



**Roadless Areas Review Task Force
Grand Junction Public Comment Meeting
Country Inn (Grand Ballroom)
718 Horizon Drive, Grand Junction, Colorado**

**June 22, 2006
5:00 p.m. – 8:45 p.m.**

5:00 pm Welcome and Introductions

5:10 Panel #1: Forest Service (10 minutes, 20 minutes Q&A)

- GMUG National Forest
- Manti La Sal National Forest
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5:50 Panel #2: State and Local Government and Stakeholder Groups (5 minutes, 15 minutes Q&A)

- ?, Montrose County Commissioner
- Reeves Brown, Club 20
- Chris Herman, Colorado Plateau Mountain Bike Trail Assn (COPMOBA)
- Tony Prendergast, Western Slope Environmental Resource Council (Paonia)
- Vince Mathews, US Geological Society

6:30 Panel #3: Stakeholder Groups (5 minutes per speaker, 15 minutes Q&A)

- Kathy Welt, Oxbow Mine
- Kathy Hall, Colorado Oil and Gas Association
- John Ellenberger, big game hunting
- John Martin, Colorado Off Highway Vehicle Coalition
- Bill Grant, Western Colorado Congress
- Nancy Fishing, Intermountain Resource

7:15 Break

7:30 Open Public Comment Period – public interested in speaking will fill out a speaker sign-up form and indicate topics which will be covered to allow the Chair to select a range of perspectives to hear from; (1 minute each)

8:45 Adjourn

Public Meeting Ground Rules

RESPECT

- Refrain from clapping and jeering
- Keep to the time allotted (one minute)
- Use time for new perspective; do not repeat previous points



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June 22, 2006
Country Inn, 718 Horizon
Grand Junction, Colorado**

Meeting Summary

PANEL #1: FOREST SERVICE

Charlie Richmond, Forest Supervisor for the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison (GMUG) National Forests, briefly presented information on the Forests. Mr. Richmond had previously presented information to the Task Force's first public meeting on the GMUG in November 2005. Because information was already provided, this panel was shared between the GMUG and the Manti La Sal Forests. Heather Mussglow presented information on the Manti La Sal Forest.

GMUG – General Information

- One-fourth of Colorado's Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRA) are on the GMUG
- One-third of the GMUG is IRA
- History – in 1997, RARE I & II inventories identified 1.5 million acres of IRA...540,000 acres were identified as wilderness and recreation management areas...leaving over 1 million acres that were addressed in 1983 forest plan...64 percent IRAs were allocated to active management areas
- Plan revision - GMUG has been working for four years to revise the plan...the hope is to release a preliminary draft by the middle of July
- GMUG conducted a new IRA inventory (*submitted to the Task Force in Delta*) for the plan revision – 66 IRA areas, 853,000 acres, met criteria for roadlessness)
- The 853,000 acres was divided into three management theme areas, close to 80 percent will remain in areas managed for roadless characteristics:
 - o Theme 1 - wilderness/wilderness like areas (21 percent of inventory, 221,000 acres)
 - o Theme 3 - maintain roadless characteristics (49 percent, 417,000 acres)
 - o Theme 5 – active management (25 percent, 225,000 acres)
- Intention is to integrate the task force process/the petition process outcomes with the review of the draft forest plan
- Concern – valid existing rights for energy – 228,000 acres in IRAs were made available for oil and gas - 50,000 acres were authorized and 90,000 acres are pending
- 2,000 acres surrounding coal mines were leased for coal in IRAs
- Seven projects have occurred in IRAs since 2001 that involved temporary roads for methane drainage
- Concerned about forest health - the majority of the forest is older stands, therefore more susceptible

- 300,000 acres have been affected by insects infestations
- Looking for management flexibility to deal with insects
- Roadless areas are important for recreation opportunities

Manti La Sal National Forest

- Some of the district is in Colorado, while the rest is in Utah (the office is in Moab)
- Working on Forest Plan revision – gone through several public meetings, expecting to release a draft in July
- One unroaded/undeveloped area on the Forest that lies within Colorado – Roc Creek:
 - o 7,970 acres
 - o Adjacent to a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) wilderness study area
 - o Proposed management includes maintaining existing permits (two), existing opportunities for public access (limited to foot access from Carpenter ridge), maintaining the semi-primitive character, non-motorized activities and very limited management activities, also consistent management across jurisdictional boundaries with BLM.
 - o The area provides both motorized and non-motorized opportunities but there is no public access (no right of way or public easement) through the surrounding areas
 - o Access for wild land fire and grazing would continue
 - o Grazing is incidental

Panel #1: Question & Answers

Question – Manti La Sal – How does oil and gas leasing fit with non-motorized/semi-primitive management?

Answer – The industry is looking to do helicopter exploration.

Question – Manti La Sal – Define “incidental grazing”?

Answer – It is unintended, or trespassing. The two permits in the area are currently not active.

