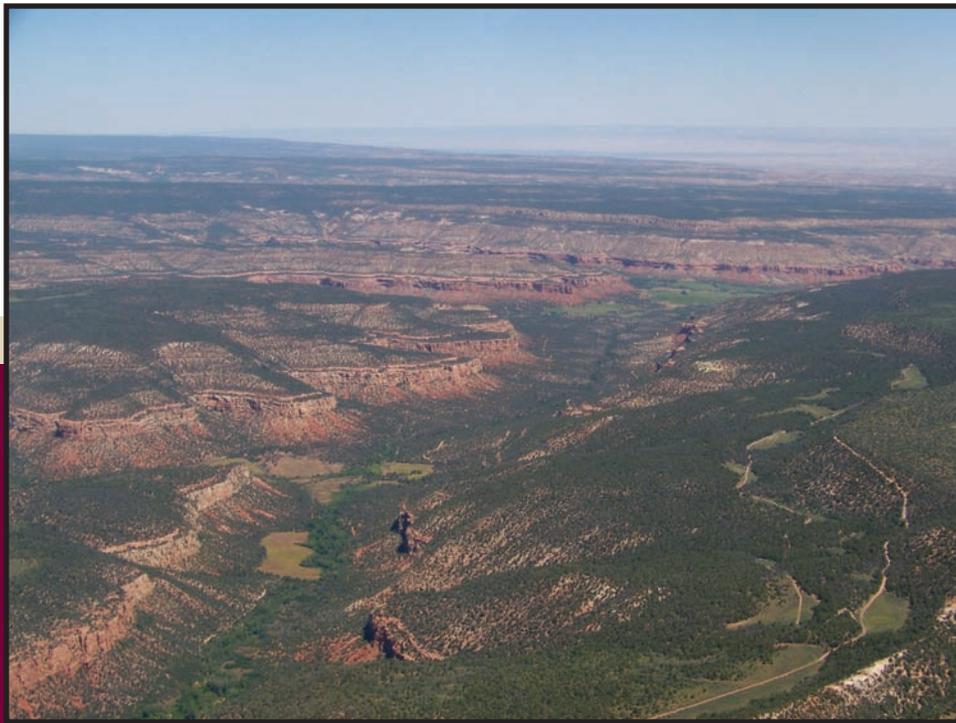




## DOMINQUEZ ESCALANTE NCA PROPOSAL

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A STUDY BY THE MESA STATE COLLEGE  
NATURAL RESOURCES AND LAND POLICY INSTITUTE  
AUGUST 2007



***Dominquez Escalante NCA Proposal***

**Public Forums Nov 2006 - Aug 2007**

**Evaluation and Recommendations**

**Natural Resources and Land Policy Institute, Mesa State College**

**Public Lands Partnership**

**Submitted to**

**Boards of County Commissioners**

**Mesa, Delta, and Montrose County**

**August 2007**



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# Acknowledgements

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## Executive Summary

Beginning in November of 2006 and continuing through the summer of 2007 the staff of the Natural Resource and Land Use Policy Institute (NRLPI) of Mesa State College and the Public Lands Partnership (PLP) were commissioned by the Boards of Directors of Mesa, Montrose and Delta counties to conduct a series of public forums in order to determine the level of public support for a proposal to designate the Dominquez-Escalante area as an National Conservation Area (NCA) with a Wilderness designation in the heart of it. This report is a summary of those meetings and the issues that surfaced around such a proposal. We have analyzed the arguments made by the various stakeholders and have included policy recommendations based on those arguments.

The meetings were attended by almost 200 individuals representing a wide variety of stakeholders in the area. While there are certainly many concerns that surfaced regarding the designation of an NCA in the area, most participants seemed to strongly support such a designation. Concerns included fears that the designation would draw undue attention to the area thus increasing population pressures on the resource, the fear that such a designation would lead to the closure of the area from some traditional uses such as motorized travel and ranching, a basic aversion to change and to increased government regulation, and the limits such designation might pose on future uses such as the building of a dam and mining claims. While these are certainly concerns worth considering, it is not at all clear that these fears would not also be realized if there was no designation. Support for the proposal centered around the need for additional resources that the NCA designation might provide, the importance of Wilderness to the recreational and economic activities in the surrounding counties, the need to protect the landscape and wildlife from an expected doubling of the population in the area in the next thirty years and the possibility of enhanced recreational opportunities through multiple use nature of an NCA.

This report details the arguments on all sides of these and other issues. Once the issues are discussed as they pertain to the question of an NCA designation, we analyze the advantages and concerns surrounding an NCA designation and list the level of support from the various stakeholders. Finally, this report assesses the level of consensus, support and disagreement that has surfaced and makes policy recommendations based on those results. The report also includes, as attachments, notes on the meetings, comments received, power point presentations that framed the discussion at the meeting and maps indicating the current boundaries of the area and suggestions for changing those boundaries surrounding designated Wilderness area within the NCA proposal. We have also included lists of the participants at the meetings and their affiliations with various stakeholder groups (if they provided that information. The interim report prepared by the staff at NRLPI after the two large public education meetings is also included as an attachment.

As a result of these public meetings and our analysis of the issues that have been advanced, we conclude with five clear policy recommendations. First, there should be an NCA designation for Dominquez Escalante area. Secondly, the existing boundaries of current proposal should be maintained (excluding any private land on the external

boundaries of the NCA proposal). The Wilderness Study Area within the NCA proposed boundaries should become Wilderness with the boundary of the Wilderness moved to the edge of the rim along the river corridor. Because of the many significant issues that still need to be resolved after such a designation there ought to be a mandate to create a management plan to settle these use issues raised in this process. Such a management planning process should have heavy public participation. There is also a significant need to increase resources for management particularly in the areas of enforcement, dedicated staff and trail improvements.

# Report: Evaluation and Recommendations

## Process and Policy Formation

The Natural Resources and Land Policy Institute (NRLPI) of Mesa State College and the Public Lands Partnership (PLP) were invited by the County Commissioners of Mesa, Delta and Montrose counties to call public meetings and facilitate discussion to see what level of consensus (if any), or what varying degrees of support exists for the proposal of an NCA designation for the Dominquez-Escalante Special Management Area on the federal lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

In order to facilitate this public conversation, a series of public meetings were called in Mesa and Delta County in November of 2006 and the summer of 2007. Initially, there were two public education forums. The forum in Delta was facilitated by the Public Lands Partnership and took place in November of 2006. Two panels were organized to establish the issues surrounding the proposal. The speakers on these panels represented various stakeholders including county government, federal land agencies, and user groups such as ranchers, environmentalists, motorized vehicle users and local historians. Public comments (both verbal and written) were encouraged and a summary of these comments can be found in the interim report in attachment “a” of this report. Another public education forum was held on June 14, 2007 at the city hall of Grand Junction in Mesa County. A similar format of two panels and public comment was used, and the meetings were facilitated by the Natural Resources and Land Policy Institute of Mesa State College. The participants of the panels represented various stakeholders including local government, federal land agencies and various user groups such as the Friends of Greater Dominquez coalition, Western Slope ATV Association, the boating community, ranchers, Colorado Plateau Mountain Biking Association and the Colorado Mountain Club. Public comments (both verbal and written) were encouraged and a summary of these comments can be found in the interim report in attachment “a” of this report.

The proposed NCA area was broken into five zones in order to facilitate working groups and ensure that all issues related to the various uses of the land were heard. The zones are: 1: the Gunnison Bluffs area, 2: the Gunnison river corridor; 3: the Cactus Park area, 4: the Dominquez Wilderness Study Area (WSA) and 5: the areas of Wagon Park, Sawmill Mesa and Escalante Canyon (see map in attachment “e” for an accurate depiction of the zones described). A series

of five working group meetings corresponding to each zone were held in the summer of 2007. The meeting for zone 1 was held in the town of Whitewater, CO and facilitated by the NRLPI. The meeting for zone 2 was located in Delta, CO and facilitated by NRLPI. The meeting for zone 3 was held at the Mesa County Courthouse and facilitated by NRLPI. The meeting for zone 4 was held at the Mesa County Fairgrounds and facilitated by NRLPI. The meeting for zone 5 was held in Delta, CO and facilitated by PLP.

The format for these working group meetings generally followed the same pattern. The facilitators would frame the issue by use of a brief presentation of the process and the issues raised from previous meetings (PowerPoint presentations are included in attachment “b” of this report). Participants were then encouraged to offer comments on the issues raised and to add more to the list relevant to that particular zone. In some of the meetings this took the entire two hours, in others there was an opportunity to discuss the pros and cons of the broader proposal. Complete notes from these meetings are contained in attachment “c” of this report. Verbal and written comments were encouraged at all meetings and all written comments submitted are recorded in attachment “d” of this report. Often handouts clarifying issues were made available at the meetings for background purposes and they are included in attachment “f” of this report.

Throughout the working group meetings, our approach remained the same. We invited the public to comment on the proposed NCA designation. This invitation was done through the use of public announcements, letters to leaseholders, sign-up sheets at each of the initial public education forums and e-mails or phone calls two days before each meeting to all those who had expressed interest in that particular zone as indicated on the sign up sheets. A complete list of all the participants of these meetings, and their affiliations (if any) are located in attachment “h” of this report. We have recorded in this report all the data gathered as a result of these meetings. It was assumed that the proposal could become a reality if no opposition was expressed. Thus, we recorded both support and opposition to the NCA designation. If opposition didn’t come forward or concerns weren’t articulated, we assumed tacit consent. There could be some opposition that wasn’t captured by this process, but it was determined that if any policy was to be formed, one must make every effort to surface these concerns then make recommendations based on the data available. This report attempts to do just that.

The guiding question common to all working group meetings was, “Will an NCA designation for the Dominquez-Escalante area help or hurt the issue raised?” This question was asked after every issue raised and responses were recorded. In

the main, it was found that the NCA designation would help more than hurt the vast majority of issues with some exceptions noted later in this report.

It was encouraging to see the large and diverse representation at the summer forums. Records (based on sign up sheets available at all meetings and located in attachment “h” in this report) indicate that 167 different individuals were involved in the process. Assuming that 10-15% did not sign in, nearly 200 people participated in at least one of the meetings in the summer of 2007. The June 14<sup>th</sup> public education meeting had the largest attendance with 72 people signing in. The zone 4 WSA meeting generated the largest working group attendance with 56 people signing in. The zone 1 (Gunnison Bluffs) meeting was the least attended with 22 people signing in. The other zone meetings drew 42 (zone 2), 43 (zone 3) and 36 (zone 5) respectively. Head counts at these meetings by our staff indicate that roughly 10-15% attended but did not sign in.

There was wide geographical representation according to the addresses offered on the sign in sheet, although we would have hoped for stronger representation from Montrose County. The smaller representation from Montrose County (8) could be due in part to the distance these meetings were held from Montrose, or the small percentage of the NCA proposal that is actually in Montrose County. Mesa County had the largest representation with 79 residents attending one or more meetings. 28 Delta County residents attended at least one of the meetings. 52 attendees did not give enough information in the address column to determine their residency.

Another plus was the wide variety of stakeholders represented at the summer forums. Based on declared affiliation on the sign in sheets, all three levels of government (federal, state and county) were represented by 27 participants. The largest group of stakeholders represented (40 individuals) came from the Motorized user community. The Friends of the Greater Dominguez environmental coalition had 25 individuals representing their point of view. Other stakeholders included several members of the Gold Prospectors Association of America, members of the agricultural community (including equestrian riders, ranchers, and land owners), Mountain bikers, researchers, members of the PLP, the media and 42 individuals who did not list an affiliation on the sign in sheets. While there are certainly others that might be considered stakeholders in the area, Participants provided a fair distribution of groups interested in the proposal.

## Issues Raised

Comments raised in the public forums have been grouped into four categories for the purposes of working toward resolution. These categories were discussed at all the zone meetings and new issues were added when presented by the participants. At most of the meetings we posed the question, “Would an NCA designation help or hurt this issue.” The results of responses to that question as well as a description of the concerns associated with the issue raised are summarized below.

The four broad categories of the issues are:

1. Recreation
2. Socio Economic Uses of Public Lands
3. Other Issues
4. Maps and Boundaries

### 1: Recreation

- Motorized vs. Non-motorized areas
  - Concern: On public lands there is a traditional clash between motorized and non-motorized recreational uses. The lands under consideration here are no different in this regard. The main concerns have to do with the safety of non-motorized users sharing trails with vehicles, the noise and pollution caused by motorized use, the desire for a quiet outdoor experience and the increased pressure to close motorized routes to preserve the experience of non-motorized use.
  - NCA help: It was determined that an effective management plan (mandated by NCA status) would clarify these issues by designating areas for motorized and non-motorized use (particularly if part of the area is designated Wilderness). Comments were also received that indicate that other NCA planning processes in the area helped ease some of these traditional tensions as various user groups were made aware of the needs of other groups, and worked collaboratively to achieve “win-win” situations. Concern over the various uses of existing trails is likely to continue without NCA designation. NCA designation requires that these issues will be addressed in the development of the management plan.
  - NCA hurts: There were several comments that expressed concern that an NCA designation and subsequent planning process would limit motorized routes, closing many of them. There is evidence that many routes in other

NCA's have been closed to preserve the resources, however, one must consider the tradeoff of quantity of trails for quality trails. There seems to be a general agreement that the remaining routes left open for motorized use have been helped by improvements made as part of the NCA management plans in both McInnis Canyons NCA (MCNCA) and Gunnison Gorge NCA (GGNCA).

- Trails systems
  - Concerns: Many comments received related to the need to develop and improve trails for all types of uses on the landscape. Additional concerns suggested that the planning process after NCA designation would need to be transparent and accessible to the public to identify the need for and existence of trail systems in the area.
  - NCA helps: Many of the participants suggested that NCA designation could help this issue by providing additional funds to develop and maintain the trail systems in the NCA. Empirically, this is supported by the experience in MCNCA and GGNCA.
  - NCA hurts: Similar reservations to the issue above were offered. More scrutiny under an NCA management plan might close trails and routes. Many participants expressed their concerns on how this could be managed to maintain the quality of experience currently enjoyed on the undesignated land.
  
- Shared use trails
  - Concern: Traditionally there have been few shared use trails in the local BLM lands. If an NCA designation were to be adopted, there might be a need to develop more shared use trails in the area. The public would have to get used to the idea of sharing their trails with other user groups. By doing so, the BLM can maximize the available resources for recreational and traditional use activities.
  - NCA helps: The mandated public collaborative process of developing a management plan for the NCA would provide an opportunity to educate both the public and the stakeholder groups on the merits of the non-traditional shared use trails. The shared use trail system more fully embraces the idea of multiple uses that many argue should be at the heart of any NCA management plan.

- NCA hurts: To the extent that individuals from various stakeholder groups are not willing to embrace the shared trail concept, they might be forced by a new management plan to work with other stakeholders with whom they have serious disagreements.
- Accessibility particularly as it relates to persons with disabilities
  - Concern: Several comments particularly from the motorized community caution against setting aside substantial areas for non-motorized travel because that might discriminate against persons with disabilities who couldn't access the areas without mechanized help. Typical comments include such statements as, "My ATV is my wheelchair and you can't deny me access to public lands just because I can't hike there."
  - NCA helps: While these concerns are significant it was noted in response that the Wilderness Act of 1964 specifically does not exclude persons with disabilities. Further it was noted that there are motorized trails to many of the canyon rims currently that would allow visual access to the Wilderness area. Further, it was noted that river access for persons with disabilities exists in the status quo and might be enhanced by an NCA designation that would allow additional resources to develop access for persons with disabilities to the Wilderness area. This concern is valid for existing WSA designation, thus an NCA designation with Wilderness as a component would not substantially change this concern unless the Wilderness is greatly expanded. Some participants with disabilities found this argument for unlimited access to the area by all means of travel due to the needs of the disabled, particularly offensive.
  - NCA hurts: This is a very real concern with any Wilderness designation. Access to Wilderness area is by definition limited to non-mechanized travel. Attention would need to be paid to this concern in the management planning process after designation, but NCA designation does not preclude this and might even allow for more conversation around this concern due to the mandated planning process.
- Camping Facilities
  - Concern: Camping facilities, especially at the mouth of the Big Dominguez Canyon are suffering from overuse due to increased population pressures. There were also concerns expressed that open camping in the Cactus Park region was degrading the resources. Suggestions were made to increase

permit camping to regulate impact and to require fire pans for open camping in the area.

- NCA helps: These types of concerns are precisely what a management plan is designed to address. To the extent that such a management plan is required as a result of NCA designation, these concerns would need to be addressed in that process. The additional resources anticipated with NCA designation could also be used to improve and expand camping opportunities.
- NCA hurts: It was suggested by several members of the ranching community that an NCA designation would attract attention to the area and increase use, thus increasing the pressure on existing camping resources.
- Consideration of all the different multi-use recreation opportunities
  - Concern: Several comments were offered relating to the need to include all user groups in the planning process and to preserve the multi-use characteristic of the NCA.
  - NCA helps: The unique nature of the NCA in the federal system of land management is that it is committed to multi-use principles. Many have suggested that the advantage of an NCA is that it has “something for everyone.” Thus, an NCA designation for the area is likely to address the concern about keeping multi-use approaches to land management, particularly if those user groups are active in the mandated planning process after designation.
  - NCA hurts: The most significant concern is that NCA designation would close trails and routes, thus decreasing opportunities for multi-use. In the MCNCA and GGNCA experience these concerns seem to be adequately addressed. There were also several comments about the fear that an NCA designation would turn the entire area into a Wilderness area. This is clearly not part of the proposal or any amendment suggested by the participants of the process. The nature of an NCA as a multi-use area would seem to guard against this potential concern.
- Gold Panning
  - Concern: The Gold Prospector’s Association of America is actively engaged in gold panning and light dredging especially in the Rattlesnake Gulch area of the Proposed NCA. They are concerned that an NCA designation would preclude their recreational activities.

- NCA helps: An NCA designation would not stop the recreational use of mineral development on public lands and in public rivers. In the current management plan, any dredging must obtain a permit from the BLM who already have the authority to regulate such activity. This is not likely to change with an NCA designation.
- NCA hurts: That section of the Gunnison River is currently withdrawn from the 1872 Mining Act in the care of the Bureau of Reclamation for the purposes of studying the possibility of a dam on the river. This study has been complete, and an NCA designation would likely keep the area withdrawn from the 1872 Mining act but the withdrawal would be transferred to the BLM for management. Additionally, an NCA designation would likely withdraw the area from the 1920 Minerals Act, and would be off limits to future mineral development. Such a designation would not affect existing claims in the area, but would prohibit the development of new claims.

## 2. Socio-Economic Uses of the Land

- Grazing
  - Concern: There are a number of permit holders for grazing livestock on public lands. They expressed concern that a designation might negatively affect their leases and grazing activity. They were particularly concerned about access to the Wilderness areas in order to maintain fences, cattle, stock ponds and gates.
  - NCA helps: The NCA designation would not preclude grazing on public lands in the area. Special agreements with landowners and grazing lease holders in MCNCA and GGNCA suggest that these concerns can be adequately addressed within an NCA. The Wilderness Act allows for such arrangements to be made. In fact, the lands in the WSA are currently managed as wilderness with little flexibility to deal with the concerns of ranchers. During the creation of legislation to turn the WSA into Wilderness many of the concerns of grazing permit holders can be addressed and written into law. Ranchers were encouraged by the BLM to contact lease-holders in MCNCA and GGNCA to discuss their experiences with these arrangements. It was further suggested, that the additional resources that generally accompany an NCA would allow for cooperative projects between the BLM and lease holders to maintain adequate stock ponds for cattle and the wildlife they also support. There is also the possibility that an NCA designation would attract matching grants for special

projects that would include improvements to grazing infrastructure. This has been the case in other NCAs in the area.

