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Comments: To whom it may concern:

Crested Butte Nordic would like to make several comments in regards to the Forest Plan revision for the GMUG. Crested Butte Nordic is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit whose mission is to provide individuals of all ages and abilities the opportunity to learn, enjoy, and improve in the sports of cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. We fulfill this mission by grooming 50 kilometers of winter trails for nordic skiing and snowshoeing, offering programs for youth and adults, and hosting events in both the winter and summer. With over 90,000 skier days a year, Crested Butte Nordic provides an essential amenity that helps sustain the economic, physical, and mental health and wellbeing of the Gunnison Valley.

As primarily a winter outdoor recreation service provider, Crested Butte Nordic's main concern in the Forest Plan revision is to retain the areas where we currently have permission to groom winter trails and to keep the possibility of future winter grooming for non-motorized recreation on the Gunnison National Forest. We would like the Forest Plan to permit motorized grooming for non-motorized recreation on Forest Service lands surrounding our municipalities (Gunnison, Crested Butte, Mt. Crested Butte, and CB South). For example, CB Nordic typically receives an annual permit to groom trails in the Lily Lake Area for our Thanksgiving Camp. This is a specific activity we would like to continue in the future. If the climate continues on its current trajectory and snow continues to be more erratic around the town of Crested Butte, we would like to be able to explore higher-up regions of the National Forest where motorized grooming for non-motorized recreation would be a good fit. We have no plans to extend our grooming operations in the near-term, but given the changing climate, development patterns, and other unpredicted changes, Crested Butte Nordic would like to be able to consider grooming on National Forest lands to provide a non-motorized (cross-country ski/snowshoe) amenity, if future circumstances align to make that beneficial for our communities.

Secondly, Crested Butte Nordic hosts several backcountry races that cross the National Forest (the Grand Traverse Ski, Run, & Bike; the Gothic Mountain Tour; the Grin & Bear It). Whatever the final Forest Plan looks like, we would like to continue to be able to host these races, as they are valuable amenities for our community. These races are unique experiences that forge connections between humans and their public lands, foster respect for nature, and create lasting, transformative memories for participants. Additionally, these races bring substantial positive economic benefit to our community, and yet are sustainable forms of recreation. Please consider a Forest Plan that allows these races to continue in the future.

Finally, CB Nordic leads a number of guided ski and snowshoe tours on the National Forest each year. We would like to be able to continue these guided tours in the future. A guided tour does not just get people onto the National Forest, but also teaches people about how to travel safely in the backcountry, how to leave no trace, how to identify plants/animals, and ultimately fosters connection to and respect for our public lands. We would like the revised Forest Plan to ensure that this kind of low-impact, sustainable use of the National Forest can continue.

Thank you for considering our comments.