Question – Manti La Sal - The allotments are inactive?

Answer – Yes, there are only one to two ranchers who could make use of the permits and currently they are not.

Question – GMUG – Are there any applications for leasable lands?

Answer – Yes. 250,000 acres were made available and 50,000 acres has been leased. Forest Service will provide additional data on the areas that have been leased. Total acres of no-surface occupancy within the IRAs are 97,000 acres.

Question – GMUG – Can you provide more information on mine expansions and the Canyon Creek area?

Answer – Canyon Creek is available for leasing, of the 1180 acres 460 acres are controlled surface use, and 388 timing limited. There are two possible coal mine

expansion in Sunset and Flat Irons IRAs. In Sunset IRA there are 978 acres available for coal; 350 acres are controlled surface lease and 620 acres are standard lease terms. In Flat Irons IRA there are 8720 acres available, and 530 has no surface occupancy.

Question – GMUG – Are the seven methane drainage access points under existing permits?

Answer – Yes.

Question – GMUG – Which forests have completed travel management plans?

Answer – The Uncompahgre and Grand Mesa has completed their travel planning. The Gunnison has not yet been completed.

PANEL #2: STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

Greg Trainor, City of Grand Junction, Utilities Director (*submitted hard copy testimony*) – The City of Grand Junction is most concerned with the Kannah Creek, Whitewater Creek and the North Fork of Kannah Creek and the effects on the City’s municipal watershed. Kannah Creek is the source of a significant portion of the City’s domestic water supply. The City recommends that Kannah Creek area remain designated as “roadless” with stipulations for road construction and re-construction and exceptions outlined in the 2001 rule Executive Summary.

The City has good, long standing relationships with the Forest Service and Grand Mesa Ranger District in maintaining and upgrading the existing roads as needed in the area. The City and Forest Service have a memorandum of agreement for protection of water quality since 1915. The current economic value of the City’s water supply system is conservatively estimated at \$184 million.

The City is concerned about additional surface activity, particularly coming from oil and gas activities, and the effects on drinking water. Each new surface user may compromise the City’s ability to maintain an environment conducive to collecting pristine drinking water.

Chris Herman, Colorado Plateau Mountain Bike Trail Association (COPMOBA) (*no submittal*) – COPMOBA is a grassroots mountain bike trail advocacy group responsible for the development of the Kokopelli’s, Tebeguache and Paradox trails system in western Colorado/eastern Utah. COPMOBA has 250 members, is an affiliate of the International Mountain Bicycling Association and is interested in the GMUG.

Colorado is one of the top mountain bike venues in the world and that popularity is directly related to the number of narrow trails in the backcountry setting. Roadless areas are the realm of natural landscapes and narrow trails. COPMOBA want to continue to protect these areas and supports the continuation of the 2001 roadless rule.

The 2001 rule offers protection to natural settings, but doesn't deny bike access. Mountain biking contributes significantly to Colorado's economy. Removing roadless area biking opportunities would have a negative impact on the economy.

Tony Prendergast, Western Slope Environmental Resource Council (*submitted a report at the Glenwood Springs meeting*) – Mr. Prendergast spoke on behalf of several conservation groups – Western Colorado Congress, Western Slope Environmental Resource Council, High Country Citizens Alliance, and the Sheep Mountain Alliance. Together these organizations represent over 4000 members.

Mr. Prendergast's family has been in Colorado since the 1860's. They were hard-rock and coal miners, loggers and farmers. He has worked at an educator, hunting guide, outfitter, log home builder and a seasonal wilderness ranger (not currently employed by the Forest Service).

The GMUG covers over three million acres and contains 855,000 to over a million acres of roadless forest. This amounts to one-fourth the roadless areas in Colorado. These large areas of relatively undisturbed forest have been quietly and sustainably contributing to the quality of life by producing abundant wildlife, clean water, scenic views and a vast array of recreation opportunities. Water for most of the communities has its origins in roadless areas.

The question is whether the roadless areas are protected. Mr. Prendergast and others examined the extent the proposed Forest Plan protects roadless areas and submitted their detailed findings to the Task Force. The findings covered big picture issues, the examination of each unit in which road building would be allowed, and maps of GMUG roadless areas.

Over the last 25 years more than one-fourth of a million acres have been eliminated from roadless inventory – due mostly to timber harvest. Two-thirds of the GMUG are accessible by over 4000 miles of roads. GMUG may lose another fourth of a million acres in the next 15 to 20 years from oil and gas exploration (228,000 acres of IRA lands were made available for oil and gas leasing in 1993)

Our forests and our communities are thriving and healthy today. But rapid growth is filling in much of the open space that was once agricultural land, and a growing population is causing more people to recreate in the forests. If not protected, too many roadless areas could become industrialized and motorized; natural ecosystems and wildlife populations could crash and watersheds could become fouled.

