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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Fwd: GMUG Forest Plan Revision

1525 E. Entrada Segunda

Tucson AZ 85718

November 4, 2017

Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests

Attn: Plan Revision

2250 South Main St.

Delta, CO 81418

Dear GMUG Friends,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the GMUG Plan Revision, and for hosting a welcoming and informative meeting in Gunnison last summer, which I attended.

I am writing you both as a citizen and home owner and taxpayer in Gunnison (where I hope to retire some day soon), and as a scientist who continues to study ecological systems at the RMBL in Gothic, which I have done every summer since 1972. My studies at RMBL have brought me into repeated contact with the excellent folks who work for GMUG and for other Agencies such as BLM, and have exposed me to many applied and pure science issues of our wonderful part of the world.

You probably already are aware of the unique position of the RMBL within the boundaries of GMUG. RMBL is a world-class scientific institution, leading the way literally for other biological field stations all around the world. RMBL attracts scientists from all over the world as well, and the knowledge that they gain about natural systems adds to an accumulation of understanding that goes back to 90 years--to the founding of RMBL in 1928. Thank you GMUG for graciously hosting RMBL as your neighbor and gentle user of some of your lands! The result is many decades of research projects that contribute to our understanding of a changing Earth at a time when this could not be more important.

The time is indeed urgent for all of us to support this kind of study of Earth's systems as we face global change. Therefore I urge you to consider a special designation for the surroundings of the RMBL--the Upper East River Valley. The Gothic NRA is not the answer I have in mind--it is not much used because in fact many types of modern experimental research are not allowed. Instead I have in mind a designation that recognizes this unique valley for its intense study over almost a century that informs our understanding around the world.

Designation is needed now because the pressures on the GMUG lands near the RMBL are increasing dramatically--pressures from greatly increased public recreation. I have nothing against this recreation and everything in favor of it, whether it be mountain biking or hunting--but if there is too much the ability to do scientific studies is compromised. We have seen this in very real terms in recent summers.

The Upper East River Valley is such a unique place scientifically that I urge you to consider placing further designation for this valley that prioritizes science. As a former member and Chair of the RMBL Board of Trustees I know absolutely that RMBL will be happy to work with you on the details of making this happen and making it work, in a spirit of collaboration, compromise, and assistance.

Best wishes for the Process and thank you for considering my comments,

Nick Waser

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