nonwork visitors to the area, could cause significant additional stress on the ecosystem, including the National Forests and the environmental infrastructure within local communities.</p> <p>It is not clear whether the impacts of this growth were contemplated in the White River National Forest and Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests comprehensive management plans. The Final PEIS should discuss this issue.</p>