For these reason, the recommendation is to reinstate the roadless conservation rule, with refinements that address particular situation in Colorado. One refinement is an exception for underground mining adjacent to current mining (with limited activities – exploration, methane drainage, monitoring, etc). It could be possible to allow specific, limited mine activities to occur with language in the rule to address reclamation and restoration of the areas to roadless characteristics.

The 2001 rule addresses other energy development, but recommends the addition of a no surface occupancy stipulation. The rule could help ensure that areas are returned to a roadless condition once leases have expired.

Most people do not understand the roadless issue is not about “roadless” but about limiting roads, but want things to remain the same. Mr. Prendergast urges the Task Force to reinstate the 2001 roadless rule.

Vince Mathews, Colorado Geological Society (*no submittal*) – Mr. Mathews reviewed a series of maps showing existing conditions on the GMUG for oil and gas fields, wells, permits, known areas for mining and maps showing potential area for mining and oil and gas, as well as metallic and nonmetallic minerals. Colorado’s value for energy production for 2005 was \$11.8 billion, which is larger than agriculture - \$8.1 billion for natural gas, \$1.2 billion for oil.

United States’ oil production peaked in 1973. Natural gas production is declining. To keep production flat, the U.S. will increasingly turn to Colorado and Wyoming for production. Drilling rig permits have increased from an average of thirteen a year to seventy-four last year and ninety last week. Colorado has the largest coal bed methane reserves in the country and is the sixth largest coal producer in the nation. Colorado has the largest reserves of “good” or “clean” coal in the Nation.

Mr. Mathew concluded by giving the task force the global view. China is growing so fast that once they exported natural resources (e.g., exported cement before 2003) and because of their rapid growth has begun to import natural resources. This has created shortages, dramatic price increases, and pressures to extract the resources.

Reeves Brown, Club 20 (*submitted hard copy testimony*) – Club 20 is a coalition of individual and business interests in Colorado’s 22 western counties that, for over half a century, has served as the collective “voice of the Western Slope” on issues affecting our region.

With over 70 percent of the region owned by the federal government, the issue of how best to balance multiple uses and values on public lands is very important to every one of the western counties. This land provides critical summer forage for our ranchers, an economic livelihood for our mining and timber industries, habitat for our world famous big game herds, recreational opportunities for both our motorized and non-motorized recreation enthusiasts, and scenic view-sheds for all.

Club 20 supports the petition process and the task force’s efforts. Club 20 urges the task force to weigh the input received during this process and input to the Forest and local planning documents, and to seek a balanced solution that gives appropriate weight to local economic and social values. Recognize that for local communities adequate access to public lands is essential to sustain their livelihood.

Where the Forest Service is proceeding with their established planning process, where they have already invested time and money in engaging public input, Club 20 requests the Task Force defer to the planning process.

It is important to recognize and maintain valid and existing rights.

Finally, Club 20 urges the Task Force to ensure proper funding is secured to implement the recommendations.

Panel #2: Questions and Answers

Question – City of Grand Junction – Who does road maintenance?

Answer – Forest Service does road service, but sometimes there is a swap for services (e.g., Grand Junction provides sand/gravel, Forest Service provides bathrooms).

Question – City of Grand Junction – Does Grand Junction have existing structures in IRAs?

Answer – No, the City’s structures are on the edge of the IRAs.

Question – City of Grand Junction – Do you monitor water quality and are there signs of degradation?

Answer – Yes, we monitor water quality. There are no indications of degradation of water quality.

Question – Club 20 – Does the 2001 rule provide enough assurances for valid existing rights?

Answer – The concern is about the process of administering the rule and whether there is a good grasp on what is “existing”.

Question – Colorado Geological Survey – Is the Colorado Geological Survey going to make a recommendation to the task force?

Answer – No, just providing information.

Question – Mr. Prendergast – How much of the reduction of IRAs over the last 25 years was due to Wilderness designations?

Answer – The one-fourth decrease in IRA acres stated earlier was calculated without Wilderness areas.

Question – Mr. Prendergast – How much of the GMUG is Wilderness?

Answer – 19 percent is designated Wilderness.

Question – Mr. Prendergast – How would mining operations expand under roadless areas? How would the surface access be restored to roadless character? What are possible approaches to implement the policy?

Answer – Mining is an important activity and has a place in our economy and is resource of national significance. A good example of how to implement the policy and

possible approaches is the agreement forged between the Western Slope Resource Council and a coal company on Sunset IRA mining development which included lots of language on reclamation.

PANEL #3: STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

Kathy Welt, Oxbow Mine (*submitted hard copy testimony*) – Ms. Welt presented on the coal mine opportunities in the North Fork Valley. The 1983 and 1991 Forest Plans, the 1993 revised oil and gas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and the 2001 rule allows for such road construction in certain areas. Many of the roads that have been built are not included in the IRA inventory. Ms. Welt provided a map of existing leases and IRAs which surround the mines and restricts expansion. She urged that IRAs need to be looked at on a site specific level to address the unique needs of the area.

