

Attention: GMUG Plan Revision Team

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the GMUG Scoping Document. I grew up ranching and spending my summers on the Uncompahgre National Forest in the Big Creek and Campbell Point Allotments. Today, I stay closely connected to Colorado's natural resources through employment with Conservation Districts in NW Colorado. While my work does not specifically relate to the GMUG, it has helped me become even more involved in the management of our public lands. Myself, my family and many friends and neighbors here in Grand Junction rely heavily on the GMUG for a living, for recreation, for our economy, and our clean air and water. Therefore, I felt it important that I offer the following comments on the GMUG Plan Revision.

I greatly appreciate the acknowledgment of the multiple use standard for Forest Service Lands. The livestock industry and conservation districts across the State have been advocates for this approach and strongly believes the intent of multiple use planning does not place one use over another. We can all utilize and benefit from productive forest lands when properly managed for multiple use.

The planning process should carefully consider implications of one use to another. Such as implications to resource impacts or livestock grazing from activities such as lack of logging, increased recreation, etc. The lack of timber harvest opens the Forests to dangers and resource impacts of catastrophic wildfires that impact all users and all resources including soils, water, plants, animals, and air. Well managed livestock grazing has managed resources, through timing, duration and stocking rates to deliver high quality habitat that supports diverse ecosystems for all to enjoy. Well managed and monitored recreation can also benefit but it is probably the most challenging use to manage given the numbers of people and the fact there are not permits or consequences to the individuals if they do not abide by guidelines/rules. If all uses are well managed and impacts are monitored, all users can benefit in their respective ways and enjoy the Forests.

GMUG Wilderness Areas and Wilderness Study Areas (WSA) must continue to be managed in context of historic uses...such as grazing, improvement construction and maintenance, mechanized vehicle use, etc. The WSAs were not designed to be managed as wilderness in perpetuity and I would respectfully request that these areas be releases and placed back into multi-use management.

I support the approach of proactively addressing conflicts between public recreation/access and private lands as noted in the third bullet under the "Integrate Resource Management for Multiple Uses and Ecosystem Services" section. However, I believe we also need to proactively address the conflicts between permitted uses (timber harvest, grazing, guiding, etc.) and the uses that are not permitted (ATV and bike use, camping, hiking, etc.). This relates back to who can and who can't be held accountable. The permitted uses are paying and have livelihoods at stake while the recreation is there to enjoy their leisure time. Hopefully the FS can find ways to help with these conflicts.

According to the Department of the Interior, grazing on public lands contributes a minimum of \$1.5 billion to the national economy. The Tri River Extension has verified that every cow represents more than \$600 to the local economy in Mesa County alone. As stated in the Scoping document, there are approximately 51,000 head of cattle permitted. This is over \$30 million in economic impact to the local communities in and surrounding the GMUG.

Language on page 3 under the heading "Contribute to Social and Economic Sustainability" states; "Provide people and communities with a range of social and economic benefits for present and future generations. These benefits include water, timber production, **range**, recreation, energy resources, and additional multiple uses." I respectfully request the term "range" be changed to "livestock grazing" or "livestock production" based on the information noted above.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide input during this Scoping process. Maintaining our Forests as sustainable and productive forest for the benefit of the American Citizens is very important. We appreciate your effort to manage them in this manner.

Sincerely,

Callie Hendrickson
Grand Junction, CO