- NCA hurts: It is certainly possible that the NCA designation would attract more recreational tourism putting additional pressure from these stakeholders on federal agencies to limit grazing. However, given the demographic growth of the surrounding counties (they are projected to double in population within 30 years according to the Colorado State Demographer's Office), these pressures are likely to exist regardless of NCA designation. With an NCA designation there is likely to be an increase of resources to manage the area to maintain its traditional multi-use characteristic and protect grazing as a legitimate use of the land.
- Current Private Land Ownership - Agriculture
  - Concern: Private land owners, who are concentrated primarily along the Gunnison River corridor and in Escalante Canyon expressed concern about the difficulty of accessing their property due to Wilderness designation.
  - NCA helps: One of the issues upon which there seemed to be general consensus from all the stakeholders was the need to move the Wilderness boundary to the top of the ridgeline along the river corridor. This would address this concern as well as concerns by landowners to be able to run power to their ranches along the river and develop their gravel bed deposits at some future date. It would take an act of Congress to change the boundary of the WSA in the existing status quo. This solution could be wrapped into the legislation that designates the NCA in the area much easier than it would be able to be changed without NCA designation.
  - NCA hurts: If these changes are made to the Wilderness boundary this issue can be addressed. Unfortunately, land owners are still skeptical that such a promise would be upheld.
- Mining
  - Concern: The NCA designation would preclude future oil and gas development and mineral development in the area.
  - NCA helps: Although there are a few gas leases in the southern section of the proposed NCA area lying within the BLM Uncompahgre Field Office management area, there are no significant oil and gas resources in the rest of the area under consideration. These existing leases would be unaffected, but future leases would be precluded. There are some traditional mining

practices for a variety of mineral resources in the area including uranium, vanadium and other minerals, but most of this activity is beyond the proposed boundary of the NCA and would not be affected by the designation.

- NCA hurts: There is always the potential that some minerals would be unrecoverable from such a designation, however, the claims for recoverable minerals in the area are minimal, and some of the area (the river corridor) is already withdrawn for development. Thus, an NCA designation might not adversely affect this. If an NCA was established and subsequent deposits of oil and natural gas were discovered, these resources could not be developed without federal legislation.
- Tourism
  - Guiding and Outfitting
    - Concern: Limits would need to be placed on commercial guide and outfitting services, particularly on the Gunnison River in order to better manage the resource.
    - NCA helps: There are 10 commercial outfitting permits already issued on this stretch of the Gunnison River. There is also a limit of 25 members of any party on the river. These regulations already exist in the current management plans. An NCA designation would not affect this any more or less than existing management practices would. It should be noted that the limit of 10 commercial outfitters does not apply to outfitters catering to persons with disabilities such as Colorado Discoverability.
    - NCA hurts: An NCA designation is likely to enhance the commercial appeal of the area for outfitters, thus a designation might increase demand for commercial permits without increasing supply of such permits. It should be noted that no person officially identified with commercial outfitting organizations expressed any concern about an NCA designation.
  - Economic benefit to surrounding communities
    - Concern: It was noted in several meetings and in the endorsements from area businesses that an NCA designation would have a

significant benefit to the local area economies through the increased appeal to tourism. Business endorsements suggested that having a third NCA designation in the area (there are currently only 13 in the entire federal system), would definitely make Western Colorado a destination for environmentally oriented tourism, particularly if a Wilderness designation is incorporated into the NCA as it has been in MCNCA and GGNCA .

- NCA benefits: Over 90 businesses in the area signed a letter of support (included in attachment “d” of this report) for the NCA designation with Wilderness at the heart of a broader multi-use area. It is difficult to accurately measure the exact economic benefits of any particular NCA designation such as the proposed Dominguez-Escalante NCA, but there is ample evidence that NCAs do have positive economic benefits to their surrounding communities. Not only tourism, but quality of life appeals would be enhanced for community businesses attempting to attract and keep a qualified workforce in a competitive job market.
- NCA hurts: There were few downsides to an NCA designation expressed when one considers it from the economic benefits to the surrounding community. One concern expressed repeatedly by the ranching community was that NCA designation would provide additional funding to enhance recreational opportunities. They were concerned that eventually these recreationalists would pressure the BLM to deny ranchers their grazing permits.

### 3: Other Issues

- Damage from overuse and increased activity in area
  - Concerns: In a variety of ways, many of the comments expressed in the process centered on the concern that the resources in the proposed NCA area were being degraded because they were being “loved to death.” Overuse, due to increased population in the area, is likely to have lasting impacts on the public lands in the future; much of this damage is already being experienced. Recreational use of the area has increased among every user group. Demographic trends suggest this problem will only get worse. For numbers on use in the area and demographic projections in the three counties, see the PowerPoint slides in attachment “b” of this report. It should be noted that one participant expressed doubt about the accuracy of

the recreational use and demographic numbers presented by the BLM and NRLPI. He suggested that the numbers were inflated thus overstating the need for NCA designation. Those interested in the methodology used to generate their numbers should contact the regional BLM offices in Grand Junction and Montrose as well as the State of Colorado Demographer's Office.

- NCA helps: Public education of healthy land use, proper signage to inform the public of regulations, and dedicated staff to enforce regulations could all be increased with the additional funding that has historically accompanied NCA status for an area. Unfortunately, there were far more needs than additional funding is likely to be able to cover. However, the BLM estimates that it spends @ \$150,000 per year on the area presently compared to \$400,000-\$600,000 spent on each of the two other NCAs in the area. The designation of an NCA also increases the priority of the projects in the designated area in times of budgetary resource scarcity. For a complete breakdown of the comparative costs of land management in the area, see the PowerPoint slides in attachment "b" of this report.
- NCA hurts: A few participants expressed concern that an NCA designation would literally "put the area on the map" thus attracting even more use and overuse of the land. This is certainly a valid concern. The tradeoff that exists between increased use from NCA designation and increased funding to help manage the NCA cannot be determined at this time. However, it is anticipated that increased use of this land will occur regardless of NCA designation. The increase in funding associated with NCA designation will provide the BLM with better opportunity to address the problems caused by increased use.
- Enforcement issues
  - Concern: The increased population also increases the likelihood of damage from vandalism, trespass, and artifact theft.
  - NCA helps: Increased resources associated with NCA designation can be used to hire additional staff, particularly in the area of law enforcement. Often there are existing regulations to manage the use and abuse of the land, but there are too few resources to enforce these regulations on a consistent basis. The area is already receiving some additional enforcement in the Escalante Canyon and potholes area from the increased enforcement staff of the Gunnison Gorge NCA which were added after its NCA designation.

- NCA hurts: There may be some increase in use and associated enforcement issues as a result of NCA designation, however, experience with MCNCA and GGNCA suggest that this is more than offset by the additional dedicated staff resources that accompany an NCA. The staff of the GGNCA suggested in the zone 5 meeting that vandalism and other enforcement problems actually went down as a result of NCA designation for that area.
- Trails - repair and construction
  - Concern: Like so many areas on BLM land in the Grand Junction and Uncompahgre Field Offices, there are not enough current resources to maintain and construct the trails needed to serve the recreational needs of the growing population in the surrounding counties. There is also a lack of prioritization on non-designated lands due to lack of resources.
  - NCA helps: To the extent that NCA status draws in more resources and increases the prioritization of trail projects in the area, then an NCA designation would definitely help with this issue. However, this is not a panacea, and there are still likely to be fewer resources than demands for trail maintenance and construction. Nevertheless, designation should help here. The designation would also bring attention to the Old Spanish Historic Trail that runs through the area. The communities of Grand Junction and Delta have been interested in developing this trail as a way of connecting the two communities.
  - NCA hurts: There was no downside to NCA designation for this issue expressed during the meetings.
- Permitting issues to manage use
  - Concern: Several comments, especially early in the process, centered on the possible need to issue permits for some uses in the area, in order to manage use of the resource.
  - NCA helps: The mandated planning process would allow a full discussion of management options including the possibility of permits for certain uses. While the NCA designation would mandate a management planning process, the possibility of permits and other management tools exists currently and would likely increase due to population growth regardless of NCA status.

- NCA hurts: The idea of increased permits to regulate use was strongly resisted by some participants. Further discussion on this issue needs to take place regardless of designation. NCA designation would not necessarily make permits more or less likely than non-designation.
- Biological impacts of human activity
  - Concern: More people in the area have had negative effects on the wildlife, particularly in the Wilderness Study Area. Since the pedestrian bridge was installed at Bridgeport in 2006, the BLM trail counters indicate over 10,000 people have crossed the bridge. There is a resident herd of bighorn sheep in the immediate area and there were several conversations on the impact of this increased traffic; none of it conclusive. The staff of NRLPI visited the bridge area and Big Dominguez canyon twice during the summer, and herds of 25 and 40 sheep were spotted in the area during these visits. When asked, CDOW officials at the meetings said it was too early to conclusively determine what impact there was on the herd, but they are gathering data and monitoring the situation with interest.
  - NCA helps: The NCA designation would not change hunting or game management regulations necessarily. Several comments were received concerning the need to protect wildlife access to the river corridor of the NCA. Boundary issues on the river, discussed elsewhere in this report, suggest that these concerns can be accommodated in an NCA designation and subsequent management plan. The NCA status, it was suggested by a few participants, would also serve to help wildlife by the opportunity that exists for public education on these issues as a result of the attention an NCA designation would draw to the area.
  - NCA hurts: More attention, we were reminded by some participants, means more interest in the area and more population pressure as a result. This is certainly a possibility that should be considered. Every effort should be made to address this in the management planning process regardless of NCA status.
- Archeological site access and protection
  - Concern: It has been estimated by (DARG) archeologists that there are over 2000 documented sites of archeological interest in the NCA proposal area. These sites are part of the cultural heritage of the community and the country and ought to be protected according to all who commented in the meetings.

- NCA helps: DARG officials sent an enthusiastic letter of support for the NCA designation (See letter attached in attachment section “d.ii” in this report). This letter details all of the reasons why these sites should be preserved and how the NCA proposal is an excellent way to do that. There is also a significant opportunity with more resources as a result of designation to educate the public regarding this important cultural heritage.
- NCA hurts: No comments were received specifically relating to harm to the archeological sites as a result of designation except for the general caution about increased attention drawn to the area. This might increase the pressure on the archeological sites if people decide to “love them to death.”
- Noxious Weeds
  - Concern: The meetings for zone 1 and 2 were full of concerns about noxious weed control in the area, particularly cheat grass in zone 1 and Tamarisk and Russian Knapweed along the river corridor.
  - NCA helps: These problems will exist regardless of the designation status of the land; however, most at the meetings agreed that if there were more resources as a result of designation, then some of these could be directed to help the problem. The “weed sprayer” boat is an example of such work in MCNCA as a result of additional funds made available to the NCA.
  - NCA hurts: No comments were received on how NCA designation would make this issue worse, only concern that even with designation there still might not be enough resources to address the issue. This is a valid concern, but it is also a constant concern about all public lands and the resources available to address concerns such as noxious weeds.
- Dam along Gunnison River
  - Concern: An NCA designation would preclude the possibility of constructing a dam on the Gunnison River in the area for the purposes of water storage and recreational opportunities. There was one tireless advocate of this position that attended almost every meeting this summer, and a couple others who showed support for the concern. The dam, according to its advocates, would help with water storage, recreation, hydro-electric production, and wildfire prevention through the use of its water to put out fires.
  - NCA helps: The NCA would not help this issue, as it would rule out the possibility of a dam at that location.

- NCA hurts: The dam was proposed over 15 years ago and in 1992 the BLM, the Bureau of Reclamation, the US Fish and Wildlife Service and other agencies (both federal and state) issued recommendations that a dam not be built on that stretch of the Gunnison for a variety of reasons (for a detailed discussion of the 1992 findings, see the letter in attachment “d.ii”, a brief description of those arguments follows here). Government agencies argued against a dam in the NCA proposal area because it would have a negative impact on several Threatened and Endangered fish species protected by the Endangered Species Act of 1973. Additionally, the BLM expressed concerns about impacts to the Wilderness Study Area upstream, particularly in regard to the solitude experience sought by some stakeholders. The Bureau of Reclamation’s feasibility study for the proposed project rejected the site and expressed concerns about the projects impact on other BoR administered projects. Archeological surveys of the area as a result of the study indicated that numerous archeological sites would be damaged or destroyed if a dam were built in the area. The BLM also sited a lack of enhancement to recreation as a dam would change the area from a primitive/no facilities to water-based motorized which would require more facility development and maintenance. These would require more resources without additional funding being made available, thus, drawing resources away from other projects. Finally, the active railroad line that runs along the river throughout the entire NCA proposal area would have to be relocated if a dam were built. This adds significantly to the cost of the project. All of these concerns related to a proposed Dominquez Dam project were expressed several times during the forums by BLM officials. While this objection to an NCA designation for the area is legitimate in that an NCA designation would preclude the dam project, it is not a reason to reject the NCA proposal because of the numerous problems with the construction of the dam at this site.

#### 4: Maps and Boundaries

Many of the changes suggested to the boundaries were noted on maps that were laminated and made available at every working group meeting so that suggestions of boundary changes could be documented. After each meeting, the suggested lines were transferred to a large wall map that contained a master legend of all changes proposed so far. Written comments were encouraged on these maps and proposed changes, and cards were made available for such comments. All suggestions have been transferred to a map included in attachment “e” of this report. If additional map suggestions were received, we included them in attachment “d” of this report.

- Expansion and contraction of NCA boundaries
  - Concern: Most participants expressed support for the external boundaries of the NCA. Some were concerned that any boundary would divert resources from other areas. The Friends of Greater Dominquez offered recommendations that additional lands be added to the NCA (see proposal in attachment “d.iii”). There was also concern that care be taken to exclude private property within these boundaries from the NCA, in many cases this could be done by drawing the boundary around the property in question rather than making it an in-holding.

The boundaries around the outer part of the NCA would be part of the legislation. The area is bounded by Highway 50 to the north, Highway 141 to the west, the boundary between USFS land and BLM land to the south, and 25 Mesa Road to the east. As long as private lands were excluded, this was supported by most participants. It was suggested that the BLM and CDOW negotiate to exchange the current CDOW in-holding within the current Dominquez WSA as part of this legislation. Both agencies indicated that the dialogue to make this happen has already begun and it could be a part of the final legislative proposal.

Among participants supportive of the NCA designation, only the Friends of the Greater Dominquez coalition and their supporters advocated any change to the external boundary. They argued that the boundary, especially on the south side (between BLM and USFS) does not follow natural watersheds but rather agency lines on the map that are not reflective of the landscape. To that end, they suggest a more “natural” boundary to include Black Point in the NCA, and designate it Wilderness along with the current WSA adjacent to it. They also propose adding the area of Kelso Mesa in the USFS land to the NCA designating it as an area in need of study for wilderness suitability. Finally, they have proposed adding the Camelback WSA to the NCA designation with a status of “Special Management Area” which has already been given to the adjacent Rubidoux Special Management Area in the Uncompahgre National Forest. For a detailed account and arguments for their proposal see the proposal in attachment “d.iii”. There is considerable resistance to all or part of their proposal from a variety of groups such as the USFS, the county commissioners of Mesa, Delta and Montrose counties, much of the ATV community, and many of the area ranchers. See, for example, the USFS response to the Black Point and Kelso Mesa proposals in attachment “d.ii” of this report. Noting this, the Friends of Greater Dominquez still wish the

proposal to be considered, but are strongly in support of NCA designation even if it does not have lands beyond the proposed boundaries outlined above and on the map in attachment “e” in this report.

- Expansion and contraction of Wilderness area
  - Concern: There was a lot of discussion about wilderness boundaries in several of the meetings this summer. Some in the motorized community would wish no Wilderness at all as it infringes on their freedom to “do what they want and go where they want” on public lands. We surmise that absolutely no wilderness is the opinion of a small minority of even these participants.

Most participants recognize the need for Wilderness designation of at least a part of this NCA. Generally, it is agreed that the boundaries should follow the boundaries of the current WSA. There are three important and noted exceptions to this. First, there is general agreement that it would be advantageous to move the Wilderness boundary to the rim of the river corridor to make it a more natural and defensible boundary, and to allow access for land owners along the river bottom. Secondly, many argued that the Wilderness boundaries in all locations should follow obvious landmarks (such as rims and roads) as much as possible. Finally, as noted in the previous issue raised, the Friends of the Greater Dominguez coalition advocate keeping the current WSA boundary and expanding it to include Black Point on USFS land, and to include the Northern area of zone 3 (Cactus Park) between the Tabauache trail and the River (not including a road that bounds the current WSA and divides it from this piece of primitive land). Western Colorado Congress submitted a petition with almost 500 signatures in support of their proposal and a list of 90 businesses that also supported the designation of Wilderness (the text of the petition and the names of the businesses have been included with their proposal in attachment “d” of this report). There were many who objected to the expansion of wilderness boundaries particularly in the Cactus Park area, arguing that there are many motorized routes in the area already. One participant submitted a written reply to this addition to wilderness arguing that if separated from the larger piece of Wilderness in the current WSA by an obvious road to the river, then the piece lacks the 5000 acre requirement for Wilderness designation under the 1964 Wilderness Act. It is possible that adding the Cactus Park north area to a Wilderness designation would lose the support of many in the Motorized and Ranching communities who might otherwise support or at least not object to NCA designation and the

current Wilderness boundaries. To be sure, there are some in the Motorized and Ranching communities that do not support NCA designation or Wilderness designation regardless of this addition.

- Inventory issues – getting the maps right
  - Concern: The routes shown on the maps offered by the BLM in the process were not updated or accurate, particularly the routes in zone 3 and to a limited extent zone 4. The BLM offered to work with anyone who knew of other routes to update the inventory. This has impact primarily on the Wilderness designation of lands in the NCA proposal. Some suggested that there were several routes in areas under Wilderness Study Area status or consideration by the Friends of the Greater Dominguez for Wilderness designation. The BLM GJFO may be better able to assess the outcome of these conversations. They have suggested trail designation and route inventories are an on-going process by their very nature and would continue with or without NCA designation. Many of these routes and trails are likely “social trails” that are created by unplanned use in order to access a particular landscape feature such as a view or the river.
  
- Interagency land management
  - Concern: It was suggested by a several participants that the NCA should incorporate lands managed by more than the BLM, particularly lands managed by USFS. The reluctance of the USFS to support adding their lands to the NCA proposal was offered as evidence of interagency “turf wars.” The Forest Service denied this allegation suggestion instead that the Uncompahgre National Forest is in the midst of a multi-year public management planning process. The lands suggested for wilderness designation and incorporation into the NCA are already being managed as roadless areas. The USFS suggested that it would undermine the years of public process that has already gone into the planning for the Uncompahgre National Forest to ignore those recommendations and list it as Wilderness within the NCA. (For an excellent articulation of the USFS position on these matters, see their written submission in attachment “d.ii” of this report). They have also suggested that additional Wilderness Designation and NCA status on USFS lands would not necessarily benefit the land in the same way it would with a designation on BLM land due to the nature of federal funding for the two different agencies. There have been examples

of interagency management of NCAs in the federal system, but it is not common (See background Information on federal NCAs and other designations in attachment “g” of this report).

It was clear from the process that there already is a significant amount of interagency discussion surrounding this NCA proposal. Staff members from the BLM, USFS, CDOW and all three counties have been in continuous communication over the issues identified in this report. This was evident during meeting breaks and after each public forum, as well as, many other smaller meetings members of NRLPI attended during this summer.

## Advantages and Concerns of Proposed NCA designation

To facilitate decision making a list of the advantages and concerns surrounding the proposition is provided here. This is a helpful exercise for clarifying the lengthy issue summary above, and for moving forward toward policy recommendations. In response to public encouragement at the first zone meeting (zone 1 - June 21, 2007 in Whitewater, CO), a list of the advantages and concerns of an NCA designation was prepared with input from the meeting participants. Below are the results of that effort. At several subsequent meetings, additions to the lists were made. Much of the analysis of the advantages and concerns were developed in the issues section above; consequently, only a listing of the results of the discussion with minimal comments beyond a description of each argument are contained in the following section.

Advantages of NCA designation (from June 21 Zone 1 meeting)

- **Dedicated staff including more enforcement officers** - other NCAs in the area have staff dedicated to the NCA that focus attention on all issues raised in the management of public lands.
- **Help focus - prioritize projects** - each field office is responsible for hundreds of thousands of acres of public lands. Clearly defined boundaries helps prioritize the planning of trails and other projects. There are also additional resources often available for these projects for lands set aside in designated areas such as NCAs.
- **Have the right for public input** - While it is true that the public always has the right to offer input on the management and planning for public lands, the NCA designation would mandate a planning process that must include significant public participation. Thus, NCA designation would increase public participation in the management of the area.

