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Comments: Under Proposed and Possible Actions of Protected Vegetation Management in the Draft Revised Management Plan, I was delighted to see a section addressing fuel management and the local economy. It states, "While fuels treatments are considered non-commercial, wood products could be produced and sold to local purchasers, which would reduce the government out-of-pocket expense for the treatment (Stewart, 2021, p.176)." Salvage logging, a form of fuel treatment, is sometimes necessary even before a prescribed burn, and can yield valuable timber products (Fettig, 1989)[Fettig, D. (1989, September 1). Cutting timber to save jobs: The economics of forest management. Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. <https://www.minneapolisfed.org/article/1989/cutting-timber-to-save-jobs-the-economics-of-forest-management.>]

. Integrating a relationship between the local economy and fuel management into the final GMUG National Forest plan will not only benefit the federal government, but also significantly reduces local fire dangers, boost local economies, and reduce environmental impacts of urban development.

Fostering these types of relationships have been extremely successful in the past, as seen during the Big Willow Salvage Timber Sale in Gunnison County in 2018. The 2,155-acre timber sale administered by the Colorado State Forest Service through the Good Neighbor Authority allowed for the successful creation of defensible space near both the Arrowhead and Blue Mesa Subdivisions, seriously reducing wildfires threats around the communities. The project reduced safety risks to the public by removing hazard trees along trails and roads, while supporting the local timber industry and helping to facilitate forest recovery (Phillips, 2018)[Phillips, K. (2018, November 28). U.S. Forest Service and Colorado State Forest Service Join Forces on Big Willow Salvage Timber Sale. Grand Mesa Uncompahgre and Gunnison national forests - News & events. <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/gmug/news-events/?cid=FSEPRD604253.>]

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Using local materials has the obvious benefit of reducing the significant environmental impacts of transporting materials over long distances, but also encourages vernacular building styles which, when compared to industrially produced material buildings, has a much lower carbon footprint (Malin, 2014)[Malin, N. (2014, August 28). On using local materials. BuildingGreen. <https://www.buildinggreen.com/feature/using-local-materials.>](Fernandes et al., 2013)[Fernandes, J., Mateus, R., & Bragan[ccedil]a, L. (2013). The potential of vernacular materials to the sustainable building design. Vernacular Heritage and Earthen Architecture, 623-629. <https://doi.org/10.1201/b15685-108>](Xu et al., 2020)[Xu, J., Deng, Y., Shi, Y., & Huang, Y. (2020). A bi-level optimization approach for sustainable development and carbon emissions reduction towards construction materials industry: A case study from China. Sustainable Cities and Society, 53, 101828. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scs.2019.101828>]

. Places like Gunnison County are projected to grow by 3,100 people by 2030, with greenhouse gas emission projected to grow by 12% if we continue with development as usual. Currently 61% of greenhouse gas emissions from Gunnison County can be attributed to residential and commercial buildings (Cattles, 2020) (City of Gunnison Comprehensive Plan, 2020) [GUNNISON 2030, Final updated comprehensive plan draft. Welcome to City Of Gunnison, CO. (n.d.). https://www.gunnisonco.gov/news_detail_T2_R393.php.]

. By using local timber harvested for fuel treatments, the carbon footprint of these building materials will be reduced significantly, thus reducing the environmental impact of urban development all together.

By encouraging fire management and local engagement in timber sales, I believe the Grand Mesa,

Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests can play a huge part in developing sustainable and resilient communities in Colorado.

RESOURCES

GUNNISON 2030, Final updated comprehensive plan draft. Welcome to City Of Gunnison, CO. (n.d.). https://www.gunnisonco.gov/news_detail_T2_R393.php.

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