The IRA map and boundaries were created based on data from the 1970s. Things have changed, technologies have improved, and development has occurred which has brought to light mapping errors.

Colorado's coal is of exceptional quality – high in heat and low in sulfur and mercury, which is important for environmental compliance for many utilities. Congress recognized the importance of low sulfur coal in the Energy Policy Act of 2005. North Fork Valley coal is super-compliant coal.

The GMUG 2004 Coal Resource and Development Potential report stated that, based on current mine plans the majority of mines in Somerset have mineable reserves to last until 2015. This figure only took into account coal that is currently under lease and did not consider adjacent unleased coal reserves.

The coal industry brings economic benefits to local economies through tax revenue, supply and services, and employment opportunities. Restricting coal development because of a lack of allowable access will have substantial economic impacts.

Coal mining is among the heaviest regulated industries in the U.S. Coal mine operators are required to commit to reclamation of surface disturbance by posting a reclamation bond to ensure the work is completed. Operators must comply with strict performance standards for protecting water quality, vegetation, wildlife and more. Operators work with the Forest Service to restrict motor vehicle access on temporary roads, when requested.

The North Fork Valley Coal mining district is asking existing and adjacent coal leases be unencumbered by roadless designation and allowed access to unleased coal resources adjacent to existing mines for exploration, development, health and safety needs and sustainability, consistent with current forest plans. Operators are also asking for better assessment of the coal resources in the western portion of the North Fork Valley. Finally asking for the removal of five parcels (79,794 acres, 1.8 percent of total Colorado IRA lands) to be removed from IRA designation.

Kathy Hall, Western Slope Colorado Oil and Gas Association (*no submittal*) – In 1993, Forest Service and BLM completed an EIS for the GMUG. This document became the governing document of what lands were suitable for oil and gas lease and what stipulations to protect the environment were attached to those leases. This governing document will remain in effect until it is revised or replaced by a new plan. The current Forest Planning process will not do away with the 1993 EIS rules. It is Ms. Hall's understanding that Forest Service and BLM intend to re-look at the 1993 EIS document following the GMUG Forest Plan revision.

The 1993 EIS thoroughly considered and analyzed leasing within IRAs and removed many roadless areas from consideration for future leasing. There are also areas within IRAs that are suitable for leasing, some have been leased and some remain available for leasing.

Colorado Oil and Gas Association position is:

- Let the Forest Service plan the forest – they gather plenty of public and expert advice in developing and implementing the plan
- Honor existing leases – access to the leases, access without roads is not access; exploration and gathering and transmission systems requires roads
- Follow the 1993 EIS document – high and moderate potential oil and gas areas should remain open to future leasing; the current forest plan and the 1993 EIS considered roadless. Let the land managers manage and the GMUG planning process proceed.

John Ellenberger, big game hunting (*submitted hard copy testimony*) – Mr. Ellenberger worked for the Colorado Division of Wildlife (DOW) for over 33 years, 9 years as a State Big Game Manager. Lands managed by the Forest Service are very important to big game populations in Colorado. DOW's post-hunt population projections from 2005 estimate approximately 258,000 elk in the state with 95 percent inhabiting areas west of I-25; 613,000 deer with 90 percent residing in the same area.

Maintaining habitat on public lands for big game is about security – the right amount of food, cover, water and space makes animals feel secure. Change the mixture of components and security decrease and animals avoid the area. Forest Service lands and roadless areas provide large amounts of secure habitat for big game.

Roads and vehicle access management have been serious issues for big game managers for many years. It is challenging to achieve a balance between access for recreational use and maintaining habitat for big game in proper amounts.

Experts of the last 30 years have shown the impact of roads and recreationists on wild life are real and significant. The research can be grouped into four categories:

1. Loss of habitat due to roads – impacts are two-fold, direct loss of habitat and reduction in habitat effectiveness of adjacent areas (animals avoid the areas due to various levels of human activity).

2. Displacement of animals from human activities – animal displacement from public to private lands decreases where there is more wilderness and roadless areas. The movement of animals to private lands decreases hunting as an effective management tool and increases conflict with private landowners. One study showed that animals were displaced by human activity (on foot or OHV), but moved twice as far when disturbed by OHV interaction.
3. Mortality and decreased animal fitness due to human activities –one study showed repeated human disturbance by human activity on foot or horse reduced elk calf survival.
4. Treatment/control – reducing the number of open road miles in big game hunting areas can improve hunter success rates.

Roadless areas are very important component of big game habitat and preserving those areas is an excellent opportunity to protect wildlife and wildlife habitat now and in the future.