- **Defined boundaries on BLM land** – Unlike other land agencies such as the USFS and the NPS who have clearly definable boundaries to forests and national parks, the BLM is charged with the management of all other federal lands in the system. While the distinction between BLM and non-BLM land is clear, the ability to focus attention on special places in the BLM management area is one of the important benefits from NCA designation.
- **Educational process** – By openly discussing the challenges of land management and multi-use, the public is educated on the needs of fellow stakeholders and government agencies on the land. The public also learns of the unique qualities that make the land worthy of NCA designation.
- **Positive economic benefits on the local communities** – As suggested earlier, there are many positive economic benefits to the local communities as a result of tourism, quality of life issues, workforce recruitment, etc. This would be especially true for the communities of Grand Junction and Delta both of whom would be located between two different NCAs if the Dominguez-Escalante area was designated an NCA.
- **More funding-specific budget line** – Empirically, NCAs get more funding than non-designated lands. This has been true of the two NCAs in Western Colorado since their inception. This is due in part to the separate budget line for the NCA and partly due to the ability to tailor grant proposals to a specific recognized piece of land.
- **More transparent process** – The public discussions before the NCA designation and the mandated public participation in the management planning for the area as part of the NCA designation makes the land management more transparent to the public, if they wish to follow the process.
- **User groups are more respectful of each other** – By hearing the concerns of other user groups in the planning process, several participants thought that user groups became more understanding of the needs of other groups in the planning process in MCNCA and GGNCA.
- **Certainty on management in future** – By designating the land as an NCA, particularly with Wilderness in the center of it, there is a great deal of clarity given to land management in the future, and it would take another act of Congress to change its status, whereas with no designation, existing land uses could be changed by the managing agency (of course the current WSA designation would also take an act of Congress to change).
- **Multiple use plus wilderness** - A real advantage of the “something for everyone” approach to an NCA is that it can have a wide variety of uses in its management

plan from the more restrictive such as Wilderness designation, to the less restrictive multi-use areas such as the areas of zone 1, 3, 5.

- **Recreational opportunities** - Increased funding and project prioritization with NCA status could translate into more recreational opportunities, as well as better quality of opportunities in the area.
- **Preservation of landscape and cultural resources** - As noted earlier, archeologists suggest NCA designation is one of the best ways to preserve the cultural resources, especially those in the Wilderness area. The landscape is also likely to benefit from the increased resources that usually accompany NCA status.
- **Draws attention to the area** - The NCA designation would literally put the area on the map. With three of the 14 NCAs in the federal system within 100 miles of each other in Western Colorado, there certainly would be more interest in tourism in the area. This was seen as an advantage by those focused on the economic benefits to local communities.
- **Calls attention to wildlife** - It was thought that an NCA designation would draw more attention to the wildlife in the region, particularly the threatened and endangered species. There were several comments that suggested even the process of discussing NCA status drew attention to the wildlife. This could lead to greater protection for the threatened and endangered species as the public is made more aware of their habitat.

Additional advantages raised at other meetings:

- **Proactive management plan** - The Colorado State Demographers Office suggests a doubling of population in surrounding counties in the next 30 years. The NCA designation and subsequent planning process would allow land managers and others to take a proactive approach to planning for the additional impacts this growing population is likely to have on the NCA.
- **Success in other NCAs should ease concerns about designation for Dominguez-Escalante area** - Success of McInnis Canyons and Gunnison Gorge NCAs in the area give precedent for this NCA's success.
- **Need for balance** - It was suggested that there is an important balance offered by Wilderness designation for part of the NCA relative to land being developed at a rapid rate in the surrounding counties and across the country.
- **Highlight paleontological resources** - NCA status would highlight and protect unique paleontological resources in the area including recent discovery of a

sauropod dinosaur fossil in the Dakota formation just inside the NCA proposed boundaries on Sawmill Mesa. This is apparently an extremely rare find, and an important discovery to advance paleontological research.

Concerns regarding designating the area as an NCA (June 21 meeting, Whitewater, CO).

- **Too much focus (resources) on one specific area** - Concern was expressed that by setting some land aside the BLM would draw resources away from other undesignated land. This is certainly possible, but may be significantly offset by new federal funding available once an NCA is designated.
- **Draws attention to the area** - This was also listed as an advantage, but in this context more attention leads to increased population pressure and over use and abuse of the land.
- **May hinder future water storage and power plants** - It will preclude any water storage plans in the NCA boundary, but would not necessarily affect water storage elsewhere in the region. The proposed Dominquez dam was studied and rejected (see discussion above).
- **Could restrict access** - A common concern, especially among the ATV users. This would need to be carefully considered in the planning process. It was suggested that actual routes might decrease, but the quality of the remaining routes would be much better, and the landscape could be preserved for future generations.
- **Increase pressure on wildlife** - This was a concern especially about the increased traffic across the Bridgeport Bridge into the WSA and the resident herd of Bighorn Sheep in the area. This is being studied currently by the CDOW. There was also some concern for the Threatened and Endangered Species in the river, but the impact of increased visitation was not as clearly linked to this.
- **Could increase access** - There was equal concern that an NCA would encourage more use, and the current WSA could be shrunk as a result of motorized user advocacy during the formation process. Also concerns were expressed that improvements such as the Bridgeport Bridge have increased access opportunities to otherwise extremely rough and remote country which creates the opportunity for overuse of sensitive areas.
- **Increase pressure to eliminate grazing for NCA** - This is a related concern to population pressure expressed by ranchers. They fear that an NCA designation will make people think the land is special and should not be “spoiled” by the presence of cattle. Nothing in the NCA would prohibit cattle grazing in the area,

nor change current leases. This could be a problem in the future, regardless of designation, if the population grows as projected.

- **Increase incidents of trespassing/gates left open, etc.** – This was another concern among the ranchers. They argued that more people mean more opportunities to trespass, leave gates open, etc. Again, this is likely to happen regardless of NCA status if the populations grow in the next few years as projected. The NCA might make resources available for public education on the issue, and for more signage that would help people distinguish between private and public land.

Additional concerns raised at other meetings:

- **Would increase pressure on other public lands if there were closures or restrictions on this land.** – If people could no longer recreate in the manner they have grown accustomed to, they will go elsewhere in the public lands system, thus increasing pressure on those resources.
- **Creation of a Federal Reserve water right** – This issue did not come up during the process, but was expressed by an individual in a phone conversation after the process was completed. The concern is that creation of an NCA will imply the creation of a federal reserve water right that may preclude future changes to water rights upstream. This issue has been successfully addressed in other NCAs by the inclusion of language in the enabling legislation that states there is no implied federal reserve water right associated with the creation of this NCA. See attachment “g” for the language surrounding this issue in other NCAs.
- **This represents change** – There is always some objection to the idea of any change in any public forum. Many argue variations on the theme, “things are fine the way they are” and “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” While there was some sympathy for this concern, given the growing population and the close proximity of the landscape to that population, it is doubtful that things will remain as they are regardless of NCA designation. The real question is what, if anything, the NCA designation would do to alter this.
- **Can’t trust the government to do what they promise** – Unfortunately, during the process it became clear, that there was a high level of distrust for any government plans or promises from a number of the stakeholders involved. It is difficult to argue against examples given of the government “letting people down or breaking promises.” However, a positive experience of government cooperation on the NCA could turn this into a positive in the future, as trust is built one project at a time.

### Analysis of advantages and concerns raised

The advantages identified as a result of this process are more numerous than the concerns. Many of the concerns identified are not necessarily unique or even germane to the question of NCA designation, although there are a few that need careful consideration before a policy is recommended.

Many of the concerns are based on misconceptions about the process of creating an NCA and the not in have not been part of the experience of operating NCAs in the rest of the federal system. One of the purposes of this report is to clarify those misconceptions and to ground our analysis, response and recommendations in the empirical reality of other NCAs in the federal system.

## **Policy Support/Opposition**

In this section, each of the major stakeholders is identified and an attempt is made to indicate whether they support the proposed NCA designation if that can be determined by their oral and written comments in this process. In some cases, the level of support was confirmed by talking with representatives from these groups while compiling this report, or reading their support in written submissions found in attachment “d”. It should be strongly noted that not all stakeholders in any given category would concur with the assessment of their group’s position here. This is true of the membership of any group on almost any issue. As such efforts were made to determine from the data the stakeholder’s positions and issues (discussed in greater depth above). All of the data from the process is included in the numerous attachments to this report so that one could determine for themselves the position of stakeholders..

### Agencies

BLM - Support

Issues: Budget, Enforcement, Wilderness Designation, Multiple Uses

USFS - Support

Issues: Kelso Mesa and Black Point additions, Public Planning Process

CDOW - Support

Issues: Land Swap (In-holding in WSA), Impact of increased use on wildlife

### Local Government

Mesa County - undetermined

Traditional Support and Past resolutions - See attached resolutions and description of Mesa county action regarding Wilderness and other designations in the Dominquez Escalante area. See supporting documents and the resolution in attachment "g".

Past success with McInnis Canyons NCA

Delta County - undetermined

Issues: Addition of Camelback WSA and Rubidoux Canyon

Past success with Gunnison Gorge NCA

Montrose County - undetermined

Issues: Addition of Camelback WSA and Rubidoux Canyon

### Stakeholders:

Friends of Greater Dominquez (Environmental Coalition) - support

Issues: addition of other wilderness parcels outside designated NCA proposed boundaries, change status of zone 3 north area to wilderness, wilderness designation for WSA is key to support, wildlife is important especially endangered species in river, solitude opportunities important, enforcement of regulations needs improvement and resources, "thinking like a mountain"

Business - support

90 companies publically supported

GJ Chamber of Commerce letter of support (see attachment "d.ii")

Economic opportunities for surrounding communities

Mountain Bikers - qualified support

Issues: access to wilderness, offered alternative designation that allows for bike access to WSA lands

Boaters - support

Issues: overuse of resource, especially campground at mouth of Dominquez canyon, permits for river use

Archeologists - support

Issues: damage to archeological sites, see support letter

Indigenous Population - neutral

Not visible in process, archeologists suggest Ute support to protect sacred and cultural sites

Equestrian Community - support

Issues: resources to increase and maintain trails

Hikers - support

Issues: quiet experience and solitude is best preserved by Wilderness areas, noise is a problem as is safety

Gold Prospectors - neutral to some support

Issues: access to continued prospecting that will be limited by NCA designation

Motorized Users - Mixed to not supportive

Issues: Increased regulations, access to wilderness areas, trail closures, accuracy of routes mapped, philosophical opposition to wilderness designation.

Ranchers and landowners - Mixed to not supportive

Issues: access to property and management of fences stock ponds and gates, opposition to any change, increased use leads to pressure to limit grazing rights in area.

Water Storage proponents - not supportive

Issues: want to build dam on Gunnison River which would be precluded in NCA.

## Consensus, Support and Disagreement

The purpose of this process was to determine what if any consensus there was for this proposal. Efforts were made to gauge the level of support for the proposition and detail the concerns raised where there was disagreement among the participants of the process. All the issues identified during the process have been discussed, and a list of the advantages and concerns has been prepared. There were several points of consensus in this process, although there was not complete consensus on the designation itself. These points are listed as the common ground on which nearly every stakeholder agreed. Next, the points on which there was not necessarily any consensus, but strong support from most of the participants are listed. This is where the common ground begins to crack, but is still firm. Finally, we list those points on which there was significant disagreement during the process. To push the metaphor, this ground is unstable and might benefit from time and more interaction. These areas of disagreement are points at which significant members of the stakeholder's coalition begin to part ways. Based on these points of consensus, support and disagreement, policy recommendations are made in the final section of this report.

### Consensus:

- Love of Land
- Historic Ties to Land
- Land has characteristics for NCA designation
- Archeological resources in the area are extensive and deserve protection
- NCA should be multiple-use
- Boundaries of the current NCA Proposal should be maintained
- Need more resources to manage land
- Wilderness boundary should be moved to the edge of the rim along the river corridor

Strong Support:

- Need more enforcement of laws on land
- Some NCA designation is a good idea
- Part of the proposal ought to be wilderness

Disagreement:

- Addition of other lands to proposals, particularly Black Point, Kelso Mesa, Camelback WSA, and Rubidoux Special Management Area.
- Addition of Dam to River
- Wilderness in north part of Cactus Park within NCA
- Cherry stemming of roads into wilderness area
- Accuracy of maps and route survey

**Recommendations\***

1. NCA Designation for Dominguez Escalante Area.
2. Existing Boundaries of current proposal should be maintained.
3. WSA area within boundaries should become Wilderness with the boundary of the Wilderness moved to the edge of the rim along the river corridor.
4. Mandate a management plan to settle the use issues raised in this process. Such a management planning process should have heavy public participation.
5. Increase resources for management particularly in the areas of enforcement, dedicated staff and trail improvements.

\* It is important to note that while the PLP facilitated two of the public meetings, they do not as an organization support any position on the question of NCA designation. In fact, the PLP as an organization based on their mission as an organization cannot endorse any management action in the region. The recommendations of this report and analysis are the product of the staff of NRLPI after consideration of the data and comments presented by all stakeholders throughout the summer of 2007.

# Attachments

## A: Interim Report after Public Education Forums

Dominquez-Escalante Management Area

Public Forum

June 14, 2007

Summary Report

Prepared by

Natural Resources and Land Policy Institute

Mesa State College

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- VI. Working Group sign up list
- VII. Contact list of participants from PLP Meeting - Nov. 2006 in Delta, CO
- VIII. Zone Map for Working Groups of NCA Proposal
- IX. Friends of Greater Dominguez Proposal and Map

Cc: John Peacock, Mesa County Administrator

Catherine Robertson, Field Manager, BLM, Grand Junction field office

Barbara Sharrow, Field Manager, BLM Uncompahgre field office

Charlie Richmond, Forest Supervisor, USFS, GMUG forest office

Field Office, Ken Salazar, US Senate

Field Office, Wayne Allard, US Senate

Field Office, John Salazar, US House of Representatives

Delta County Commissioners

Montrose County Commissioners

Pam Motley, Public Lands Partnership

Ken Straley, Outdoor Recreation Planner, BLM, Grand Junction field office

Ron Velarde, CDOW, Grand Junction Office

Renzo Del Piccolo, CDOW, Montrose Office

## Executive Summary and Analysis

A three hour public meeting hosted by Mesa County was held on June 14, 2007 at Grand Junction City Hall in order to educate the public and begin the process of building consensus around a National Conservation Area designation for the Dominguez-Escalante Management Area. This meeting was facilitated by the staff of the Natural Resources and Land Policy Institute of Mesa State College. This was the second public meeting in the process.<sup>1</sup> These meetings were intended to identify all the issues that need to be considered in follow-up working groups<sup>2</sup> held throughout the summer. The meeting was attended by over 75 people<sup>3</sup> and broadcast live on the public access channel. The meeting was divided into two panels and two opportunities for public comment. The first panel focused on background and agency presentations. The second panel focused on a representative sample of stakeholder groups. In general, the meeting was positive with a wide variety of issues identified.

We have summarized some of the recurrent themes/issues as follows:

- Wilderness boundaries
- Trails systems
- Accessibility to area
  - For maintenance
  - Rescue operations
  - Disabled
- Camping Facilities
- Inventory issues
  - Accuracy of Maps/Trails
- Landscape planning
  - Need for interagency cooperation in land management
  - Need to follow natural boundaries when designating management approaches
- Enforcement of Rules
- Motorized vs. Non-Motorized uses
- Permitting
- Need to reach out to user groups not represented in panels
- Possibility of water storage/reservoir
- Need for user groups to describe specific boundaries they prefer

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<sup>1</sup> Comments and a contact list from the earlier meeting have been included in this report.

<sup>2</sup> Sign-up sheets included in this report.

<sup>3</sup> 71 people in attendance left their contact information included in this report.

- Biological issues including flora and fauna

Several of these comments are focused on specific management decisions that are perhaps too detailed to be included in the legislation. Several other comments are based on misinformation. Clarification of this misinformation has to be a goal of this public meeting process. We believe that the working groups will serve this purpose and help to more clearly identify these and additional concerns in the hopes that we might move this process forward.

To move forward on legislation only two things are absolutely needed:

1. General Consensus from the community that legislation creating an NCA is a good idea for the Dominguez-Escalante Management Area.
2. Specific boundaries for the NCA as a whole and any special management areas within it such as Wilderness Area designation.

While it will be an important outcome of this process that the land managers gain some understanding of how the community hopes the land will be managed, we ought to be careful not to get so caught up in the details during these working groups that we miss the broader requirements of moving forward.

In order to facilitate the working groups, we have clustered the above concerns into three categories. We will offer these categories, solicit others, develop consensus on the placement of concerns in these categories, and then address them one at a time to resolve issues if possible. The categories are the following:

- **Maps and Boundaries**
  - Expansion and contraction of Wilderness Area
  - Inventory issues – getting the maps right
  - Interagency land management
- **Recreational Opportunities**
  - Motorized vs. Non-motorized areas
  - Trails systems needed
  - Shared use trails
  - Accessibility

- Camping Facilities
- Consideration of all the different multi-use recreation opportunities
- **Impacts of Public use of Public Lands**
  - Damage from overuse and increased activity in area
  - Enforcement issues
  - Trails – repair and construction
  - Permitting issues to manage use
  - Grazing access
  - Biological impacts of human activity
  - Archeological site access and protection

An important question to focus discussion will be, “Would an NCA designation help or hurt our ability to deal with this concern?”

## **Meeting Notes for June 14, 2007 Dominquez-Escalante Public Education Meeting**

### **Opening speaker Steve AcquaFresca**

A special thanks from the Chamber of Commerce

Raise support on management of the area

Paying special attention to this area

Club 20

Supports the consensus of the public

Applauds the process of the public forum

### **Dr. Tim Casey – NRLPI Mesa State College**

Gets the issue on the table

2 different panels

1. Presentation from the BLM and the Forest Service
2. Representatives sample of the different groups interested in the area

## **Dr. John Redifer – NRLPI Mesa State College**

This is a community plan and should include talking to all the people

Natural Resource and Land Policy Institute is committed to maintaining the values of the conservations and wants to provide facilities and research

“The beginning of the end and the end of the beginning.”

Wants to find general consensus for national conservation area (NCA)

2 things needed to move forward

1. general consensus from the community that the NCA in this area is a good idea.

2. Boundaries of NCA and Wilderness area

The tricky part is the boundaries of the area.

## **Pam Motely-- PLP**

Goals

1. Influence the management of the lands

2. Promote public input

Hosted the 1st community awareness of the area in November 2006 in Delta

1. Over 50 people

Similar format

Outcomes from the meeting

Realized the passion for the area

Apparent that people have very different desires for the final outcome

More users of the area came forward that “we were aware there was.” It helps frame a large outlook

Will host 2 different focus groups in Delta

## **BLM: Barb Sharrow and Catherine Robertson, BLM**

Focus people ideas and thoughts into the different zones

Originally had 9 different zones but broke them down into 5 based on use

Primary focus is the actual public use for the lands

Purpose of zones is to help with discussion, nothing is set in stone

### **Catherine Robertson**

Zone 1: Gunnison Bluffs

Day use. Some four wheel drive and mountain bikes.

Community linkage trail between Grand Junction and Delta

Increasing private land development especially in Whitewater, especially in the last 10 years or so

Zone 2: Gunnison River

Canoeing--day use mostly

Class 1 maybe class 2 river

Have created more access points ( 4 or 5)

Camping is a challenge especially in Dominquez Campground

Zone 3: Cactus Park

A conflict zone

The northern area borders the river

No roads

Backcountry--solitude

The rest of zone 3 is:

Better developed. Better trails

Connectivity issues with the forest service

HWY 141 scenic route

Growth is going to heavily increase

Zone 4: The wilderness study area

2 canyons

Native America Art

Ute Tribe

Big horn sheep

The new bridge has increase the public use of the 2 canyons

Lands itself are multigenerational

Education is key: How to use the area suitable for a WSA. The WSA plan was originally requested in 1962.

Zone 5 – Escalante Canyon, Sawmill Mesa

A lot of the uses in the bubble in the northern area surrounded by the WSA are used the same as the southern parts of zone 5, therefore we combined the zones.

Hunting

Roads and trails

Common user group

### **Barb Sharrow**

The southern part is close to Delta. Delta has a historic connect to the lands

Escalante canyon is drivable and you get a good sense of ranching/history/culture and beauty to the area.

There are also historic cabins up there.

