

Town of Crested Butte

P.O. Box 39 Crested Butte, Colorado 81224

-National Trust for Historic Preservation's 2008 Dozen Distinctive Destinations Award Recipient-

-A National Historic District-

Phone: (970) 349-5338
FAX: (970) 349-6626
www.townofcrestedbutte.com

January 22, 2018

Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests
Attn: Plan Revision Team
2250 South Main Street
Delta, CO 81416

Submitted via email to: gmugforestplan@fs.fed.us

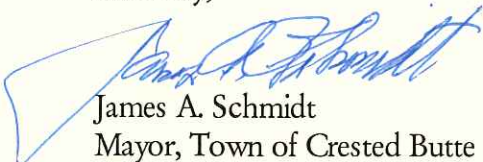
Dear Scott Armentrout and the GMUG Forest Planning Team,

Thank you for the comprehensive and carefully detailed wildlife and air quality draft assessments.

We have reviewed the assessments and have the following specific comments on the assessments. These comments should be read as addendum to our December 4, 2017 letter. We have also reviewed the Draft Wilderness Inventory.

We continue to appreciate your ongoing effort to encourage public participation and look forward to continuing to participate in the Forest Plan Revision.

Sincerely,



James A. Schmidt
Mayor, Town of Crested Butte

At-Risk Species

Page 1 of the assessment identifies mule deer and elk hunting as large-economic drivers. Scenery-viewing and passive wildlife watching also draw significant numbers of visitors to the Town of Crested Butte and are also major economic drivers. Each summer, the Crested Butte Wildflower Festival brings hundreds of visitors to our Town to look at wildflowers, and other flora and fauna. Non-consumptive wildlife and plant use should also be considered as economic drivers.

Oil and gas can be a risk factor for some flora and fauna populations¹, but is not identified as a risk-factor in the assessment (pg. 34).

The Town of Crested Butte is concerned that there are such a large number of at-risk species identified on the GMUG, with many of their corresponding ecosystems predicted to decline by more than 30% with climate change. The Town of Crested Butte is dependent upon intact, high-functioning ecosystems for our tourism-driven economy and our high-quality of life. We would encourage the Forest Service to mitigate impacts on at-risk species from known risk factors and to pursue landscape-level conservation strategies to protect entire ecosystems and classes of species that are predicted to be affected by climate change.

Air Quality

Clean air is critical to the health and wellbeing of Town of Crested Butte citizens, and one of our highest values as a Town. We are concerned that particulate matter (PMC) is predicted to increase in Gunnison County from 2011-2025 (page 4). Page 26 identifies increased oil and gas production as the cause of increased particulate matter in Gunnison County. The Town of Crested Butte is unlikely to benefit economically from the increased oil and gas production and is highly concerned with the effects of climate change on our local economy. Given our concerns with oil and gas production, the Town does think that the increase in particulate matter is acceptable and would encourage the Forest Service to prioritize clean air in their decision making.

¹ Johnson, Heather E., et al. 2016. "Increases in residential and energy development are associated with reductions in recruitment for a large ungulates." *Global Change Biology*. Available online: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/gcb.13385/full>