January 16, 2018

Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests

GMUG Plan Revision Team  
2250 South Main Street  
Delta, CO 81416

Re: GMUG Forest Plan Revision Assessment Comments

We are writing to you on behalf of Share the Slate, a non-profit organization based in Crested Butte, CO focused on protecting winter access and promoting the shared interests of all user groups within the public lands of Gunnison County.  We work to educate various user groups and work toward creating awareness between them so that user groups can coexist and enjoy the same recreational areas together.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the GMUG forest plan revision, and your willingness to consider diverse comments from a variety of stakeholders, including

Share The Slate.

While it is our understanding that the GMUG forest plan revision will not specifically address winter travel plan management in the Gunnison National Forest, it is also our understanding that the revision will provide a framework going forward for winter travel. We look forward to both processes as an opportunity to educate and promote shared values between user groups, while also ensuring continued winter access for all user groups.

Share the Slate wishes to express their support for the Gunnison Public Lands Initiative, which provides an outline for the Gunnison National Forest going forward. By organizing ten local organizations which represent users of various interests including ranching, water resources, motorized use, conservation, mountain biking, recreation, and hunting and angling, the GPLI is setting a positive example for promoting shared use of our public lands.  Over the course of years, this group has met to develop a balanced and insightful use plan for Gunnison Public Lands which satisfies the needs of all user groups.  They have set a model for the nation in representing all users, promoting awareness of land use, and developing a culture of compromise.

Looking to the future, it is our hope that the forest plan revision and winter travel management plan will continue the precedent set by the forward-thinking Gang of Nine decision, which ensured an equitable winter travel management plan for the various winter user groups. Careful attention will be required for winter trailhead parking, signage, and sanitation facilities.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments, and we look forward to the draft plan and continued cooperation going forward.

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