Pink Area – Area of Critical Environmental Concern

Rare plant life – hanging gardens

Travel up-- great access to the forest and close to the wilderness study area

Trails

McCarty--12 miles

Gunnison Park

And many historical trails

Zone 5

Access to the forest straight from Delta

Historic treatment back in the 50s

Have gone back in recent years to see how the treatments were doing and to update some.

Road systems

ATV

Jeep

Four wheel drive

Rattlesnake canyon

Gold mining

Great over looks

**USFS—Charlie Richmond**

The land that is up-stream from the NCA proposal

188,000 acres

96% Forest

4% Private land

8% vegetation

Road less area

Back in the 70s there were an estimated 58,330 acres of roadless land

Recently did a revision and found there is actually less road less area

57,842 acres total

5,810 available wildernesses

47,466 capable of maintain roads?

4,446 inventory (what is left )

Multiple uses

Timber

Hiking/mountain biking

Grazing

Motorized use

Land Management Plan

MA 2- 267 acres <1% research

MA 3- 2826 acres 03% backcountry

MA 5- 176772 acres 98% of active management

Revision

5 years ago we tried to revise the plan but it got held up for legal reasons but came up with this new plan through significant public participation in the planning process

MA 1- 5,196 acres <03% of wilderness

MA 2-102 acres <1% for research

MA 3- 58,527 acres 33% back county

MA 5- 115,397 acres 64% active management

MA 8- 22 acres 1% permanent modify/ rec

Rec Management

56% general forest

44 % backcountry

In the last 4 or 5 years there has been site specific travel

68% motorized

32% non-motorized

## Livestock

88% available for use

93% active use

## Timber

43000 acres of timber production

32 acres of potential harvest for other uses

Fire

Wilderness

## Fire and Fuels

111,000 acres are in the priority area

80,000 acres wildland/Urban interface

## Big Game

35,000 acres of mule - winter ranges

29,000 acres of elk winter ranges

## Proposed Plan

Recommend 4955 acres or approximately 3% of the national forest lands with another 864 acres in MA 1.3 (primitive)

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

### **Dede Ranzenberger**

- Didn't realize how large the area is
- Lack of water storage in the river
- Ideal for a reservoir
- 10 years ago a plan was made for 23 miles long and about ½ maybe a 1 mile wide
- Concerned that most concerns are about rec and not about water
- Maybe a power plant on the dam
- Worried about more rules and regulations

### **Mark Schofield from W.C.C.**

- Question to the forest service about the wildlife/urban interface and fuels treatment

Response from the forest service: **Connie Clemenson**

There are projects in process and are developed in cooperation with the individual property owners. If anyone wants details on a specific plan they should contact her at the USFS

**Janice Shaffer from Mountain Club**

- Question: What is a NCA exactly
- Answer from the BLM: Legislative designation. It helps gives the BLM direction for management. Mostly thought its makes the area a priority and more funding is available.

**Eric Rechel**

- BLM and Forest Service talk about the management of the landscape
- Stakeholders- The one who cant be here tonight: Wildlife. How do we help maintain wildlife?
- Are these boundaries set in gold?

**Carole Chowen from W.C.C. and Seirra Club**

- It is important to have a quiet place to float down the Gunnison
- Proposed wilderness area is accessible and is minimal
- Concerned about the motorized %

**Kent Davis( Ranch owner )**

- A lot of what the BLM says is roadless is not.
- There are ATVs on the top, even though there are "no roads"
- Boundaries
  - Water diversion needs to be addressed
- Against the wilderness area and said it needs to be smaller

**Beverly Kolkman**

- Concerned about the roadless v road
- Horseback riders have been left out of this meeting and they have their own concerns

### **1st man from the Gold Prospector's Association of America**

- Monies for licenses can help pay for the land
- Everything with a motor needs to have license, maybe other users should have one too
  - Horses
  - Boats and canoes

### **2nd man from the same group**

- Sorry to say it but ATV don't respect other people
- Concerned about what a NCA would shut down because there are already roads there
- Believed that if there were roads it couldn't be a wilderness area

### **Break**

### **Panel 2**

#### **Oscar Massey - Rancher**

- Owns permits on the north rim
- Family has owned the ranch since the 1890s.
  - Uses are for grazing and raising cattle
- Wants things to stay the same because its important to their livelihood
- Concerned about emergency personnel and how they are handled
- BLM has done a good job
- The new bridge is helpful because it takes the pressure off our bridge
- Worried about the extra layer of bureaucracy.
  - Would a special one be created or will the BLM and Forest Service do it?
- Wants to see the boundary lines be addressed so that people actually know where it is.
- Wants and is willing to work with the agencies

### **Environmental Interest**

#### **Friends of the Dominguez Area**

##### **Bill Grant and Jim Riddell**

3 main points

1. Keep places wild

Understands that there are some disagreements as to what is wild

2. Natural boundaries work best

Think like a mountain reference

Political boundaries don't work

3. Different needs and users needs to be addressed

Keep high impact activities in areas where it can be managed best

4. Desire a much larger Wilderness Area including several areas within the Forest Service lands adjacent to the proposed NCA, and on BLM land adjacent to the NCA to the south.

- Many of these places have strange political boundaries like Potter canyon
- The wilderness of Roubideau needs to be extended into the BLM area  
No oil/gas/mineral potential so keep it wild

## Boating

### Jerry Nolan

- Concerned about overuse of the resource
- Long term goals  
Keep and preserve
- Present situation is better than it was when he first started  
The BLM has done an excellent job in keeping with their needs
- Needs additional camp sites  
Currently only 5 or 6 that are heavily used and abused
- New bridge is excellent
- Parking one mile away is great
- Future necessities  
Permits for camping, especially on weekends
- Suggestions  
Better communication with all parties involved.  
  
Mailing lists  
  
Email updates

## Volunteer outreach

- No pets
- No fees
- No motorized activity
- Wilderness proposal should accommodate boaters camping

## Motorized Trails

### Steve Chapel

- Can't go into specifics until the maps are modified
- New routes are possible
- Don't steer motorized away because it doesn't work
- There are lots of dead end routes
- WSA boundaries should be shrunk
- Wants more trail heads
- Increase rapidly so there needs to be an increase in number of routes
- Areas are heavily used and many routes are still being discovered
- The routes need to be preserved
- Year round use mostly
- Foot and horse trails to not accommodate most of the users of the land
- Search and rescue needs to be considered
- Land owners need to be in communication with the clubs to help maintain the roads and for other volunteer work that needs to be done
- Roads need to be better patrolled so that are less violations
- It is important not to change it
- Wildlife isn't really affected
- Solitude is in the eye of the beholder

## Mountain Bikers

### Clark Rieves

- Keep it brief
- As said before it's a beautiful area
- Agreed that there needs to be protection
- And there is a lot of land to go around

## Hikers

### Clare Bastable

- Great potential for the land especially for a NCA
- Enforce limits on number of people allowed to hike in one group

- Endorses the Friends of Dominguez plan to expand wilderness areas

## Public Comment

### Janice Shaffer

- Use of Fire pans only policy in area
- Group needs to come up with a reasonable number of people in a group at a time

### Mike Mathes

- Came here for open spaces
- Sees it shrinking
- People need to keep it free
- Has seen many different areas closing
- There isn't much damage
- "Our land belongs to us, and we can all get along to use it."

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Man from Gold Prospector's Association of America (name inaudible on tape)

- Enforce the laws. It works in Utah
- Have people out there enforcing the laws
- Its public land
- Most people do not know how to survive on the land. ATV and motorized help to rescue people
- Be thankful for motorized activity because they can get you out. Just think about it

### Charlie Kerr

- Extremely beautiful area. There is high impact and we need to manage it
- NCA brings the management that the area needs
- Address the myths  
Every place has a road. Most places have roads all over CO. I've seen them.  
Every wilderness has them but it doesn't take away from the wilderness but there isn't a lot of places for wilderness to prevail.

### Joan Woodworth

- It was a very constructive meeting
- Some concerning comments: not everything is multi usage
- Figure out the compromise for everyone
- There is too much self interest

## **Shelby**

- Archeological Site. There is little protection for the sites
- Don't know if the wilderness area will help but it wont hurt
- Ute tribe still uses the sites.
- No one is innocent. We have all damaged the land

## **Steve Gunderson**

- Was President of Multiple users trail organization in Idaho
- Brought together all different trail users
- Sees the animosity of the different trail users
- Hopefully this will decrease
- Not all human damage is motorized
- Learn to respect the resources so damage is minimized
- All have talked about the joy this land brings to us. So eliminate the discrimination and stereotypes between groups

## **Dede Ranzenberger (spoke a second time)**

- Need to consider reservoir for water storage

## **Dr. Redifer**

- Not a single person here doesn't love the land
- NCA doesn't preclude from things happening. It helps provide funding and the resources to manage the land
- The issues of usage are all things that can be worked out
- Each stakeholder is a minority, through compromise and consensus we can form a majority
- Boundaries have to be determined for successful legislative effort.
- Don't pass up the funding available because of the inability to agree on boundaries.

### **Public Land Partnership**

**Escalante Dominguez forum Delta, Co.**

**November 2, 2006**

Flipchart Notes:

## 1. Boundaries

- Status of proposed boundaries
- Boundaries not set in stone.

## 2. What is the next step? How to get involved

## 3. Access

Roads are being closed

## 4. Gold miners and recreational prospectors need to be involved

Gold miners etc need access to river - motorized

GP A=Gold Prospectors of America, Olathe, Durango, Colorado Springs

## 5 Ag lands conservation

## 6. Gunnison Bluffs area - signs - no motorized traffic enforcement issues

## 7. Would NCA or travel management bring more resources? Planning

## 8. Funding Concerns

## 9. Access for people that need motorized - disabled, etc.

10 USFS: How are you gathering information to determine NCA NCA impact on USFS planning effort

## 11. Recreational area along the Escalante River

## 12. Legitimacy of signs

13. More thought put into plan; orderly fashion; problem solving process; no science, arbitrary science

## 14. Friends of the Greater Dominguez: Landscape Centered process

East side of River

Gunnison Bluffs Area, also Kelso Mesa Archeological

## 15. River Rafters

- Appreciate the improved camping facilities, maps, signage, etc.

- Promoting protection and etiquette on the river
- Rock Art
- UN complex published
- Volunteer work force

23. Dick Miller

- Parts should be protected within SW A . Parts should not be
- River Traffic has increased
- Welcome general public
- Reason for pristine: Musses

24. You have to be on the land

25. Environmental groups and landowners

26. Roads on Delta county side - limited use

27. Issues for later: Tourism; DOW; Guide and Outfitting

28. GP A use area & river after high water is over - trash is present on islands

29. Dominguez Dam Project: DOI evaluation 1990 - 1992; determined not to be feasible

30. Why not release back to mining?

**Public Land Partnership**

**Escalante Dominquez Notes**

**November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2006**

**Note cards**

\*Taken exactly as written from note cards provided by members of the audience.

- Boundary recommendation should not include previous existing roads. Don't cheat! Be honest.
- Plan adjacent recreational systems to be included in recommendation to Congress. Cactus Park-Escalante Canyon

- Base closures on science for protection of users and agency. Use scientific approach such as problem solving process.
- If BLM is recommending Dominguez Wilderness ( as it should )- consider reopening Potter Creek Trail next to Camelback, as a concession to local users and a right thing to do.

- Motorized is not afraid of science. Bring it on.

- "Potholes"- to BLM  
Lenore Styles:

I am very angry at the development of this area. You have only heard of a small segment of locals and went ahead and changed the character of this rustic area. I have no pets or kids. I like to drink in the potholes privately. I feel you have made this area unnatural and what a waste of our money. I feel a few big boulders would have been sufficient.

- I would like to see point of small scale mining and recreational prospecting on the use of the River, also Miguel River area.
- The bicycles and hikers have no more rights and privileges to this land than the prospectors
- You haven't scratched the surface on the socio-economic outcomes, particularly tourism. Does recreation associated with wilderness generate less local socio-economical benefit or more? I think there is data on this that suggests wilderness creates less economic benefit.
- Several years ago CSU and PLP sponsored some survey research on the amount of guide and outfitting that was done by ranchers. In those days, depending on the size of the ranch, guided-and-outfitting was sometimes the only profitable piece left. Guide and outfitting needs to be clarified, and these relationships looked at. Ask Mary Chapman or Robbie LeValley about the research.

## B: PowerPoint Presentations

Shown at each of the zone meetings  
In order to help facilitate the conversation

**NOTE:** The issues and concerns on the following PowerPoint slides were written onto the slides during the meeting as they were raised by the participants. These slides, while extensive, serve as a useful collection of meeting notes. Only the first few slides in every presentation were prepared ahead of the meeting by facilitators.

# Power Point for Zone 1

## Dominquez Escalante NCA Proposal

Public Forum Data  
2007

Natural Resources and Land Policy Institute – Mesa State College  
And  
Public Lands Partnership  
Facilitators

## BLM Lands in Proposal

- Dominguez Canyon Wilderness Study Area
  - 67093 acres 31.7% total
- Gunnison River
  - 12440 acres 5.9% total
- Gunnison Bluffs
  - 18410 acres 8.7% total
- Wagon Park/Sawmill Mesa
  - 73056 acres 34.6% total
- Cactus Park
  - 40200 acres 19.3% total

## Budget Figures

### ■ Gunnison Gorge NCA

- Base \$409,400
- + One time: \$354,975
- = TOTAL 07 Budget: \$764,375
- Staff: 2

### ■ MCNCA:

- Average Budget since 2002: \$600,000 annually ('07--\$619,000, has been as high as \$743,000)
- Staff: 4

## Visitor Figures

### Dominguez Escalante Management Area

- Zone 1: Gunnison Bluffs
  - 2 organized group permits issued each year for horse endurance rides.
- Zone 2: Gunnison River
  - about 4,000 people used the river between Delta and Bridgeport Bridge.
  - UFO has 9 commercial outfitters and GJ has 4.
  - Commercial use is right about 3000 with about 1000 private boaters.
  - The private boating use is increasing rapidly.
- Zone 4: Dominguez WSA
  - a trail counter on McCarty Trail last year for 9 months. 1,657 count. Some of those figures could be folks going up and coming back.
  - A lot of hunting in the fall on top of the Mesa.
  - traffic counter up top on the road going into the WSA which showed 1941 for a nine month period '06
- Zone 5: Wagon Park/Bennett's Basin/Escalante Creek/Sawmill Mesa
  - About 17,800 use the Potholes which is located in Escalante Canyon.
  - We have 3 upland outfitters that work in this zone and Dominguez WSA.
- All figures from Uncompahgre Field Office - BLM

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## Where do we go from here?

- 2 things needed to move forward toward legislation
    - General Consensus from the community that legislation creating an NCA is a good idea for the Dominquez-Escalante Management Area.
    - Specific boundaries for the NCA as a whole and any special management areas within it such as Wilderness Area designation
- 

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## Categories of Issues for Area

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All issues raised in earlier public forums have been grouped into these categories for the purposes of working toward resolution.

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3 categories identified

**I: Maps and Boundaries**

**II: Recreational Opportunities**

**III: Impacts of Public use of Public Lands**

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**I: Maps and Boundaries**

- Expansion and contraction of Wilderness Area
  - Inventory issues – getting the maps right
  - Interagency land management
-

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## **II: Recreational Opportunities**

- ❑ Motorized vs. Non-motorized areas
  - ❑ Trails systems needed
  - ❑ Shared use trails
  - ❑ Accessibility
  - ❑ Camping Facilities
  - ❑ Consideration of all the different multi-use recreation opportunities
- 

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## **III: Impacts of Public use of Public Lands**

- ❑ Damage from overuse and increased activity in area
  - ❑ Enforcement issues
  - ❑ Trails – repair and construction
  - ❑ Permitting issues to manage use
  - ❑ Grazing access
  - ❑ Biological impacts of human activity
  - ❑ Archeological site access and protection
  - ❑ Noxious Weeds
-

## Pros

### ■ Pros

- Dedicated staff
- Help focus prioritize
- Have the right for public input
- Defined boundaries on BLM land
- Educational process
- Positive economic benefits on the local communities
- More funding-specific budget

- More transparent process
- User groups are more respectful of each other
- Certainty on management in future
- Multiple use plus wilderness
- Rec. opportunities
- Preservation of landscape and cultural resources
- Draws attention to the area
- Calls attention to wildlife
  - More protection for endanger species

## Cons

- Too much focus (resources) on one specific area
- Draws attention to the area
- May hinder future water storage and power plants
- Could restrict access
- Increase pressure on wildlife
- Could increase access

## Zone 1 Issues

- Uses of the land
- ATVS
- Wildlife viewing
- Grazing
- Trail riding
  - Horses
- Hiking
- Mountain Biking
- Archeological sites

- Scenic views
- Issues or concerns
  - Protection for archaeological sites
    - Help: It would give money to different groups to protect them
  - Shooting areas
    - Help: Help clarify where they are
  - Spanish Trail
    - Indifferent but could bring education to the area
  - Partying areas
    - Resources to help clean up

- Trespassing on private land
  - Help : Clarify boundaries
  - Help: Bring education to where the private land is
    - Signs, posts and maps
- Trails Systems
  - Help: Bring money to create more trails
  - Help : Validate the uses
    - Staff have more capabilities to see the usage of the land
  - Help: Planning process
-

# PowerPoint Presentation for Zone 2 Meeting

**Dominquez Escalante  
NCA Proposal  
Zone 2 Meeting**

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**Public Forum Data  
2007**

**Natural Resources and Land Policy Institute – Mesa State College  
And  
Public Lands Partnership  
Facilitators**

**Zone 2 stats**

- **Zone 2 Gunnison River Corridor Use**
  - GJFO - @ 2,000 users in 2006
  - UFO - @ 2,000 users in 2006
  - Total 4,000
    - Based on Escalante registers and SRP reports. Total of 4,000 visitors divided equally between offices.
  - About 10 commercial outfitters

## Questions to focus on

- First part of the meeting: Should this stretch of the Gunnison River be included in an NCA?
- Second part of the meeting: Is the NCA a good idea in general for this entire area?

## Uses of Zone 2

- Recreational rafting
  - Canoeing, kayaking and boating
  - Swimming and floating
  - Recreational prospecting
  - Agricultural
    - Livestock
    - Irrigation
  - Enjoying wildlife viewing
  - Railroad transportation
  - Fishing
  - Hunting
  - Access to cultural heritage sites
  - Endangered Species Protection
- 

## Uses

- ATV trails
- Horse recreation
- Foot traffic
- Ties together landscapes within the zones
- Camping
- Motorized traffic
- Orchards
- Access to private property
- Habitat

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- ATV trails
- Horse recreation
- Foot traffic
- Ties together landscapes within the zones
- Camping
- Motorized traffic
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- Access to private property
- Habitat

---

## Issues raised throughout the process as they relate to Zone 2 – the River

- Overuse and degradation of resource
  - Permits and limits on numbers of users
  - Private property rights
    - Access
    - Trespass
  - Access to wilderness and scenic places
  - Recreational prospecting
  - Cultural site protection and visitation
- 

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## Issues in Zone 2 continued

- Water storage/ dams/ water diversion structures
    - Fire
    - Drought
    - Fish species
    - Power plant
  - Boundary of Wilderness
    - Wildlife corridors
-

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## Issues

- Noxious weeds
  - Day use fees
- 

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## Where do we go from here?