John Martin, Colorado Off-Highway Vehicle Coalition (COHVCO) (*submitted hard copy testimony*) – Mr. Martin has been involved with the motorized recreation community for over 15 years. There is confusion about terminology – is “roadless” a step toward restrictions for motorized use or the door to wilderness. The public does not understand the term “roadless”. The term, as it was used in the roadless rule, has nothing to do with what the common man would call a road. “Roadless” areas imply there are no roads, but they have roads.

Where and the type of travel effects everything on the forest. Travel management took 15 years on the Grand Mesa National Forest. Each forest has different characteristics. The Grand Mesa has a lot of water facilities that are checked by water commissioners. These water commissioners use ATVs to be able to do their job checking the safety of dam facilities. This monitoring activity is how the trails came into existence. No forest is managed in a vacuum.

Mr. Martin asked the task force to eliminate the confusion over the term “roadless” and rename their process to allow the people of Colorado to discuss the issues clearly. People need a common language to communicate, with words and definitions that are clear to people with different backgrounds and priorities, in order to discuss the issues and not argue about terminology.

Bill Grant, Western Colorado Congress (*no submittal*) – Public comment to date is calling for continuation of the protection offered by the 2001 roadless rule. Under the new forest plan 30 percent of the GMUG IRAs will be open to development. Specific roadless areas that will not be protected under the Forest Plan are:

- Clear Fork – contains may feeder streams and is home to pure strains of Colorado Cutthroat trout
- Battlements – rich with wildlife, including bears and contains a vital linkage with Sunnyside Research Natural Area
- Electric Mountain – spectacular aspen forest and elk calving area

These areas are generally lower elevation forests vital to maintaining clean water and supporting healthy wildlife populations.

Mr. Martin recommends all roadless areas remain roadless. Roadless areas are not free of trails or motorized use and maintaining roadless protection would not alter a single existing motorized route, it would just restrict new routes. He is also in agreement that it is important to find a better, clearer term than “roadless”. Protect our quality of life; maintain roadless areas with no net loss.

Nancy Fishing, Intermountain Resource (*no submittal*) – Intermountain Resource is the last large conifer saw mill in Colorado (located in Montrose). In order to keep the mill operating there needs to be a supply of timber from all over the state. Ms. Fishing is concerned about the mis-information about the timber industry.

Ms. Fishing and the timber industry support the forest planning process. Forest plans give structure and provide time to address controversial issues and have a set of standards and guidelines

There are documented best management practices for the timber industry. The Task Force should review language from these best management practices and from timber contracts when discussing temporary roads. The language says that if a road is put in, it must be removed/reclaimed.

There needs to be flexibility in order to use timber management techniques to improve forest health. Health of wildlife can be enhanced by improving vegetation conditions and timber management could be used to protect wildlife habitat.

Ms. Fishing asked the Task Force to clarify the 2001 rule terminology “imminent threat” and “emergency access”. Ms. Fishing supports protecting roadless area, but there are areas that need to be treated and the Forest Service needs the flexibility to select the right management option/technology.

Eric Sorenson, Delta Timber Company (*no submittal*) – Mr. Sorenson is part owner in the Delta Timber Company, the second largest saw mill in Colorado with twenty-two employees. Recently the timber industry is being used to scare the public, by say that the industry is out to annihilate the forests. This is not true.

Delta Timber Company works exclusively with aspen timber. Yet there is not enough available to keep the mill running a full capacity. Forest Plans identified 165,000 acres of aspen timber for sale. This is about one-third of the total aspens on the forest. Aspens are susceptible to disease and insects, but the infestation goes unnoticed because aspens die from the inside out. 90 percent of the aspen stands in the forest are in the same, older, age class. We are seeing more aspen mortality because the stands are old. Roadless area designation does not preclude aspen health issues. It is important to give the Forest Service all the management tools possible to address forest health and safety issues.

Mr. Sorenson recommends the Forest Service update their roadless inventories to be accurate; provide Forest Service the flexibility to meet forest health and restoration needs. The Forest Service has a vast amount of expertise and experience, let them do their jobs. There need to be exceptions to the 2001 rule stipulation of no cutting or removal of timber. There are opportunities in roadless areas to harvest timber without new roads. Finally, Mr. Sorenson recommends removing areas that are not suitable for Wilderness designation from roadless designation.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

50 people signed up to speak (all were called, 49 spoke) on topics including: multiple use, healthy forests, fire danger, travel management plans, watershed health, boundaries, use of maps, confusion label, economic impacts, oil and gas lease sale, access for recreation (snowmobiles, ATV, walking, and disabled), healthy ecosystems, and enforcement.

