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First name: Sue

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Forest Supervisor Stewart,

I am writing to assure you of my wholehearted endorsement of the proposed land exchange between the Forest Service and Mt. Emmons Mining Co. (MEMC). This is an essential piece of putting an end to an enduring struggle to protect Crested Butte and the Gunnison Valley from the industrialization, with its inherent major impacts, that a molybdenum mine on Red Lady would have brought.

I recently visited the Three Peaks Ranch, along with MEMC staff, and found it to contain stunning wetland complexes, which would be protected through this exchange. Imagining this area succumbing to inundation by mine waste was a reprehensible thought. I am grateful to MEMC for being an honorable partner in finding a creative solution to a longstanding quandary.

I believe that the private lands offered in exchange for the public land on Mt. Emmons are a more-than-adequate representation of a good-faith trade, and am encouraged that they provide quality habitat for Gunnison sage-grouse, Canada lynx and other species.

With the recent declaration by President Biden of the possibility of an administrative withdrawal of mineral rights from the Thompson Divide area, which includes Mt. Emmons, we can now envision full closure to an issue that has challenged our communities for over four decades. I believe that the land exchange, along with its most critical conservation easement, will facilitate the more immediate resolution of this issue while legislative withdrawal is sought to resolve it in perpetuity.

Having been deeply involved in protecting our communities from the numerous environmental and social impacts of mining since 1977, I truly hope that this land exchange, conservation and extinguishment agreements, combined with mineral withdrawal, will finally bring us the peace of mind we all have been seeking for so long.

Thank you, and all your staff, so much for carrying this land exchange forward. Please, after hearing public input, finalize this land exchange as soon as possible.

Very sincerely,

Sue Navy