- Is there common ground regarding the area?
  - Love of land
  - Its special qualities that make it an appropriate potential for an NCA
  - Multiple use of area when taken as a whole
  - NCA designation would seem to help more than it would hurt
  - Management plan process after any designation will require a great deal of public involvement and must address many concerns raised in this process.
  - At least some wilderness ought to be in the heart of this NCA



# PowerPoint Presentation for Zone 3 Meeting

## Dominquez Escalante NCA Proposal Zone 3 Meeting

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**Public Forum Data  
2007**

Natural Resources and Land Policy Institute – Mesa State College  
And  
Public Lands Partnership  
Facilitators

Average Annual Growth Rate by percentage							
	2000-2005	2005-2010	2010-2015	2015-2020	2020-2025	2025-2030	2030-2035
<b>County</b>							
<b>Mesa</b>	2.1	2.1	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.1	1.9
<b>Delta</b>	1.6	2.7	3.1	2.9	2.5	1.9	1.2
<b>Montrose</b>	2.4	2.8	3.4	2.2	2.6	1.6	1.4
<b>Total projected population</b>							
	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035
<b>Mesa</b>	130,399	144,711	162,268	181,947	202,741	224,418	246,152
<b>Delta</b>	30,255	34,545	40,163	46,306	52,347	57,491	61,154
<b>Montrose</b>	37,877	43,518	51,520	57,411	65,241	70,471	75,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>198,531</b>	<b>222,774</b>	<b>253,951</b>	<b>285,664</b>	<b>320,329</b>	<b>352,380</b>	<b>382,706</b>
<b>Net &gt;</b>		24,243	31,177	31,713	34,665	32,051	30,326

Source: Colorado Division of Local Government, Demography Office, August 2006

ESTIMATED USE OF DOMINGUEZ-ESCALANTE SRMA

2006

Zone	Zone Name	GJFO	UFO	Total	Notes
Zone 1	Gunnison Bluffs	2,000	1,000	3,000	Rough guess based on known use patterns and SRP's.
Zone 2	Gunnison River	2,000	2,000	4,000	Based on Escalante registers and SRP reports. Total of 4,000 visitors divided equally between offices.
Zone 3	Cactus Park	13,577	0	13,577	Vehicle traffic counts converted to visitor counts, adjusted upward 5% for estimated entries on non-primary routes. Assumes no through travel (limited opportunities).
Zone 4	Dominguez Canyons WSA	13,042	3,635	16,677	GJFO: Based on visitor traffic counts in lower and upper Dominguez, adjusted upward 5% for estimated entries via upper Little Dominguez and Cactus Park (assumes no through-travel). UFO: Based on visitor and vehicle traffic counts on McCarty Trail and mesa top, respectively, converted to visitor counts and adjusted upward 5% for estimated use on Gunnison Pack Trail.
Zone 5	Wagon Park/Bennetts/Escalante/Sawmill	3,500	22,250	25,750	GJFO: Rough guess based on known use patterns and SRP's. UFO: Based on Potholes numbers, adjusted upward 25% for estimated use elsewhere in this zone.
TOTAL				63,004	

Note: Estimates do not include non-recreational users, nor do they include visitors entering off-trail or on some non-primary routes.

## Democracy is about the discussion of tradeoffs

- Tradeoffs embodied in multiple use principle of BLM lands.
- Freedom vs. order tradeoff is at the heart of all political decisions.

## Future Process

- ❑ One more meeting on Zone 2 – Delta – Aug. 2
- ❑ Natural Resources and Land Policy Institute will compile data and produce a report for Mesa, Delta and Montrose county commissioners.
- ❑ After a review of the report and the results of these meetings, the commissioners may make recommendations to Colorado Congressional delegation (other stakeholders may also make their recommendations as well) who could introduce legislation
- ❑ Congress debates and passes legislation
- ❑ Significant public involvement in the development of a management plan for the NCA including designated uses.

## Proposal to consider : Should there be a National Conservation Area in the Dominguez-Escalante Area?

- What is an NCA?
  - ❑ National Conservation Areas (NCAs) are designated by Congress to conserve, protect, enhance, and manage public land areas for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. NCAs feature exceptional natural, recreational, cultural, wildlife, aquatic, archeological, paleontological, historical, educational or scientific resources.
- Why ask the NCA question now?
  - ❑ Growth of population in region provides opportunity to be proactive in management of lands.
  - ❑ Interest by government officials at a variety of levels to consider the question.

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## Key question for issues raised

- Will an NCA designation help or hurt with this issue?
- 

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## 2 part format for Zone 3 meeting

- Part 1: Is there agreement that an NCA designation is a good idea for Zone 3?
  - Part 2: Where should the boundary be for the wilderness and the NCA?
-

## Uses of Zone 3

- Riding ATVs
- Hiking
- Wildlife Habitat
- Camping
- Recreational Gold Prospecting
- Some Horseback Riding
- Just Passing Through
- Stone Quarry
- Hunting
- Grazing
- Native Plants
- Shooting/Plinking Practice
- Archaeology
- Rock Hounding
- Viewing From River or Land
- Future Water Storage
- Photography
- Auto Tourism
- Mining Claims: Uranium, Copper, Silver, Gold
- Mountain Biking
- Motorized Vehicles
- Firewood Cutting/Collection
- Christmas Tree Cutting

## Issues for Zone 3

- Weekday vs. Weekend Use
- Concern for separate use
- Poor planning on meeting schedules
- Maintain stock and wildlife ponds and natural resource projects - help
- Consider road closures
- Creation of new routes
- Gates and fences

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## Issues for Zone 3

- Enforcement
  - Road maintenance
  - Working management plan for grazers
  - Wildlife buffer along river from motorized activity
  - Future drilling
  - Littering/vandalism
  - Accuracy in travel counters
- 

---

## Boundaries

- No boundaries up to the river
  - Don't expand Wilderness into zone 3
  - Expansion of Wilderness area
  - Decrease existing Wilderness area
  - Move boundaries to the canyon rims
-

# PowerPoint Presentation for Zone 4 Meeting

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## Dominquez Escalante

## NCA Proposal

### Zone 4 Meeting

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Public Forum Data  
2007

Natural Resources and Land Policy Institute – Mesa State College  
And  
Public Lands Partnership  
Facilitators

Average Annual Growth Rate by percentage							
	2000-2005	2005-2010	2010-2015	2015-2020	2020-2025	2025-2030	2030-2035
<b>County</b>							
<b>Mesa</b>	2.1	2.1	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.1	1.9
<b>Delta</b>	1.6	2.7	3.1	2.9	2.5	1.9	1.2
<b>Montrose</b>	2.4	2.8	3.4	2.2	2.6	1.6	1.4
Total projected population							
	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035
<b>Mesa</b>	130,399	144,711	162,268	181,947	202,741	224,418	246,152
<b>Delta</b>	30,255	34,545	40,163	46,306	52,347	57,491	61,154
<b>Montrose</b>	37,877	43,518	51,520	57,411	65,241	70,471	75,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>198,531</b>	<b>222,774</b>	<b>253,951</b>	<b>285,664</b>	<b>320,329</b>	<b>352,380</b>	<b>382,706</b>
<b>Net &gt;</b>		24,243	31,177	31,713	34,665	32,051	30,326

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Source: Colorado Division of Local Government, Demography Office, August 2006

ESTIMATED USE OF DOMINGUEZ-ESCALANTE SRMA

2006

Zone	Zone Name	GJFO	UFO	Total	Notes
Zone 1	Gunnison Bluffs	2,000	1,000	3,000	Rough guess based on known use patterns and SRP's.
Zone 2	Gunnison River	2,000	2,000	4,000	Based on Escalante registers and SRP reports. Total of 4,000 visitors divided equally between offices.
Zone 3	Cactus Park	13,577	0	13,577	Vehicle traffic counts converted to visitor counts, adjusted upward 5% for estimated entries on non-primary routes. Assumes no through travel (limited opportunities).
Zone 4	Dominguez Canyons WSA	13,042	3,635	16,677	GJFO: Based on visitor traffic counts in lower and upper Dominguez, adjusted upward 5% for estimated entries via upper Little Dominguez and Cactus Park (assumes no through-travel). UFO: Based on visitor and vehicle traffic counts on McCarty Trail and mesa top, respectively, converted to visitor counts and adjusted upward 5% for estimated use on Gunnison Pack Trail.
Zone 5	Wagon Park/Bennetts/Escalante/Sawmill	3,500	22,250	25,750	GJFO: Rough guess based on known use patterns and SRP's. UFO: Based on Potholes numbers, adjusted upward 25% for estimated use elsewhere in this zone.
TOTAL				63,004	

Note: Estimates do not include non-recreational users, nor do they include visitors entering off-trail or on some non-primary routes.

## Frequently Asked Questions

- What is an NCA?
  - National Conservation Areas (NCAs) are designated by Congress to conserve, protect, enhance, and manage public land areas for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. NCAs feature exceptional natural, recreational, cultural, wildlife, aquatic, archeological, paleontological, historical, educational or scientific resources.
- Why an NCA now?
  - Growth of population in region provides opportunity to be proactive in management of lands.
  - Interest by government officials at a variety of levels to consider the question.
- Are there others in Colorado?
  - Yes – 2 others McInnis Canyons and Gunnison Gorge
- What are these summer meetings hoping to accomplish?

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## Frequently Asked Questions

- How does an NCA designation affect funding?
    - Generally, funding has increased with other NCAs both in terms of individual budget lines, dedicated staff, and the ability to attract grant funding and one-time project funds.
  - What are the steps in the process?
    - First, decide if an NCA is what is wanted and where the boundaries should be.
    - Recommendations are made to Colorado Congressional delegation who could introduce legislation
    - Congress passes legislation
    - Significant public involvement in the development of a management plan for the NCA including designated uses.
  - What is the difference between proactive and reactive land management?
  - What is needed for legislation?
- 

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## Frequently Asked Questions

- Will I still be able to use the land as before?
    - Generally, yes, although much of that is decided in the development of the management plan after legislation.
  - Is it all becoming wilderness?
    - No, although NCAs typically have some wilderness component
  - What does a wilderness designation mean?
    - See handout to answer a wide variety of these type of questions
  - How much of the proposal is wilderness?
    - Approximately 37% as proposed
  - How does an NCA designation affect trails?
  - Can we add land to an NCA later?
    - Yes there is precedent to do this with many of the NCAs including Gunnison Gorge
-

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## Key question for issues raised

- Will an NCA designation help or hurt with this issue?
- 

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## 2 part format for Zone 4 meeting

- Part 1: Is there agreement that an NCA designation is a good idea for Zone 4?

If there is no agreement, or the answer is no, then part 2 is irrelevant.

- Part 2: Where should the boundary be for the wilderness?
-

## Issues for Zone 4

- Help/Hurt?
- Help
    - Mt. Bike Assoc. (COPMOBA) supports NCA
      - Ban of bikes within Wilderness areas.
      - Proposes a National Protection Area for WSA
      - Support Wilderness designation for Dominguez North
  - Possibly hurt or help
    - Limit # of visitors at Bridgeport via a permit system due to Big Horn Sheep population

## Issues for Zone 4

- Dominguez WSA not suitable for Mt. Bikes.
- Nice for hikers to have an area that does not have Mt. Bikes or motorized use on it. **Wilderness provides this opportunity.**
- Idea of Wilderness bigger than “what is it in for me?” Statement of value. **Wilderness has an intrinsic value.** There are areas that are important to preserve from – oil rigs, roads, etc. Long-term protection.
- Arch sites in Big Dominguez are a jewel. Rock art is almost pristine. **Wilderness will help to protect these sites.** Arch sites that are 1 mile or more from a road are more protected.

## Issues for Zone 4

- If ranchers hadn't taken care of the land in the past and will continue to be taken care of. Harvesting a renewable resource. Grazing and timber harvesting helps prevent fires. **Wilderness hinders the ranchers' ability to work on the land.**
  - Examples: Carry fence post in by horse? Use of chainsaws prohibited within a wilderness area.
- Clarification: Use of motorized vehicles/tools within a Wilderness? Specified routes can be designated and a calendar of usage. **Process (ranching) is more complicated but not precluded.**
- Disturbance to Big Horn Sheep – not hikers but domestic sheep. No domestic sheep in the area now but could be possible in the future. Should be addressed in the mgt plan.
- **Air quality. Wilderness designation will help this.**
- Dominguez Canyon is beautiful. **Wilderness designation will protect this area.**
- Large camping parties of organized canoe trips. Ranching important but land needs to be protected. Area is pristine but there is easy access – vandalism is an issue. **Wilderness/NCA designation would help give the BLM the resources to manage area.**
- Canyon is a small part of the WSA. The top of the WSA is not highly used. **The top doesn't need Wilderness designation. Wilderness will bring more people by putting it on the map.**

## Issues for Zone 4

- Wilderness increases usage. Less public impacts with NCA.
- More visitors to a Wilderness area is OK. The area is still protected.
- Bark beetle kill of trees in the area increases fire potential. Fire and beetle kill treatments within Wilderness.
- Gravel on private lands. What will wilderness designation do to the right to commercially use of gravel and the future value of the private land? **Wilderness could help land values but access issues could hurt this.** Some private areas are accessible only through the WSA.
- WSA designation has more stringent regulations than a Wilderness area would have. Regarding ranching activities – the Wilderness area would help with specific landowner/permittee issues.

## Boundary Discussions

- Rim as a boundary. A boundary that is easy to identify out on the land. More definable.
- Boundary should be up on rim rather than along the river. Take out the roads that are within the WSA. Take out the mesa tops within Delta County and area with dam.
- Power line to ranch. Move boundary back from the river corridor to the rim.
- FGD: Landscape approach. Black Point (USFS lands) area should be included in Wilderness.
- Canyons can be designated as wilderness but the top of the mesas should not be included. There are currently roads within this area.

## PowerPoint Presentation for Zone 5 Meeting

## Dominguez Escalante NCA Proposal

Public Forum Data  
2007

Natural Resources and Land Policy Institute – Mesa State College  
And  
Public Lands Partnership  
Facilitators

## BLM Lands in Proposal

- June 21 - Gunnison Bluffs (Zone 1)
  - 18,410 acres 8.7% total
- June 28 - Wagon Park/Escalante Canyon/Sawmill Mesa (Zone 5)
  - 73,056 acres 34.6% total
- July 12 - Dominguez Canyon Wilderness Study Area (Zone 4)
  - 67,093 acres 31.7% total
- July 26 - Cactus Park (Zone 3)
  - 40,200 acres 19.3% total
- Aug 2 - Gunnison River (Zone 2)
  - 12,440 acres 5.9% total

\* Zones 1,2,3 and 5 have been designated for discussion purposes only. They will not be a part of legislation. There will be 2 final boundaries: NCA and WSA/Wilderness.

## Definitions

### National Conservation Area (NCA):

- Designated by Congress to conserve, protect, enhance and manage public land areas for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. Each NCA has its own legislation that is developed through a public process and directs the agency to manage certain components (areas) within the NCA. An NCA can contain both designated Wilderness as well as other areas for off-highway vehicle use.

### Wilderness Areas:

- Designated by Congress to protect areas of public lands that are considered “wilderness” in nature. Federal lands that retain their primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human inhabitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions.

## Budget Figures

- **Current Dominguez/Escalante Areas**
  - 2 BLM Offices currently spend \$150,000/yr on the area.
  - Dedicated Staff: 1 seasonal
- **Gunnison Gorge NCA**
  - Base \$409,400/yr
  - + One time: \$354,975 (for special projects)
  - = TOTAL 07 Budget: \$764,375
  - Dedicated Staff: 2
- **McInnis Canyon NCA:**
  - \$600,000/yr (Average Budget since 2002)
  - '07 = \$619,000 (Has been as high as \$743,000/yr)
  - Dedicated Staff: 4

## Pros/Cons for NCA Designation

### ■ Pros

- Dedicated staff
- Helps prioritize management
- Process emphasizes public input
- Defined boundaries on BLM land
- Educational process = collaboration
- Potential positive economic benefits for the local communities
- More funding-specific budget
- More transparent process
- User groups are more respectful of each other
- Certainty on management in future
- Multiple use plus wilderness
- Rec. opportunities
- Preservation of landscape and cultural resources
- Draws attention to the area
- Calls attention to wildlife
- More protection for endangered species

### ■ Cons

- Too much focus (resources) on one specific area
- Draws attention to the area
- May hinder future water storage and power plants
- Could restrict access
- Increase pressure on wildlife
- Could increase access

\* Compiled by public input at the June 21 meeting

## Current Visitor Figures for the Dominguez-Escalante Management Area

- Zone 1: Gunnison Bluffs
  - 2 organized group permits issued each year for horse endurance rides.
- Zone 2: Gunnison River
  - Approx. 4,000 people used the river between Delta and Bridgeport this year
  - UFO has 9 commercial outfitters and GJ has 4.
  - Commercial use is approx. 3000, with approx. 1000 private boaters.
  - The private boating use is increasing rapidly.
- Zone 4: Dominguez WSA
  - A trail counter on McCarty Trail for 9 months last year recorded 1,657 counts. (Some of those figures could be folks going up and coming back.)
  - A lot of hunting in the fall on top of the Mesa.
  - A traffic counter up top on the road going into the WSA recorded 1941 counts for a nine month period in 2006
- Zone 5: Wagon Park/Bennett's Basin/Escalante Creek/Sawmill Mesa
  - About 17,800 people visited the Potholes - located in Escalante Canyon.
  - We have 3 upland outfitters that work in this zone and Dominguez WSA.

\* All figures from Uncompahgre Field Office - BLM

## Where do we go from here?

- Two items are needed to move forward toward legislation:
  - General Consensus from the community that legislation creating an NCA is a good idea for the Dominguez-Escalante Management Area.
  - Specific boundaries for the NCA as a whole and any special management areas within it such as Wilderness Area designation

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## Categories of Issues for Area

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Comments raised in earlier public forums have been grouped into these categories for the purposes of working toward resolution.

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### Four categories identified

- I. Recreation
  - II. Socio Economic Uses of Public Lands
  - III. Other Comments
  - IV. Maps and Boundaries
-

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## I: Recreation

- ❑ Motorized vs. Non-motorized areas
  - ❑ Trails systems
  - ❑ Shared use trails
  - ❑ Accessibility
  - ❑ Camping Facilities
  - ❑ Consideration of all the different multi-use recreation opportunities
  - ❑ Gold Panning
- 

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## II. Socio Economic Uses of Public Lands

- ❑ Grazing
  - ❑ Current Private Land Ownership
    - Agriculture
  - ❑ Mining
  - ❑ Tourism
    - Guiding and Outfitting
-

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### III: Other Comments

- ❑ Damage from overuse and increased activity in area
  - ❑ Enforcement issues
  - ❑ Trails – repair and construction
  - ❑ Permitting issues to manage use
  - ❑ Biological impacts of human activity
  - ❑ Archeological site access and protection
  - ❑ Noxious Weeds
  - ❑ Dam along Gunnison River
- 

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### IV: Maps and Boundaries

- ❑ Expansion and contraction of boundaries
  - ❑ Inventory issues – getting the maps right
  - ❑ Interagency land management
-

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## Current Zone 5 Uses:

- Motorized
  - Camping
  - Grazing
  - Hunting
  - Swimming
  - Fishing
  - Bicycling
  - Hiking
  - Archeology
  - Agriculture – crops and irrigation (we hope)
  - Kayaking
  - Historic Sites
  - Equestrian
  - Scenic Driving
  - Wildlife Habitat and viewing
  - ACEC – plant communities
- 

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## Concerns/Issues for Zone 5:

**Question to keep in mind for resolving issues raised in these categories:**

Would an NCA designation help or hurt our ability to deal with this concern?

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## Concerns/Issues for Zone 5: Recreation

- rec. management
  - Help: Additional Funding
  - How much funding goes to land not salaries
    - Gun. Gorge – perhaps 50% to land
- Physical disabilities – opportunities
  - Hinder: close trails
  - Multiple use trails do not prohibit access
  - Facilities would consider accessibility
  - Help: new funding for trail development
- Funding without NCA designation
  - NCA has landscape focus
- Does it secure public land for future rec. use
  - Help: it does secure the lands from future development

## Issues and Concerns – Zone 5 Recreation

- Could boundaries change
  - Act of Congress – has been done
- Could Oil and Gas develop?
  - Only if legislation allows on prior use, withdrawn from future leasing
- Could firefighting happen?
  - General NCA – yes.
  - Wilderness – minimal impact issues
  - NCA can do timber harvest

## Recreation –Zone 5 concerns

- Water storage
  - Neutral on issue, would not stop it
- Will it limit ATV use different than it is today
  - Planning process AFTER legislation will determine
- Travel Management
  - Eventually do same type of planning process, would be quicker with NCA
- Gates and Cattle Guards
  - Help: additional funding and travel management plan

## Concerns/Issues for Zone 5: Socio Economic Uses of Public Lands

- Grazing interest/rights
  - Need access to ranges (winter/summer)
    - No effect in zone 5
    - Restrictions in trails of Zone 4 impact use of zone 5
  - Water rights and diversions
  - Stock ponds
    - Could help because NCA projects often get priority
  - Concerns about conservation projects – wildlife
    - Would continue with NCA
  - Hunting use?
    - NCA would not effect these opportunities
    - Could help manage game use b/c of land swap

## Concerns/Issues for Zone 5: Socio Economic Uses of Public Lands cont'd

- Does extra funding help private landowners improving inholding?
  - Can be done now in partnership, problem is not enough money
  - Couldn't hurt future chances if there was more NCA money, but will not solve all problems.
- Will there be more money for enforcement and fire control?
  - Current GGNCA enforcement already helping Zone 5
  - Could help funding for road improvement as well
- Increased use will degrade area
- Why change it?
- Vandalism and trash
  - Can address problems in a proactive way
  - Happens Now – NCA could be a proactive way to get ahead of problem
  - Rec sites and regulations improves negative impacts in potholes

## Concerns/Issues for Zone 5: Other Comments

- Can't Stop people coming
  - NCA helps: More "boots on the ground" to stop the impact of too many users on land
- Will it bring more restrictions to locals working on the land – cattle etc.? How that effects the bottom line of operation
  - Could be done now with or without NCA designation
  - NCA could attract more people to the area, increases possible user conflict
  - Restrictions on ponds close to wilderness

## What if this does not become NCA?

- Will try to manage area as best as they can.
- Land use plan will be updated in a year or so.
  