The comments are recorded in summary and reflect major issues, concerns, major themes, specific locations and specific actions. The following are the speakers, their organizations (if they are affiliated), their place of residence and a few of the key issues and locations they touched on:

1. Eric Rechel, Grand Junction, Colorado – supports wilderness areas...ask us to have vision beyond ourselves...the definition of multiple use needs to include preservation of wildlife habitat...being able to manage for insect may not be the best for the health.
2. Angie Many, Cedaridge, Colorado – concerned with the sever insect problems and catastrophic fire risk...roads are necessary for improving health of the forest...recommend preserving current roads and provide the flexibility for roads for management...don't need more lands off limits.
3. Wayne McFetridge, Blue Ribbon & CHOVCO, Grand Junction, Colorado – member of ATV clubs...don't want any roads closed, because trails need to be maintained...more ATV users than ever and less trails puts more pressure on the open trails.
4. Ken Emory, Western Slope 4 Wheelers, Montrose, Colorado – ask the task force to take no action and release all lands to Forest Service management...a poll taken in April in GMUG counties showed 43 percent said FS should not reduce public assets on public lands...public lands should be managed for the public not from the public.
5. Denny Behiens, ? – part of a state wide sportsmen group...supports Division of Wildlife's recommendation...the Roan Plateau proposal would be a good model for Roadless areas.
6. Gary Shaw, Western Slope ATV Association, Grand Junction, Colorado – have been riding ATVs for fourteen years...disagree with the idea that ATV's affect big game, personally experienced seeing big game while riding...the most alarming thing to animals is a human with dog...roadless is a stepping stone to wilderness.

7. Steve Chapel, Western Slope ATV Association, Grand Junction, Colorado – president of the Western Slope ATV Association...local forests need local control; forests are all different...IRAs are all different – some steep, some have ATV (e.g., flattops), etc....there is no justification for managing remote areas the same as popular ATV areas.
8. Monica Writanen, Small Potatoes Farm, Paonia, Colorado – small potatoes farm...when there is no water there is no agriculture, no cities...water captured on IRA are used on my farm...recommend no net loss of roadless acres.
9. Lee Ames, Delta, Colorado – is a land owner in remote Sinbad valley, have trails that leave the place and go no where....management plan plans say those trails are closed...the Manti la Sal is behind the property...private property owners are being boxed in by public lands and their restrictions.
10. Daniel Gonzalez, Paonia, Colorado – state of Colorado provides the highest acres of protected lands per capita...already have too many road that provide for ample uses...recommend to reinstate the 2001 rule.
11. Joan May, Sheep Mountain Alliance, Telluride, Colorado – the Sheep Mountain Alliance is a conservation group...support protection of remaining IRAs in GMUG...watersheds and economies will be protected...San Miguel has many gas leases...need roadless protection beyond today...protect from gas exploration.
12. Walt Blackburn, Thunder Mountain Wheelers, Delta, Colorado – the forest plan has just been sent for initial review; there was extensive input from the public on the revision...Forest Service are the professionals...asking the task force to not destroy the excellent work of the Forest Service by going counter to forest plan...presented 1600 petition asking for task force to leave forests open.
13. Brain Hawthorne, Blue Ribbon Coalition, Pocatello, Idaho – Blue Ribbon Coalition is a national off-hwy advocacy group...IRAs are only an inventory...they are not logical boundaries or management prescriptions...inventory should be decided by forest management plans.
14. Terry Brown, GIS Colorado, Grand Junction, Colorado – on the board of GIS Colorado which is a mapping organization...the problem is in inaccurate maps showing only the approved roads...this causes designation of roadless areas that have roads...need better maps so those areas that really have no roads can be seen.
15. Mark Schofield, Western Colorado Congress, Grand Junction, Colorado – presented 600 petitions from local folks that want to see the 2001 rule reinstated...support maintaining existing roadless areas for clean water, recreation opportunities for families, etc...support the 2001 roadless rule...concerned regarding gas leases in Battlement and Clear fork IRAs.
16. David Watson, Northwest Colorado Snowmobile, Craig, Colorado – keep all areas open in any forest...open roadless areas for multiple use.
17. Dan Turner, Uncompahgre Valley Trail Riders, Montrose, Colorado - OHV use is a viable and valid use...it is the fastest growing form of recreation... economic impacts from ATV users is not small...ATVs are not destroying forest; only 217 acres are open for ATV trails in the Uncompahgre.
18. Roy Johnson, Uncompahgre Valley Trail Riders, Montrose, Colorado – ask that task force let local Forest Service do the work on the land...good to see and hear

