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First name: Dennis

Last name: Murphy

Organization: Uncompahgre Watershed Partnership

Title: Board President

Comments: To Mr. Chad Stewart:

The Uncompahgre Watershed Partnership Board is writing to express our conditional support of the request by the Ouray Silver Mines, Inc. (OSMI) to lease 152 acres of locatable minerals under lands managed by the National Forest System for the purpose of connecting "OSMI's patented claims to OSMI's Revenue Tunnel, providing access to silver, gold, copper, lead, and zinc mineral deposits in OSMI's patented claims".

The proposed project is located near Camp Bird Road (CR 361) to the west of Ouray, Colorado. These lands lie in the high alpine setting with a sensitive alpine tundra ecosystem and diverse flora and fauna. "No post-leasing surface disturbance is anticipated on NFS lands as part of this proposed leasing action," according to the public scoping documents. Current management of OSMI has demonstrated responsibility and care in its operations so far, thus we expect their continued actions in this area to demonstrate the same.

Still, as a nonprofit focused on the health of this watershed, we ask that the U.S. Forest Service carefully examine this proposal and require OSMI to prevent any water contamination and any degradation of the natural environment from the proposed expansion. We urge you to require mitigation of any disturbances to wildlife habitat and recreational resources.

Thank you for providing an opportunity to comment. We look forward to hearing from you regarding the findings from the environmental assessment.

Sincerely,

Dennis Murphy

Board President

Uncompahgre Watershed Partnership