- What are the chances of increasing funding without NCA designation?
  - Higher priority of scarce dollars

## Concerns/Issues for Zone 5: Map Boundary Input

- State wildlife lands? Would they be included?
  - Discussing with BLM possibility of land swap
  - Help: clarify land swap
- More natural boundary for the NCA between BLM land and Forest Service Line
- Should be smaller
- Private land issue on corner adjacent to city of Delta.
- What drives the planning process for this NCA are they different?
  - Make sure incorporate uniqueness of land in mgmt plan.

## **C: Notes from Zone Meetings**

### **Focus Group: Zone 1 Gunnison Bluffs June 21,2007**

#### **Dr. Casey**

There are some issues that may carry over to the other zones but our primary focus tonight is zone 1. We have compiled together what we think are different categories and issues that were raised at the last meeting for different public comments and the note cards that we asked to hand in after the meeting. Once we have agreed that all issues are on the table its then time to roll up our selves and address them.

#### **Catherine Robertson**

To help clarify what an NCA is

Helps prioritize and getting funding to the area in need. There are already two here, Gunnison Gorge and McInnis.

Every year we put money in for special projects and this year we happened to get some. But it is a gamble. NCA may help ensure the funding needed for projects.

#### **Dr. Casey**

Everyone has an idea of what needs to be done, but there isn't a lot of resources available to do so.

It was suggested to move forward on legislation but we need general consensus for Grand Junction, Delta and Montrose County to make sure an NCA would be a good idea. Secondly, we need to address specific boundaries and figure out where the Wilderness areas are.

Here are the 3 categories of concern that we put together.

- I. Maps and Boundaries
- II. Recreational opportunities
- III. Impacts of public use on public lands

#### **David Dashner**

What are the pros and cons of creating an NCA?

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## Pros

### ■ Pros

- Dedicated staff
  - Help focus prioritize
  - Have the right for public input
  - Defined boundaries on BLM land
  - Educational process
  - Positive economic benefits on the local communities
  - More funding-specific budget
- 

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## Pros - continued

- More transparent process
  - User groups are more respectful of each other
  - Certainty on management in future
  - Multiple use plus wilderness
  - Rec. opportunities
  - Preservation of landscape and cultural resources
  - Draws attention to the area
  - Calls attention to wildlife
    - More protection for endangered species
- 

---

## Cons

- Too much focus (resources) on one specific area
  - Draws attention to the area
  - May hinder future water storage and power plants
  - Could restrict access
  - Increase pressure on wildlife
  - Could increase access
-

## **Dr. Casey**

I don't want to undermine the cons because we have a lot of pros. Are there any other cons for the issues?

No one spoke up.

## **Maps:**

For zone one there was no real strong voice on moving the boundaries.

No real problems with the boundaries with zone one except for, there is a lot of private land around the river. Please see the power point presentation for the issues and how the NCA would help.

## **Catherine**

There is an intergovernmental cooperation with Mesa County on the White Water boat launch because the land is not owned by the BLM. However we have worked together on this and it has never been a real issue.

## **Recreational Opportunities:**

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### **II: Recreational Opportunities**

- ❑ Motorized vs. Non-motorized areas
  - ❑ Trails systems needed
  - ❑ Shared use trails
  - ❑ Accessibility
  - ❑ Camping Facilities
  - ❑ Consideration of all the different multi-use recreation opportunities
- 

## **Impacts:**

### **Eric Rechel**

The stakeholders that we are forgetting are the wildlife. Why isn't the DOW here to speak for them?

**Dr. Casey:**

The DOW has been contacted and we have been keeping them up to date on the process and where the process is.

**Eric Rechel**

Noxious weeds need to be addressed to. They are the hidden wildfires for our public lands. It affects the water and land health of the area and we should look at natural vegetation and maintaining and preserving what is there.

**Oscar Massey**

Why are we focusing on this area alone? Should we focus on the area as a whole?

**BLM**

Regular lands don't get the same amount of money but we recognize the need for the resources that a NCA brings

**Deede**

Water storage is still a problem and a dam can solve the problems we have in Western CO.

**Catherine**

There have been a few proposals on the Dominguez Dam, however that have all been dropped because there were just too many impacts to the area, especially on fish, the railroad line and the archeological sites to the area.

**Dr. Casey**

Now, just remember that the planning process happens after the legislative process. The legislative process just sets the boundaries for the NCA. After the boundaries for the NCA are set the public planning process beings. It took eight months for the McInnis NCA planning process and three years for the Gunnison Gorge planning process.

Conclusion:

There seemed to be a good consensus of making an NCA for the area. All of the different issues that were addressed seemed to be help by the NCA designation.

## **Focus Group: Zone 5 Sawmill Mesa, Wagon Park, Escalante Canyon June 28, 2007**

What are the Current Uses in Zone 5?

Motorized

Grazing

Hunting

Swimming

Fishing

Mountain Biking

Hiking

Archeology

Wildlife habitat

Wildlife viewing

Agriculture crop growth

Irrigation

Rafting

Smith and Moffat Cabins

Historic sites

Kayaking

Horse riding

Scenic Driving

ACEC Plant communities

Concerns and issues for zone 5

### **Recreation**

In the past the NCA has been able to bring in money in order to help manage the land. This seemed to be for the benefit of everyone. The additional funding helped to manage the recreation.

With an NCA can the uses be changed at a later date?

- Barb: The legislation comes first then the planning. There will be a 2-3 year period to plan in which there will be public input. If the legislation includes a wilderness

area then no, it cannot be changed with out Congress but, the rest will be available for the public and changes could be made at a later date.

- Every 10-15 years new adjustments would be made by the community.
- Washington would only be involved in one part and that is to designate the boundaries. NCA is local.

Concern: What about the people with disabilities?

- It would hinder the access because trails would close
- Option: Look at other NCAs to see how they have done it in the past. Make sure that the trails can still be used.
- Karen: The NCA does not decide uses by ability. The trails are designated as to what can be done on it but most of the trails are multi use anyway so that should not change much. There are no trails right now that are specifically for people with disabilities but they still have to honor anti discrimination laws. People with disabilities would not be prevented from using the trails.

Don't restrict people with disabilities to their back yards

- Ken: the money that will be gained because of a NCA designation might create new trails more accessible to all.

If we are only talking about money from NCA we should act. It would increase BLM funding by congress. But why not just lobby congress for more money?

Karen: NCA looks at areas that are special. The budget available now can't support all the land at the level that the NCA would allow

Barb: NCA's get a special budget. Right now the BLM manages scattered land all over the NCA is one way to get money focused in this specific area.

If this is designated NCA would it stay the same in the future? In other words no development so it can be secured for the next generation?

Barb: Congress would have to the only power to get rid of the NCA

- so the NCA would protect land and insure future recreation use
- the Black Canyon got more money and more trails which is also a benefit to recreation

If an area is decided to be designated as one thing can it be changed?

- With the exception of the wilderness area it can be. For example if there was an area that is made for bike trails the BLM can change it with out congress.

Will the wildlife boundaries change?

- Karen: When it goes to Congress in the legislation there can be added lands only through the act of Congress
- Barb: The boundaries can only be changed through an act of Congress.

Are there any exceptions? Specifically oil and gas development.

- Barb: Only with prior rights or designations. Normally this area would be withdrawn from any development

What about fire fighting?

- Trucks can be used in the NCA to put out fires.

Timber harvesting?

- In the Wilderness area then there can be if there is an infestation

Are there current drilling permits in the area?

- Yes, a few in the southern part of zone 5, but not many

What recreation areas are in the area?

Dry Mesa, Pot holes, Wagon Park, Escalante...there are trails hunting and biking

Will the NCA limit ATV use?

- Barb: It will be different, but not necessarily limit it. The community will bring up what it is that will be changed.

Right now Dry Creek is going through a process for travel management. The NCA would help to move that along faster.

Oscar: What about the trails that go through cattle gates?

- More funding might allow for more help in monitoring the area.

BREAK

Steve Chapel: Will the increased funding go to managing the land or just to the staff?

Karen: there will be some money to increase staff but what will go to the trails?

Dave: Money would allow seasonal workers but ½ would go to the ground.

Karen: Gunnison Gorge gets \$400,000 and additional funding for specific projects in this case the NCA helps.

Barb: Money is matched with grants from the state.

Oscar: worried about increased interest and increased permits will harm. The Proposal needs to honor ranges and grazing. Also there is the concern for water mineral and grazing rights. Don't want money wasted.

Karen: Zone 5 access for summer grazing would not be hurt by NCA. Habitat improvement projects would not be hindered and this includes fire and hazardous fuel treatments. Water rights for grazing and wildlife- the NCA would help the cause with projects they will get priority.

Dave: Concern: If NCA is established will funds be available for private land to help conservation and water storage?

- Can be done now with cooperation but there is probably not enough money to do that. The money from the NNCA will go to the ground so the chances are better.

Dave: Due to the NCA there will be increased traffic and use. Will the NCA give more people in the field to help? For example fires from campers.

- NCA would pay for law enforcement.

Dave: How will county get help to take care of the roads?

- The BLM would work closely with the county. Some of the roads will be managed by the county some will be done by BLM funding

Jo: Why should any thing change how will it improve anything? Really it will just increase traffic which will lead to more damage. There will be more trash and vandalism.

- There is no example of increased trash because of NCA. Before designation in other areas there was more damage now it can be managed faster and more effectively. The BLM needs to be proactive and the NCA is a way of doing this.

Jo: Also the restricted areas once used publicly and now will be taken away from the general public.

- Actually NCA will increase access.

Kent: If the area is designated NCA will it restrict public users? Will it affect the people who work the land because of the increased traffic and it will it hurt the bottom line?

- BLM does not have the right

Kent: The road is the main way to transport cattle. People don't want cattle on the land so will the recreation result in restriction of use?

- Technically the BLM can do this now any way but their job is to resolve conflict

Kent: The pond in zone 5 took 3 years and congress to to get it in because of the wilderness area what will the new rules do to us?

- The point is the BLM could put restrictions in place with or without NCA

Jim: there are already more people in the area and that wont change. More people = more impact = more conflict the money from the NCA will help resolve the conflicts

Tim: What does the BLM plan to do if the area does not become a NCA

- Do the best job possible and manage it the way it is being managed today.

Tim: What are the chances the BLM can get increased funding without the NCA

- It would be tough

Mark-Hunting use: there are 3 outfitters. What use does zone 5 get?

- Some wildlife on the southwest corner and there are other areas where there are more wildlife areas. What is the feasibility of including these areas?
- In the discussion with the BLM there might be a land swap NCA will not have much of an effect on hunting.

JO: I want to see the boundaries follow a more natural line

Question to the DOW rep- how do you feel the NCA will change the management of wild life

- Don't see any problems there haven't been issues in other NCAs

### **Focus Group: Zone 4 WSA July 12, 2007**

Power point

Part I- Is there an agreement that a NCA designation is a good idea?

Eric: It seems that the word "Issues" is a negative word. Is that what we are discussing?

- No not only negative... the word is value neutral

Bill: Mountain bikers COPMOBA supports the NCA but are concerned about the wilderness area. It will ban bike use even though the damage done with bikes is about the same as the damage done by foot traffic. Recommended a natural protection area. There is the concern from the conservationists that people in the area will affect the big horn sheep population so the number of people allowed in the area should be limited by a permit system. New proposal is a CPP. It will still preserve the area but will be more mountain biker friendly. A wilderness area in the Gunnison Bluffs area would be supported by the association.

Man: I have spent a lot of time in the area and I do not believe that the people in the area bother the sheep population.

Neville: The areas that are protected by NCA's are absolutely beautiful and this area is also wonderful so it too needs to be protected. In past NCA's some bike trails have been cut off but it does not limit his ability to bike at all it just means you have to go somewhere else to do so. Prefer the wilderness area.

Woman: Has a bad knee and back and has to jump out of the way of bikers flying through the trails. That's hard on her. Would like to see the wilderness area because it would give hikers a place free of careless bikers. The bikes also scare the horses.

Mark: The notion and value that goes behind a wilderness area is one that goes against the drilling and paving over the land. A wilderness area would be the statement that there is value in the land of the people who live here. The wilderness area would keep area available for future generations.

John: Professional Archeologist and has worked for the USFS and has always seen the ideas behind the USFS as multiple use ideals. If there was a wilderness area it would prevent destruction to the sites in the area that need to be protected.

Jo: Why is either proposal being considered? Ranchers have been working the area for generations and have done a great job of taking care of the land. The wilderness area would hinder the rancher's efficiency.

Question by someone: How so?

Jo: Fence example. It is hard to carry fence posts in on a pack horse to fix a fence. Motorized accessibility is important.

Catharine Robertson, BLM: Wilderness act allows for some exceptions for ranchers to use motorized equipment in the area. In the past agreements have been worked out to allow this and it has worked for all parties involved.

Jet Li: as far as the big horn sheep the people are not the problem it is the domestic sheep that cause problems.

There are no sheep in the area.

Oscar: There are sheep in the Robidoux area at least there are permits and the possibility but that is in zone 1.

Woman: Concerned about air quality. With the energy industry developing at the rate it is going the wilderness area would insure that some of the land is untouched by energy so the air quality in the area would be ok.

Cindy: WCCongress Canoeing in the area is breath taking. In favor of wilderness area and the NCA, it would keep the area pristine.

Sean: While Canoeing I have seen large camping parties although they have been company organized which is better than just normal large groups because they do a good job of making sure the area is left the way they found it but the wilderness area would insure the full protection of the area. The ranchers in the area should be granted special exceptions but the area needs to be protected. The NCA would help with the issue of destruction by trash vandalism and land abuse

Kent: No one talks about the top of the canyon and very few ever make it up there it does not need the wilderness requirements. WSA brings in more people because of advertisement.

Dick Miller: In the past the WSA traffic and business flocked to the area to take a wilderness vacation so the WSA would be a negative addition but an NCA would help.

Neville: People will always feel the need to be in the wilderness. That's ok it's our instinct to be in nature but there needs to be some sort of protection.

CONSENSUS: WSA not sure if it would hurt or help

NCA would help.

BREAK

PART II

What are some issues that might relate to boundaries?

Oscar: People need to know when they enter into the wilderness area.

Kent: There is an area that is full of gravel that could be marketable and used for profit. What happens if the traffic is restricted to it? That would result in a loss of money to the owners of the land. And Also what about future building there land there is beautiful and people will want to build there especially if it looks into wilderness area because then they will be guaranteed that view.

Dick: Has land that they need vehicles to get to their private land. The boundary should start along the rim of the canyon and roads need to be cherry stemmed out of the WSA and all roads that exist need to be documented. Don't make what is already touched a wilderness area because it is not wilderness. Instead do multiple uses.

Oscar: Don't have power at the ranch below Dick's and want to be able to run a power line to it. So, the boundaries would need to be moved to the rim to allow for the power line. The rim should also follow the river corridor.

Jim: Want to do a landscape approach see the upper parts of the little Dominguez and Black Point area (Forest Service Lands) should be included.

Man: Wilderness area prevents use by all.

Jim: The lands are owned by the American public every one should choose what to do with their belongings. Let the public choose...

Man in gray shirt: Define the areas and only the areas without roads as wilderness.

Dick: Proposal that the roads be cherry stemmed out. Where the boundaries are will have an effect on the people there.

Barb Sharrow: The Current WSA is harder to manage but with a wilderness area the rules will be more flexible.

### **Focus Group: Zone 3 Cactus Park July 26, 2007**

#### **Part I- Issues with zone 3**

Gloria: worries about the restrictions placed on ATV's on the week days the area is empty so there is no need to limit numbers on the week days

Woman: Feels that the people on ATVs are bullies and that they need their own area where they can be but also there is the need for hikers to have their spot and bikers to have theirs. This way the entire area is shared but specific spots are restricted use.

Dede: Wants a dam. There was also poor meeting planning Katharine says 73% of land is controlled by the government and that they control the Colorado River

-Katharine: That is not true

They said that there were endangered fish in the river so they wont allow a dam but there are no fish and the Gunnison river should be taken out of the NCA the area needs water especially with the way the area is growing so the river have a dam and the BLM should not get to control the Gunnison River.

Oscar: In zone 3 a lot of work has been done with stock ponds and natural resource projects would the NCA hurt our ability to continue work in the area

-NCA could help because there would be more resources available

Tim: Worried about road closures there still need to be roads for motorized use.

Man: What about the migrating herds of elk and big horn sheep

-NCA would help because the DOW would have more resources to work with to protect the area

Steve: There needs to be the creation of new routes with an NCA designation in this area. We know that some routes will need to close but in the other NCAs there were

new routes added and existing ones were improved so we know that an NCA will help with that.

Jo: People need to learn to respect gates and fences. Trespassing is a problem.

Jim: That is an education problem

Jo: No, no matter what we can't fix this problem

Jim: Well then how do we get people to stop trespassing?

Jo: I don't know because even when you fence people out of an area they cut the fence.

-So this is a question of ability to enforce current laws so the NCA will probably help because then there will be more resources available.

Austin: Road Maintenance has not been kept up on existing roads also we need a working management plan for grazers.

Man: The space around the river corridor is not wide enough. We need a buffer zone between the wildlife habitat area and the motorized area.

Wayne: What about future drilling for oil?

Barb: With current existing leases they could drill in the future but there could not be any new leases.

Jo: Encourage users to help keep the area clean there is too much litter and vandalism.

Tom: NCA won't help because it won't change the mentality of people they need to be educated by getting into their wallets.

Bill: An NCA will not guarantee any enforcement this will only happen through the management of it. In the past though the NCA designation has helped the problem.

Gloria. But I know that an NCA designation that we as ATVers will be restricted that is not fair there are fewer and fewer places for us to go.

Dr. Casey: The zone boundaries are drawn by the BLM and they, in the past, have been multi use

## **Part II Boundaries**

Oscar: The boundaries need to be moved up along the rim of the canyon

Dede: the river needs to be excluded

Man: Concerned about the domino effect. If one area goes wilderness then soon the whole area will be one. Don't expand the wilderness area into zone 3

Kent: Counters have misinformed the public about how much the area is used. 9 year old daughter was able to set off the vehicle counters by skipping around it. there are also counters in the areas where 300 head of cattle are and they are setting off the counters.

Gloria: I am up there during the week and I never see anyone, only cattle.

Rene: There are a lot of people up there on the weekend though.

Kent: Worried that the numbers have made people think an NCA is more necessary than it really is.

Woman: More people equals a larger need for more public land.

Man: If congress had not acted in 30 years then why change the way it is.

Bill: Congress has not acted because the people have not asked them to do so. We are now asking them to act. Expand zone four into the north half of zone 3. There are few roads in the area. Also cherry stem roads into dads flat.

Jo: Decreases the size of the wilderness area so that there will be more access for everyone.

Woman: What if there was a fire

-There are some provisions for firefighting

Woman: Fires are a part of nature and the only reason that they are so bad is because we do not allow for fires to burn naturally.

Dede: A reservoir would help because then there would be water to help fight the fire.

Oscar: is there a way that there could be an NCA without any wilderness.

## Focus Group: zone 2 river corridor August 2, 2007

Are there any additional uses?

ATV trails

Horse

Foot traffic

Ties together the landscapes in the other zones

Camping

Motorized traffic

Orchards

Access to private property

Wildlife habitat

There are currently permits that help to limit some of the use. These permits include fishing licenses and commercial prospecting with machinery

Would an NCA hurt or help trespassing?