- the people...desire to keep trails open for grandchildren to have same opportunities.
19. Alison Gerfin, High Country News, Paonia, Colorado – Forest Service is continuing to lease oil and gas and destroy the land for all other uses before the task force and the petition process are complete.
 20. Sue Navy, Crested Butte, Colorado – Gunnison county passed a resolution supporting roadless areas...we rely on tourism dollars...nearly 85 percent of county is public lands...people come to county to get away from noise of cities...resident businesses rely on hunters to add to the economy...support the roadless rule.
 21. Wade Haerle, Grand Junction, Colorado – been involved with the Forest Service planning for four years...numerous public meeting on the plan revisions, any one who wanted to speak did...recommend remanding the issue back to the forest planners.
 22. Phil Smith, Western Slope Snowmobile Association, Grand Junction, Colorado – in favor of multiple use...the local Forest Service is capable to manage the local forests...been snowmobiling on the National Forest since the late 1950s; three generations of users...recommend task force allow Forest Service to continue to make decisions.
 23. Geneen Kelly, Western Slope ATV Association, Palisade, Colorado – hiking trails are difficult for disabled, they need to use ATVs to get out to see the views and beautiful spaces...keep all roads open for ATV use.
 24. Dennis Larratt, Rocky Mountain Enduro, Littleton, Colorado – brought the “Stay on the Trail” trailer - a 35 foot trailer that is a self contained educational module...responsible motorized use it the right thing...OHV registration money goes to education.
 25. Dan Moore, High Country Citizen’s Alliance, Crested Butte, Colorado – urge the task force to reinstate 2001 rule...the roadless rule does not restrict Forest Service from management for forest treatment...bulk of treatments should happen at urban interface...timber harvest has declined because it is not commercially viable... only reinstatement of 2001 rule will appropriately manage lands.
 26. Larry Mosher, High Country Citizen’s Alliance, Crested Butte, Colorado – this is the tipping point to preserve wildlife habitat and ecosystems in the GMUG...cannot lose any more lands...roadless is the only real tool to keep our habitat and ecosystems alive and wildlife with enough room to migrate and survive.
 27. Ron Kelly, ATV Riders, Grand Junction, Colorado – have injured knees and had to have them replaced...with an ATV, been able to travel and visit the backcountry...when a trail is closed, I can’t go to the area...don’t take any more trails and roads away.
 28. Andrea Robinsong, WSERC, WCC, Hotchkiss, Colorado – ask to recommend reinstating the 2001 roadless rule with some exceptions...roadless areas are important to ecosystems...there is no surface occupancy on lands not currently leased, but Forest Service allows exception for all leases...so the only protection is roadless.

29. Sally Kane, Crawford, Colorado – request task force recommend reinstating the 2001 rule with amendment for fire, interface and coal mining in north fork...roadless areas prohibit road building, not multiple use...2001 rule had two decades of public involvement and preserved critical habitat and clear watershed...as a taxpayer, I've already paid for this process once...please reinstate the 2001 roadless rule.
30. Bill Paterson, Uncompahgre Valley Association – Montrose county - 300 residents...three facts – 1. state demographer predicted Montrose county will grow...currently Montrose is the 18th fastest micro-politan...BLM announced that 5 percent of public land in Montrose county is up for lease...please reinstate the 2001 rule to protect these areas.
31. Larry Amos, Collbran, Colorado – been an outfitter for 25 years in the Flattop White River area...want to talk about Battlement IRA...leave roads closed, if open road then oil and gas comes in and brings pollution that ends the good qualities of life...won't be fresh water and clean air.
32. Jim Thate, Colorado Rural Electric Association, Ridgeway, Colorado – grandfather started one of the first rural electrics in Southern Utah...maintain utilities for current and future use, and access for maintenance and repairs required...have agreements with state and feds for access...limited or denied access will cost extra dollars for helicopter access.
33. Charles Kerr, Western Colorado Congress, Grand Junction Colorado – currently Forest Service cannot maintain the roads they have...each year Forest Service gets less funding for current road system...poorly maintained roads cause the most sedimentation and weed dispersement...roadless areas protect watersheds and great multiple use recreation...ask the Governor to reinstate 2001 roadless rule.
34. John Eakins, Grand Junction, Colorado – Forest Service had the most in-depth and longest public involvement process for the 2001 rule...support multiple use and the areas for motorized use and the areas with no motorized use...request no new roads and don't close roads.
35. Lee Stieen, Grand Junction, Colorado – ask to reinstate roadless rule...Forest Service cannot maintain current roads, don't need more roads...need roadless for clean water, ecosystems, and recreational opportunities...no more new roads.
36. Jeff Miner, Colorado Outfitters Association, Collbran, Colorado – Battlement outfitters...our area has every kind of use and no surface occupancy...if new roads area allowed it is only for oil and gas...there is a great area on top of the Battlements where we don't want wells.
37. Rita Clagett, Crawford, Colorado – ecologist...Huntsmen Ridge, Pilot Knob and Sunset areas are important unfragmented habitat for all species especially big game...there are enough roads...have to stop feeding wild lands for greed...don't forget the renewable energy resources.
38. Sam Brown, Paonia, Colorado – small business owner...50 percent of my clientele are tourist, hunters and outdoor recreationalists...wild lands are a valuable resource to the Nation and important to the economic viability of the state and local communities...encourage task force to uphold the 2001 roadless rule.

