I am writing to support GMUG's proposal to designate Granite Basin as Wilderness in the Forest Plan Revision.

I have lived in Crested Butte South for 20 years and spent time in Gunnison County for twenty-nine. The proposed Granite Basin Wilderness is my back yard. Gunnison County is not an easy place to live and I think most people who live here, including myself, do so at least in part because they value our natural spaces. I have hiked in the Granite Basin area numerous times. The area is completely natural, with no evidence of human activity except the modest, sometimes hard to find, trail system and the old Pioneer Ski Area. I don't think I've ever encountered another person while spending time in Granite Basin. The world is becoming ever more crowded and the opportunities for solitude and quiet time in the natural world are becoming increasingly rare. Designating Granite Basin as wilderness would ensure that we all have the opportunity to experience this solitude. Of course there are numerous other reasons that wilderness is important, including wildlife habitat and many others.

I support the careful evaluations and analyses that GMUG conducted in 2005-2006, which resulted in recommendation of Granite Basin for Wilderness designation in the 2007 draft Forest Plan. I am confident that GMUG will conduct another accurate and comprehensive evaluation in the current revision process. I would be pleased to provide details on my experiences and observations in Granite Basin to GMUG.

I know that land managers carefully monitor and care for Wilderness characteristics. I am one of many people in the Crested Butte area who will volunteer to assist the Forest Service with management of Granite Basin, even before official designation by Congress.

Most importantly, my primary reason for supporting Granite Basin Wilderness is simple: Preserve the naturalness that I have been privileged to experience in Granite Basin for current and future generations. If we do not preserve wilderness now, we will not get another chance!