- No one is respectful of who owns what so an NCA won't make a difference.
- Kent-hurt because there will be more people going to the area so there will be more trespassing.
- Is there any funding that will go to help the problem?
  - Yes more funding will come in to an NCA so there can be more employees which means more informant.

Kent: Curious about private gravel pits in the area with an NCA designation could there be access through the NCA on to the private land to develop the gravel pits.

-With private minerals the government allows reasonable access to the area

Man: What about the Government coming in and kicking people off their land?

-In 27 years this has never happened they have the authority but it rarely happens. A land trust might try and purchase the land but that is a county/state issue not BLM

Woman: With the increase in staff in the NCA will there be a cut in the other areas of the BLM like the current field officers.

-No the NCA will provide additional positions within the BLM

Oscar: It seems that with the NCA then it gives the federal government to do what they want without public involvement.

-Congress really just declares it an NCA and draws wilderness boundaries they don't micro manage. The local BLM will do that and there is a public process to decide on how the land will be managed.

Austin: But we might get nothing with the NCA.

-The NCA forces Washington to look at the area closer so there will be an increase in funding that come with it

Recreational Prospecting

- o Right now you need a permit to use motorized equipment
- o Not really sure if an NCA will hurt and help the good thing is it will keep commercial prospecting out which will allow for more recreational use

Kent: In other NCAs are there major roads going through it

-Yes. I70 goes through one.

-Peach Valley Road goes through Gunnison Gorge

-Road status won't change under NCA.

Dede: Wants a dam on the river. Concerned about fire, drought issues, the dam will give power to the area so we will no longer rely on the eastern slope.

Oscar: Boundaries need to be pushed to the rim so that private property owners will be allowed more access.

Ed: Need to look at wildlife corridors to be sure they are not interfering with the wildlife.

-Ken: GIS people are looking at that right now and are trying to map that.

Man: Oscar has a good point. The rim is a geographic feature you can follow and it will prevent future problems.

Woman: What about the drainage that cuts through the ridge line.

-It will go across or around.

Oscar: If the rim is the boundary then people would know where the boundary is.

**\*Seems to be common agreement that the boundary needs to be at the rim of the canyon**

Austin: What about the treatment of noxious weeds?

- In a current NCA we have a weed raft that comes and takes care of them which was bought with grants given because we are an NCA.

Kent: What about Tamarisk funding

- NCA would bring in more money so it would help with this

What about day fees would they increase?

-there are no requirements one way or the other. The fees that are already in place will probably stay that way and the decision one way or another will be done through a public process.

1. Over all does it seem that an NCA would seem to help more than hurt.
  - 2 out of 50 think it hurts more than help

- Most would agree it would help

2. Some wilderness ought to be in the area

- about 8 disagree

Oscar: If it has been this way for 100+ years why change it

- Because an NCA would bring in more grants to help keep the area

Jo: But even \$1 million is not that much money it won't do anything all the government does is spend money.

Man: All the grants will do is give the agency more money to buy stuff the BLM and USFS need to be on the ground

Stu: We need to emphasize that the counties will double in size there are to many people and doing it the way we are now will not work.

## D: Written Comments

### Meeting Notes

#### Escalante- Dominguez Note-cards

Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup> 2007

\* Taken from the audience as is.

- In some areas there should be no trails at all
- Mixed group clean up projects might be a great way to make friends across "user" groups
- I support the expanded wilderness area proposed by the friends of Dominguez especially if no new trails are built in those areas
- Not all motorized routes are on the map. We need an accurate map prior to discussions
- User panel weighted towards environmental groups. Colorado Mountain Club and Clair Bastable are environmental groups and person. As a result should have another motorized rep to offset enviros
- Water Storage reservoir should be allowed on the Gunnison river
- Wilderness area is too large
- Do not need to limit the number of hiker ATVers or anything else not enforceable and too socialistic.
- Existing routes established need to be kept and not closed
- Need new ATV routes established in Cactus Park, Wagon Park, Bennits Basin
- Preserve trails existing and Access open now!
- Why are the prospectors not represented
- Why is the Division of Wildlife Not included
- Please Designate the WSA a wilderness so this area gets the protection it deserves.
- Please do Not insult any part of this area with Wayne Allard's name
- Look at what will preserve the entire water shed for Dominguez and bring forward any studies that show the impact of various uses on watershed and combine agencies (BLM and FS) in the approach
- The wilderness and road less areas seem much too large as drawn on the BLM maps. This is especially true when the Forest Service is considering 32% of the forest as non-motorized. The number of motorized users far exceeds the non motorized users and by the nature of motorized vehicles those users can cover more miles than non motorized users. I would like to see the non motorized areas reduced.
- Why aren't the prospectors represented. Bridgeport Foot and horseback access only

- All in favor of NCA but, roadless should stay that way. Legally established roads and trails stay open. Let us not have a mockery in naming (i.e. McInnis yuk)\*
- On the maps there are several trails that are open now but not shown on the map
- I am handicapped and cannot hike so I have to rely on motorized equipment. I am a native Coloradoan and was raised in the mountains. Please keep the trails open for those who can not hike or raft. I believe there is enough area for every one. Multi Use
- Need to keep open for motorized. My family has been using this area for close to 100 years on motorcycles. I am 52 and a third generation native and third generation motorcyclist. My daughter has already noticed the reduction in open trails and is wondering if her children will even be able to access this area. So keep it open.

### Escalante-Dominguez Note Cards

July 26, 2007

\*Take from the audience as is

- I want the area to be increased in order to protect it. I agree with the coalitions boundaries. I want this area to be NCA.
- I support an NCA designation for the Dominguez Escalante monument area. The wilderness area proposed by the friends of the Dominguez should be included – area 4 and the section of area 3 and forest service area. Once areas with significant wilderness qualities is invaded by motorized vehicles and mountain bikes it is lost to those who seek a safe, quiet outdoor experience on foot or horseback. Most important – wildlife deserves a space with minimal impacts.
- Physically I am unable to hike on a trail. I have used many areas in Colorado, ie river rafting, hiking, camping, and now ATVing. I have enjoyed the outdoors for over 50 years. Please do not take away our motorized trails. I enjoy my ATV and hope to enjoy it for many years to come. Please do not close our ATV trails. It is not unusual to go 60 – 70 miles in one day. This would not be possible if trails were closed as there would not be that many trails to ride on. DO NOT EXPAND THE WILDERNESS AREA ANYMORE THAN IS ALREADY THERE. IT TAKES MORE TRAILS FOR MOTORIZED THAN FOR HIKING.
- All from the same commenter:
  - Zone 3 comment: I do not support expanding the zone for WSA into zone 3.
  - Zone 5 comment: Question: if NCA is “appropriate” I support ATV use in the area. NCA sounds like a good idea with management aspect. However, historically it has been proven that we get access reduced or removed due to lack of resources to manage or unrespectful users.
  - Zone 1 comment: I was unable to attend the public meeting and am interested in the discussions of this zone as I am a property owner who resides on bordering private property. I purchased this property here for

the recreational access right out of my yard. I ATV, hike, target shoot, rock hound, view wildlife, and view the beauty of the land surrounding my property. I am not sure if a NCA designation is a good thing for this area. I don't want my access taken away from enjoying the area but I would like others to respectfully visit the area in the means they prefer and respect private property. I would support "designated route" enforcement as I practice stay the trail and tread lightly.

- Zone 3 comment: My concern about zone 3 of Escalante/Dominguez proposal: recently Bangs Canyon area north of 141 recorded "approval" for a motorized use trail which would make Bangs Canyon and Cactus Park connected on the Tabeguache Trail. I'm concerned that making zone 3 a NCA will make for more "flights" in the future to have that areas motorized trails left open for that trail continuence.
- Quiet uses are getting harder to experience. We need to preserve an amount of land for primitive experience. We can close our eyes but not our ears. The noise of motors can carry far depending on topography. Group size for all user types needs monitoring.
- Preserve the Ranches and work with them managing wildlife, stock ponds "DEPUTIZE" THEM (The Ranchers)! They know the areas well. "Cherry stem" them. Cherry stem some of the roads into/around the WSA. Enlarge WSA to include forest service headwaters.
- Move boundaries WSA into rims.
- All property north of river be off NCA property.
- Leave the area as it is – No, NCA (unknown word)
- Make Gunnison River off BLM jurisdiction – even a mile or so property on each side. The valley needs a reservoir for all the increase of population you talk about.
- Gunnison River for about 22 miles from Whitewater to Delta should be free of government power over.
- Tabeguache trail – map says Tabeguache mountain bike trail for full length – should be listed as Tabeguach trail only.
- Shrink WSA to canyon rims.
- Area 3 should not be made anything other than what it is now. But if it is going to be NCA the boundaries should be up to the rim on 141 side.
- The riparian eco system needs to be protected. Our wildlife congregates here and won't survive too much impact from motorized activity and other high impact human activity.
- North Gunnison Bluff use to be part of greater Dominguez but \_\_\_\_\_ by illegal road. It should be wilderness.
- Just because there is a boundary on the map doesn't mean management is not possible to ensure protection of resources as well as provide for primitive recreation experiences without being designated wilderness.
- I fully support NCA status for all the area considered and hope the WSA is designated as wilderness. At this time I support the inclusion of the area 3 wilderness proposal. The population of the three counties is increasing at an

incredibly rapid rate. We have to protect areas such as Dominguez that have so much to give to future generations.

- I support both NCA and WSA designations for zone 1 through zone 5 especially for zone 3. Consider a lot of road closures.
- The wilderness area should not be expanded. If it is designated as wilderness the boundaries should be changed to run rim to rim and exclude all existing roads above the rim.
- Issue with all meetings held on same night of the week. Some people have other obligations which make them unable to attend. Offer meetings on different days of the week for fair attendance.
- All from the same commenter:
  - Please reopen the roads that have been closed north of the divided road. These roads have been used for motorized access to these areas for years. Sometime in 2000-2003 about 1/3 of these roads were closed. Now there is talk of closing off more areas to motorized. How much more do we need to give up?
  - Do not expand the wilderness in the Dominguez/Escalante management area. Area 4 is more than enough area. I also do not want a request for wilderness added to the NCA request. It should be a separate request to Congress.

### Escalante-Dominguez Note Cards

August 2, 2007

\*Taken from the audience as is

- I don't support the decision/proposal of making this a NCA. I own property and am concerned how my future access will be affected. (David Rohde)
- I find that the way this meeting was facilitated, if you don't verbally disagree, you've agreed. Some people are not comfortable speaking up in a group. I witnessed no request to raise hands and counts taken to determine who really opposes or agrees to what is "reasonably agreed" to. (Tracy Rohde)
- I am not opposed to management of public land use, but do not support this area becoming a NCA. This is a very large area with many different recreational uses and I am not confident that making it a NCA is the answer. There is too much area at stake where recreational activities could be greatly affected in a negative way. I am not willing to take that risk. (Tracy Rohde)
- Unfortunately, the handful of us that attended the meetings, fight for our rights to access and use our public lands responsibly and involve ourselves in public service are a very small percent of public land users in total. Focus on education and making people accountable. IE OHV registration not issued unless a class is taken or they belong to a local club of their recreational activity. "access" license like a fishing license or hunter safety for hunting license. The younger

generations are not being taught by their elders how our lands should be cared for. Not sure of how to capture all public land uses, as registrations are not required for all activities, but an idea perhaps. (Tracy Rohde)

- Why does this area need to become a designated NCA to have more management? Manage it now how it is. No NCA. (Tracy Rohde)
- The over use and degradation of resources issue comes up time and time again. Maybe you should address the cause of that-reproduction of humans! How about putting a limit on that! No, the conversationalists will just keep pushing to close access and keep us from using our public lands. (Tracy Rohde)
- I can't help to think that even with these public meetings, somebody's mind(s) are already made up and a NCA will happen, no matter how much opposition. The Government has a way of working that way-that's historically what I find (Tracy Rohde)
- Why is so much literature being handed out about wilderness if a NCA is not that? Where's our literature on what NCAs have done for other areas designated as that-over time(10+ years) I'm supposed to trust how BLM has historically handled working out agreements with private property but I'm not being given actual instances or guarantee that what I've worked hard for won't be taken away. Today or in 20 years. And sorry, FMV is not an equivalent when you may be 60, 70 years old and lived some where for 25+ years. (Tracy Rohde)
- Its been suggested by some to adjust the WSA (zone 4) boundary along the zone 2 corridor to a more definable place and to also allow private property owners along the river to access their property more easily. I support this (Tracy Rohde)
- All of section 3 should be turned into an ATV complex that would connect to the Tabeguache and Bangs canyon trails. There are too many ATV trails in this section to be closing them. Doesn't this land belong to the American people? Let us use our land. I believe in multiple use and I have never run anyone off of any trails as we have been accused of doing. I believe that we can all use this area as it is large enough for all to use just as we have been doing in the past. We do not need a NCA please do not close us out.
- There needs to be education given to the users in regards to how to take care of the trails, the animals, nature and other users. Also there needs to be someone to enforce the rules for those who chose to ignore them.
- We lost trails in the McGinnis Canyon and Bangs Canyon. We were promised trails in Cactus Park with a connecting trail to the Bangs Canyon. I would like to see this happen. As I can no longer hike on the trails and must use an ATV to enjoy nature and wildlife. The wildlife is not bothered by ATVs. They do not run away from ATV's
- There should be an ATV complex built in area 3 that covers all of the area. It should be connected to the one on top of the uncompadre that is forest service built. It should also be connected to Bangs Canyon.
- The Request to convert area 4 to full wilderness should be a separate request from the NCA. It should not be added on to the NCA in a pork barrel type move. It should stand on its own merits.
- The Environmental groups have stated that they have the support of 90 businesses in Mesa County there are 5867 businesses. So 90 businesses works out

to 1.5% of the businesses in Mesa County. About that same percentage of people that use the wilderness now.

- I am not in favor of any expansion of the wilderness study area.
- The wilderness study area has been there for almost 30 years. It has been recommended by the BLM and other to be made into wilderness yet congress has not acted on these recommendations. So I believe it is time to give it back to multi use.

## **Comments Submitted**

**File Code:** 1920

**Date:** July 6, 2007

Mesa County Board of Commissioners  
P. O. Box 20,000  
Grand Junction, CO 81502-5010

Dear Mesa County Board of Commissioners:

The Forest Service is fully supportive of the proposal from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for the Dominguez-Escalante area. We believe that the BLM proposal is complimentary to the current and proposed management on the adjacent Uncompahgre National Forest.

I understand that some individuals and organizations are advocating expanding the BLM's proposal to include portions of the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre & Gunnison National Forests (GMUG) in the National Conservation Area (NCA) and to recommend portions of the National Forest as wilderness. I am opposed to including the National Forest in the proposal for several reasons, which I outline below:

- The GMUG has been involved in forest plan revision for over five years, and we have a proposed plan awaiting formal public comment. This proposed plan reflects the collaborative work from dozens of public meetings and hundreds of letters and emails. The proposed plan outlines the desired conditions and management guidelines for the entire Uncompahgre Plateau, including the headwaters of the Dominguez-Escalante area. It would be inappropriate to circumvent the plan revision process in mid-stream.
- The GMUG spent several years preparing the Uncompahgre Travel Plan. Thousands of hours of public participation and environmental analysis went into this plan, which provides a good balance of uses and opportunities. I think it would be inappropriate to adopt a new land management designation, like an NCA, that could affect travel management just as the public is beginning to accept and support the existing situation.
- The State of Colorado has filed a petition with the Secretary of Agriculture for rulemaking that would establish management requirements for 4.4 million acres of inventoried roadless areas in Colorado. The GMUG lands adjacent to the BLM

study area include thousands of acres of roadless areas. Again, I feel it would be inappropriate to circumvent the State rulemaking process (which will include an Environmental Impact Statement) for this particular area.

- NCA designation is primarily an Interior Department process. The positive outcomes of NCA designation for BLM lands (e.g., increased budgets and more staff to improve management), generally do not accrue to national forest designations. The congressional designations of the Roubideau Canyon, Tabeguache Canyon, and Fossil Ridge as special areas, for example, did not lead to increased funding for the Forest Service. Without increased funding, the management provisions associated with special designations are either minimally enforced or funding is reduced on other areas of the GMUG. This may be compounded by reduced resource quality in the designated areas because of the greater visitor use impacts brought about by the designation.
- The addition of National Forest to the study area will likely increase controversy. We believe that there is general consensus and agreement on the BLM's proposal. Adding National Forest areas could bog-down the BLM's efforts to achieve improved management of the area.
- The local BLM field offices and GMUG have a proven record of working cooperatively across administrative boundaries to integrate resource management activities such as livestock grazing, travel, fire and fuels, and ecosystem restoration. We will continue to do so, regardless of changes in land designation.

For these reasons, I do not support the addition of GMUG lands to the Dominguez-Escalante NCA proposal or the inclusion of any recommended wilderness on the National Forest. Perhaps when the forest plan revision and the Colorado Roadless rulemaking processes have run their course, the time will be more appropriate to formally consider integrated land designations.

Thank you for taking time to understand my perspective on this matter.

**SINCERELY,**

*/s/ Charles S. Richmond*

CHARLES S. RICHMOND

Forest Supervisor

For release on:

Friday, August 10, 2007 Contact: Richard Ott (970) 201-6637

(970) 245-7868

## **RICH CULTURAL RESOURCES IN PROPOSED GREATER DOMINGUEZ NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA**

ARCHAEOLOGISTS LEND SUPPORT TO FRIENDS OF  
GREATER DOMINGUEZ PROPOSAL

Dominguez Archaeological Research Group, Inc. (DARG), a consortium of archaeologists with expertise in the cultural resources of the Greater Dominguez landscape, today announced their support for a proposal to protect wild, undeveloped public lands along the lower Gunnison River. The proposal by the Friends of Greater Dominguez coalition encompasses both Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and National Forest land and involves congressionally legislated designations such as Wilderness and a special management area. The Greater Dominguez Canyons area holds a rich legacy of cultural resources dating from the time of the earliest human inhabitants of western Colorado, perhaps as much as 13,000 years ago, right up to little more than a century ago when the Ute Indians were forced out of their homelands onto reservation lands in Utah. The Uncompahgre Plateau as a whole contains more than 3,000 known archaeological sites and many hundreds of those lie within the proposed conservation area. "Outstanding examples of rock art from archaic, formative and proto-historic cultural periods are located within the Greater Dominguez area, as well as many other site types that span virtually the entire history of human habitation in western Colorado," said Richard Ott, a DARG research associate. "A number of Ute wickiups, or brush shelters, are present in the area and these are perhaps the most fragile and endangered of all archaeological resources." Cultural resources on public lands are protected by federal laws including the Antiquities Act of 1906, the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (ARPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), as well as other federal, state, and tribal laws and regulations. Despite these protections, archaeological resources in western Colorado are increasingly at risk from the recent acceleration of energy development and population growth. "We know from our studies of archaeology and history that human cultures have come and gone more than once in western Colorado. Boom and bust

are not a new phenomenon here. Early humans in western Colorado followed lifeways intimately tied to the land for thousands of years, only to disappear from the scene as the climate and environment changed and new, perhaps more aggressive, human cultures migrated into the area," said Ott.

Dominquez Archaeological Research Group, Inc.

P.O. Box 3543 • Grand Junction, CO 81502

970-245-7868 • [www.dargnet.org](http://www.dargnet.org)

## DARG Dominquez Archeological Research Group

"We are now witnessing a period of change in western Colorado that may equal any from the past in terms of radical transformation of human relationships to the land, as well as changes wrought on the environment and the land itself," Ott stated. "But there is an important difference to consider in comparing our current situation with those of past cultures. We, as a society, have the power of choice, and the choices we make today will have consequences tomorrow. "As archaeologists and students of history, we believe that the stories told by the art and artifacts from people who lived here before us hold important lessons for us now," said Ott. "The question of whether or not we choose to preserve outstanding examples of our cultural legacy — which includes the land itself — is not only a test of who we are, but who we want to be." "We believe that the Greater Dominguez Canyons area is more than deserving of legislative designation as a national conservation area, and will be an important step in helping to preserve and protect our common cultural legacy, not only for those of us living here today, but for those who will call this land 'home' in the future," said Ott. "The land management successes demonstrated with McGinnis Canyons and Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Areas are, we think, testament to the reasoned and balanced approach that is possible through such efforts. For these reasons, we strongly support the proposal of the Friends of Greater Dominguez." DARG research associates have surveyed and studied lands within the Greater Dominguez Canyons area since the 1970s. The non-profit group functions as a consortium of archaeologists, anthropologists and historians organized to conduct research and promote cultural resource preservation and education in the upper Colorado River Basin. In addition to on-going study and research on the Uncompahgre Plateau, DARG is currently conducting the Colorado Wickiup Project, an effort to record aboriginal wooden structure sites throughout the state; the Colorado Radiocarbon Database Project, a compilation of <sup>14</sup>C data from thousands of archaeological sites; a paleosoils and lithic source study; and has recently launched the Ute Lifeways Project, an integrated program to develop

a knowledgebase of Ute archaeology, anthropology, and ethnohistory. DARG research has been funded by grants from the Colorado Historical Society State Historical Fund, the Bureau of Land Management and private sources.