39. Olen Lund, Delta County Commissioner, Delta, Colorado – don't want to see IRA used as a tool to prohibit natural resource development...it is important to the economy of Delta County...50 percent of coal in Colorado comes from Delta County.
40. Rob Peters, Western Slope Environmental Resource Council, Hotchkiss, Colorado – the Western Slope Environmental Resource Council has for 25 years been a watch dog of the Forest Service...sometimes Forest Service gets it right sometimes they can use help...against handing things over to Forest Service wholesale...wildlife is critically dependant on wild places...roadless designation sets the standard to strive for in the future...coal mining can be done in an environmentally sensate way and lands be returned to a natural state
41. Kevin Wight, Grand Junction, Colorado – motorized user...part of Colorado four wheel drive club...grew up in a mountain community and enjoyed many recreational opportunities including hiking...now I have disabled kids and want to show them the Forest...the only way is using a Jeep or they would not be able to see it...make decisions to keep forest accessible for multiple users and manage forest to keep them open for generations into the future.
42. N.J. Fulmer, Whitewater, Colorado – citizen for environment and wildlife...support maintaining the roadless rule...no more roads from development or irresponsible use of our resources...need to move more slowly with mineral extraction until we an untenable need.
43. Diana Orf, Colorado Mining Association, Denver, Colorado – not all roadless areas are equal in characteristics...looking at a limited area for coal resources...any roads would be limited and temporary, not open to general public; therefore any roads would have minimal impact on the forest and budget, and they would be closed and reclaimed with a bond to back that up.
44. Jim Cooper, North Fork Valley Coal Industry, Paonia, Colorado – read title 2800 about mineral extraction from FS hand book...don't have money to mange the GMUG as a multiple use areas...DC needs to understand the need for funding.
45. Dick Guadagnu, Paonia, Colorado – there are alternative methods for extracting coal bed methane to get more methane and less damage.
46. Amanda Wight, Grand junction, Colorado – don't want to close roads, want to enjoy camping in the mountains and see the view...keep roads open...keep roads open for multiple generations.
47. Julie Brown, Paonia, Colorado – we as people have led the world in innovations and best practices...we lead in conservation biology...this is an opportunity to lead the world in conservation models and rid ourselves of the U.S. addictions to oil and gas...reinstate the 2001 rule.
48. Carole Chounen, Grand Junction, Colorado – care about the environment...think ahead, not just what we want now, but what is going to be left if we keep building roads...look at everything that went into the 2001 rule ...reinstate the 2001 rule.
49. Audrey Cooper, Grand Junction, Colorado – dealing with water and air quality...think about the future...no new roads...oil and gas development destroys water quality...do not lease in Kannah Canyon...think 20 years ahead.

Chairman of the task force, Russ George thanks everyone who spoke tonight and throughout the process. He announced that public comments would be taken until June 30, 2006.

Colorado Roadless Areas Review Task Force
 Overview of Written Public Comments Received at the
 Grand Junction Public Comment Meeting

		Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Number of responses:	3,028		
Number of CO residents	2,982		
Number of non-CO residents	46		
Responses by forest	General Comment	2,027	67%
	Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forests	4	0.13%
	Grand Mesa-Uncompahgre-Gunnison National Forests	1,008	33%
	Manti-La Sal National Forests	2	0.06%
	Pike-San Isabel National Forests	3	0.09%
	Rio Grande National Forest	1	0.03%
	Routt National Forest	1	0.03%
	San Juan National Forest	2	0.06%
	White River National Forest	2	0.06%
Responses by topic of concern	Social and Economic Value	8	0.26%
	Special Designations	3	0.09%
	Recreation Management	6	0.2%
	Natural Resource Management	10	0.33%
	Other: (see below for specific responses)	9	0.3%

This document is a rough, broad-based overview of the themes expressed in the written comments received at the public comment meeting. This information is for summation purposes only, and should not be viewed as an empirical, scientific content analysis.

Comment Themes

Please note that any single comment may touch on more than one of the comment themes below and is recorded as such.

Comment Themes Indicating a Preferred Action	Number of Responses
Defer to 2001 Rule/Preserve Roadless Areas	1,007
Defer to Forest Management Plan	947
Retain Motorized Recreation	1,023
Retain Non-Motorized Recreation	43

General Comment Themes	Number of Responses
General	12
Public Involvement/Collaboration and Decision-Making Process	1
Environmental Emphasis	900
Multiple Use Management Emphasis	983
Special Designations	60
Job Creation/Economic Stability of Rural Communities, States, and the Nation	1,425
Legacy Values	509
Quality of Life	364
Use of Roadless Areas to Promote or Subsidize Industry	1,120
Reallocating Costs of Roadless Area Development to Meet Other Needs	8
Other Social and Economic Values	32

Responses by Topic of Concern: Other, please specify

1. Electric utility access
2. Mapping practices
3. Multi-use
4. Preservation of quality of life
5. Preserve CO wild areas for economics: tourism, fishing, etc...
6. Roads for gas drilling
7. Water
8. Wilderness
9. Wildlife management

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