To: Mesa County Commissioner Janet Roland\*

This letter is written to provide comments on the recent proposals and public hearings regarding the Dominquez/Escalante NCA proposal. Considerable focus has been made by proponents of restricted use in these areas based on projected significant increase in population over the next 2 to 3 decades in the Western Colorado (including Mesa County) areas. Proponents seem to advocate that this population increase mandates greater and greater restrictions on public lands - except for the limited purposes enjoyed by proponents. These are public lands, and the grant of exclusive use to a small group of advocates for restrictions based upon opinion and questionable data is improper.

Restrictions are based to a great degree on means of access to and through public lands. Means of access includes foot, mountain bicycle, horseback, motorized dirt bikes, ATV's, jeeps, 4WD pickups and SUV's, and 2WD (sedans). Proponents in these matters seek to restrict as much area as possible to hiking and remove motorized vehicles to as great a degree as possible.

Land involved in this proceeding regarding addition of a Wilderness Study Area in the Cactus Park area simply fails to meet the criteria for a study area - a roadless area of at least 5000 acres, and be natural and generally unaffected by man (no buildings, roads, or other artificial developments). Furthermore, Colorado has already provided approximately 3.2 million acres as designated Wilderness Areas.

Public lands are intended for the public - not a select few. Western Colorado is a desirable location for retirement, and many people, both newly relocated and lifelong residents still enjoy an active outdoor life. Many of us, however, have some physical limitations which preclude lengthy hiking.

We do not, however, believe this should preclude the privilege of enjoying as much of our public land as possible. Additionally, proponents have given no consideration whatsoever to access by those truly handicapped - who also have rights to be considered.

Proponents seek to portray themselves as exceptional or superior in conservation and preservation, and those who travel by motorized vehicle to be eager to "devastate" the area with a total disregard for others. They

have not supported this portrayal in any tangible way - but seem to be convinced it 'sells well'.

Often the damage to trails is done in late fall by out-of-state hunters, who chain up all wheels on motorized vehicles to hunt and haul out game. Regardless of who or how public lands are mistreated, this is an issue of enforcement, not use restriction. Disregard of public property is not confined to a few classes of users, as all groups - including these proponents of heavy and expanded restrictions - have those who abuse the land and the rights of others.

To continually increase restrictions on public lands to meet predicted large increases in population who have a right to reasonable use of the same is based solely on emotion and greed, and without logic whatsoever by the proponents of these proposals; and these demands should be denied.

Respectfully submitted;

John B. Stuelpnagel

\*This letter was addressed to and received by Dr Tim Casey and the BLM. We are including only one copy here.

## **Proposals submitted**

AUG. 07, 2007

Attn. Dr. Tim Casey,

This letter is in response to the meetings on Dominguez Escalante NCA Proposal. I'm not in favor of NCA!!

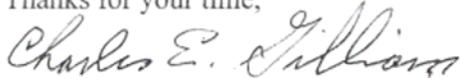
The boundary of the Dominguez Canyon Wilderness study area should be kept to the rim of the Dominguez Canyon on both sides. One should be able to look into the bottom of the canyon from both sides. When crossing drainage, the line should go straight across, rim to rim.

Any roads, Jeep roads, and ATV routes that lead into Dominguez Canyon Wilderness Study area ( all of area 4 ) should remain open. Keeping the boundary on both sides of the route would leave access for fire fighting, managing the vegetation, water storage, and the general public. That way, people can go somewhere besides the city park. If any of these roads, Jeep roads ( or trails ), and ATV route are closed it just put more pressure on other public land.

I feel only a very few that use the land on the Dominguez Escalante NCA Proposal area were at the meetings. I had to ask for an address to send a written comment. There were no E-mail addresses on the literature that was handed out at the meetings. Did I miss something? If you didn't comment at the meetings how could the public be heard or send in their comments.

There only needs to be one agency over this area. BLM or NCA.

Thanks for your time,

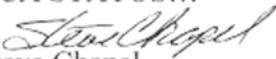


Charles E. Gilliam  
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Phone 970-248-9846 or 970-216-3475

July 2, 2007

Tim Casey & Pam motley,

I am unable to attend the meeting pertaining to the Dominguez WSA so I am submitting my recommendation for the new boundary of the WSA. Essentially the area should follow natural Boundaries such as canyon ridge lines. It should exclude roads, even those that are now within its boundaries and now called hiking trails. The roads should be returned to multiple use status. THE RIVER SHOULD REMAIN UNEFFECTED BY NCA STATUS!!!

  
Steve Chapel  
Western Slope ATV Association

**Friends of Greater Dominguez**

Western Colorado Congress ~ Colorado Environmental Coalition ~  
The Wilderness Society ~ Colorado Mountain Club ~ Sierra Club ~  
Western Slope Environmental Resource Council ~ Colorado Wilderness Network

June 15, 2007

Dear Dr. Casey and Dr. Redifer –

On behalf of the members of the community and conservation groups allied in the Friends of Greater Dominguez, thank you for your efforts in organizing and facilitating last night's Dominguez-Escalante Community Education Forum.

This is a crucial public dialogue that has begun. It is our hope that the conversations taking place over the coming months will result in successful federal legislation being introduced later this summer or in the fall.

The way you've structured the follow-up meetings – highlighting on-the-ground issues related to specific geographic areas – certainly makes sense. This format presents an opportunity to hone in on potential conflicts, as well as share information to allay unnecessary concerns.

As you indicated last night, this is a process designed to be open and inclusive in a way that moves our diverse community toward consensus on a final proposal. To be true to this process, we believe it is vital that all of the lands incorporated in the Friends of Greater Dominguez proposal be fully discussed at the series of follow-up meetings.

To that end, we recommend that the additional lands in our proposal be intentionally included in the following ways:

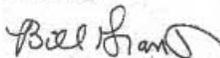
- *Roubideau Area Addition and Kelso Mesa Study Area* at the Zone 5 meeting on June 28
- *Big Dominguez Creek headwaters along Black Point in the Uncompahgre National Forest* at the Zone 4 meeting on July 12

Geographically and ecologically, these landscapes are logical extensions of the zones that have been devised.

Additionally, we recommend that staff from the GMUG National Forest's Grand Valley Ranger District be invited to join BLM staff at these meetings. Though interagency coordination does not necessarily come naturally, it can improve and enhance the sustainable management of our public lands. Such cooperation has worked well in other areas of Colorado, such as with the proposed Browns Canyon Wilderness, which includes both National Forest and BLM lands.

Again, thank you for your efforts. We look forward to fully engaging it this process.

Sincerely –



Bill Grant, President  
Western Colorado Congress

**Greater Dominguez Wilderness Proposal**  
**Friends of Greater Dominguez**  
**June 2007**

**Introduction**

Based on extensive field research and conversations with local ranchers, public land users and local elected officials, the Friends of Greater Dominguez presents the following proposal for the management and protection of lands along the lower Gunnison River. We believe this proposal captures the needs, goals, and sense of compromise that best serves the land and best responds to the variety of activities these lands support.

We are urging Colorado's congressional delegation to introduce and seek prompt passage for legislation that implements this proposal. We stand ready to support, advise, and discuss details of that legislation with local, state and national officials, with the public, and with anyone affected by this proposal.

The proposal consists of five components, including one area of widely mixed management, two wilderness areas, an expansion of an existing congressionally-designated special management area, and a new Study Area.

**Greater Dominguez National Conservation Area (NCA)**

This proposed special management area includes a variety of different management practices and protections, reflecting the existing variety of terrains, eco-systems and uses. Overall, the NCA would be managed for a variety of various recreational and other uses including motorized and off-road vehicle access, and mountain bike travel. Contained within the NCA would be two adjacent wilderness areas: Dominguez Canyons and Dominguez North.

The proposed boundaries follow the boundaries originally depicted in the Bureau of Land Management's *Community Stewardship Plan*, (since revised on the agency's 2006 *Dominguez/Escalante Area* map), and appear as a broad purple line on our accompanying map, *Lower Gunnison Wilderness Lands*, (May 2007).

**Dominguez Canyons Wilderness and Dominguez North Wilderness**

We propose that the BLM Dominguez Canyons Wilderness Study Area (WSA) receive permanent Wilderness designation and be supplemented in two areas, following boundaries previously established in the *Citizens' Wilderness Proposal*.

First, a geographically contiguous expansion of the Wilderness to include the primitive roadless headwaters of Little Dominguez Creek along Black Point in the Uncompahgre National Forest, shown in red without cross-hatching on the accompanying map, *Lower Gunnison Wilderness Lands*, (May 2007).

Second, a new Wilderness Area to be added immediately to the north of Dominguez Canyons WSA, roughly between the Gunnison River and the Tabeguache Trail, shown as Dominguez North Wilderness on the accompanying map, *Lower Gunnison Wilderness Lands*, (May 2007). This wild area is

geographically and ecologically a continuation of the area within the WSA, and is separated from it only by a road used to access private lands along the river.

#### **Roubideau Area expansion**

The Friends of Greater Dominguez proposes that the existing BLM Camel Back Wilderness Study Area be added to the National Forest Service's existing Roubideau Area, designated in the Colorado Wilderness Act of 1993, with the entire area having the same protections and management as currently apply to the Roubideau Area. We further propose that the Area be expanded to include additional wild areas of Potter Canyon, Monitor Mesa and Monitor Canyon, as shown on the accompanying map, *Lower Gunnison Wilderness Lands*, (May 2007). This expansion and unification represents a geographically logical completion of this important special management area.

#### **Kelso Mesa Study Area**

Our proposal asks that legislation provide interim protection for the wilderness characteristics and roadlessness of the upstream portions of Escalante Creek in the Kelso Mesa area, and direct the U.S. Forest Service to study the area for wilderness potential and for possible addition to the Greater Dominguez National Conservation Area described above.

\*\*\*\*\*

This proposal, taken collectively, has been prepared in response to comments received from federal agencies and from local elected officials, acknowledging expressions of support and boundary preferences from nearby landowners and agricultural users of the area, and attending to public recreation activities and desires on the lands involved. We believe that it provides a comprehensive, sensitive, and appropriate array of protection for this beautiful, important and multi-dimensional place.

#### **Friends of Greater Dominguez Contacts**

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Clare Bastable  
Colorado Mountain Club  
(970) 618-1341  
bastac@cmc.org

## Support Wilderness Protection!

The following group/business adds its name to the growing list of those that support the Friends of Greater Dominguez legislative proposal.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Business/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**A REQUEST TO SUPPORT WILDERNESS PROTECTION FOR THE GREATER DOMINGUEZ CANYON AREA INCLUDING THE DOMINGUEZ NORTH AND KELSO MESA AREAS LOCATED IN MESA COUNTY AS TO PROVIDE ECONOMIC BENEFITS AND GREATER PUBLIC LANDS PROTECTION IN WESTERN COLORADO.**

**WHEREAS**, in 2000 the Mesa County Commissioners voted in support of Wilderness protection for Dominguez Canyon,

**WHEREAS**, the current Mesa County Commissioners will be discussing national Wilderness legislation for the greater Dominguez Canyon area,

**WHEREAS**, Mesa County currently has only one wilderness area protected by the Wilderness Act,

**WHEREAS**, Western Colorado citizens realize the benefits of public lands and the increasing need to protect surrounding lands,

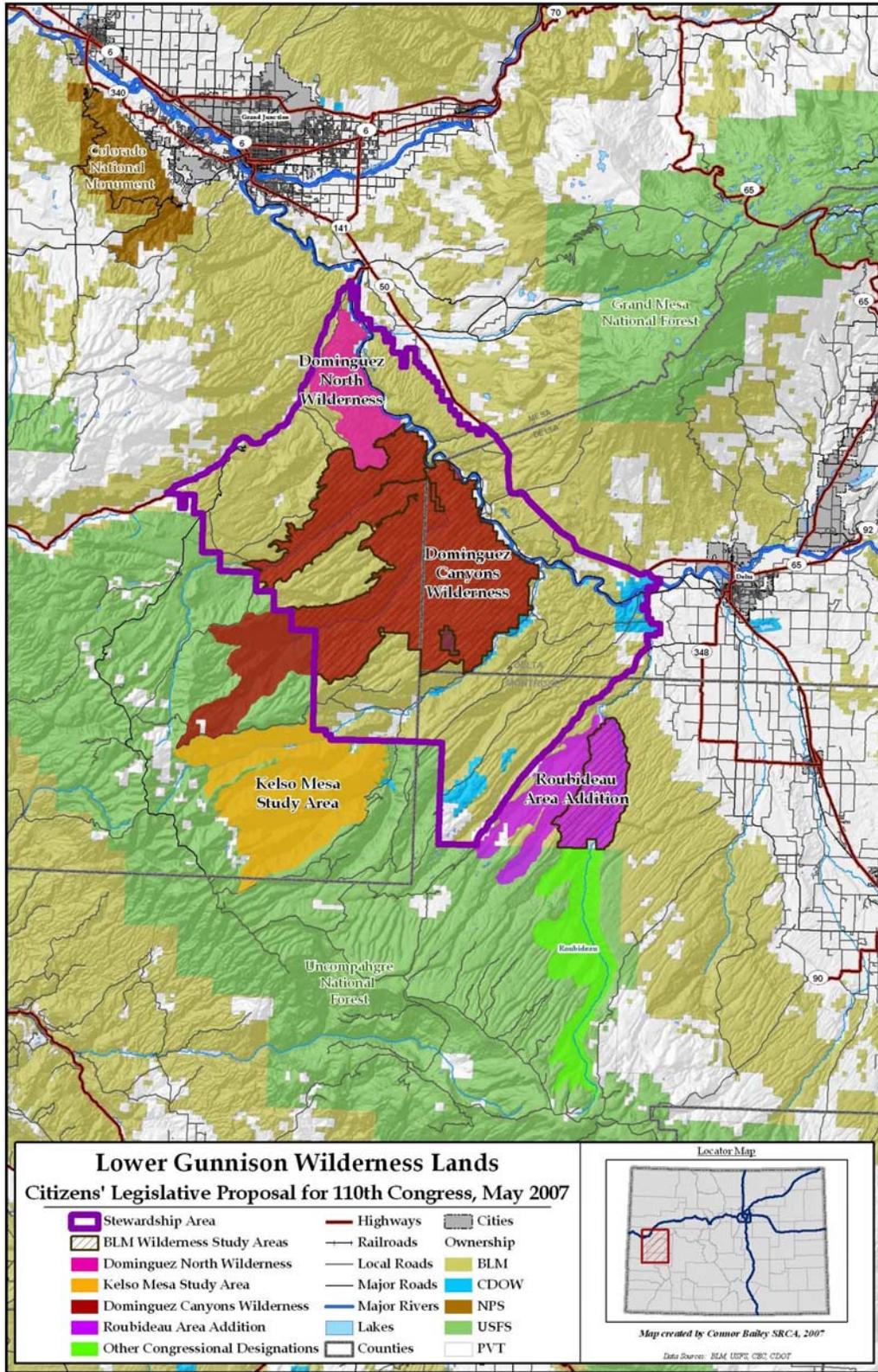
**WHEREAS**, Wilderness legislation is especially important to the tri-county (Mesa, Montrose, Delta) area because of the benefits for economic development as well as health and environment,

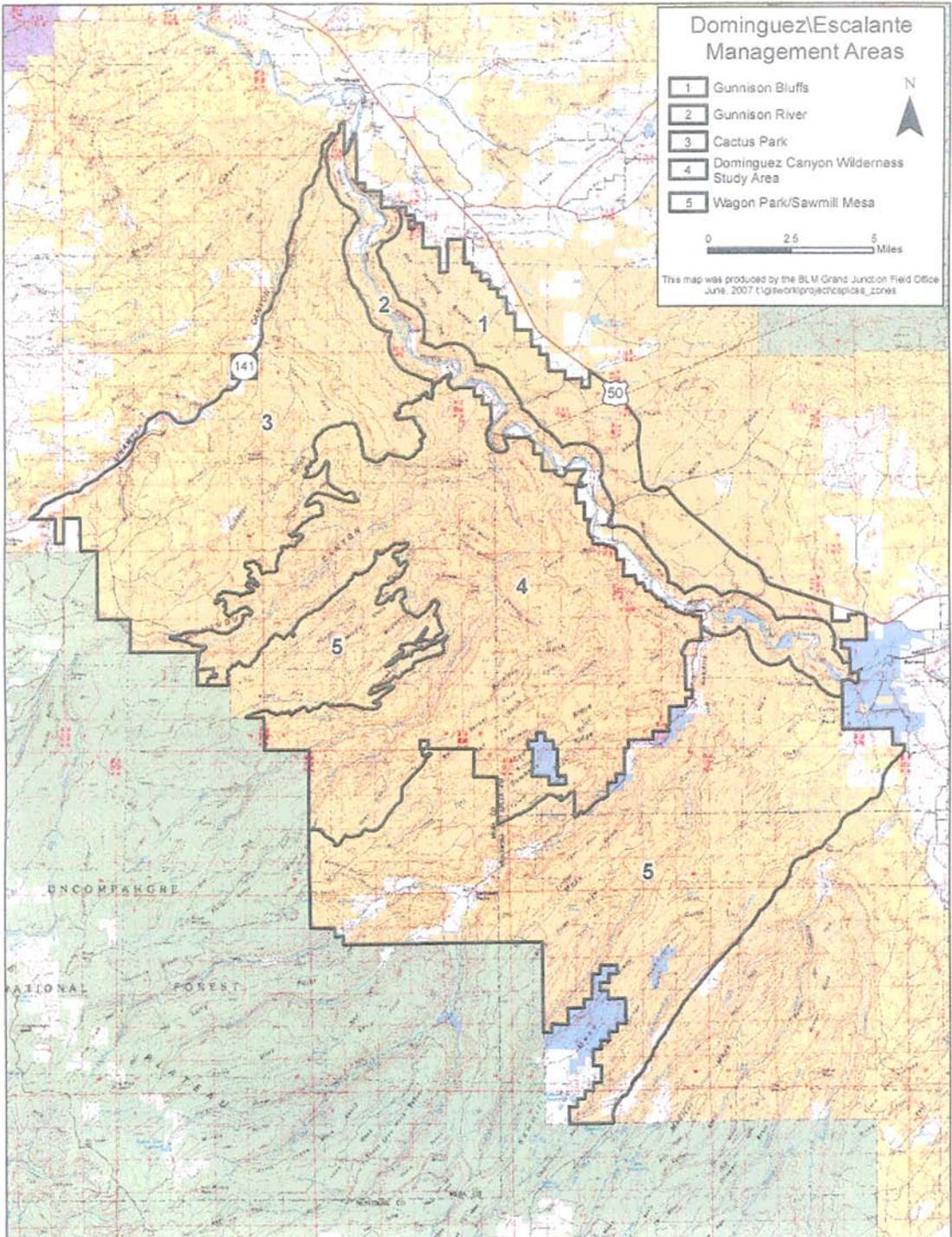
**WHEREAS**, Wilderness protection will ensure that these lands are protected for future generations but still maintain access for multiple recreational uses such as hiking, horseback access, hunting, fishing and all other non-motorized and non-mechanized uses,

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED** \_\_\_\_\_ hereby urges the Mesa County Commissioners and the Colorado congressional delegation to increase public lands protection for the greater Dominguez Canyon area including the Dominguez North and Kelso Mesa areas.

## Friends of Greater Dominguez Business/Organization Supporters

13 Photography  
A Hagggle of Vendors Emporium  
A Voice of Reason  
Ace Cash Advance  
Ancient Technologies  
Angels in the Making, LLC  
Audubon, Roaring Fork Chapter  
Birmingham Realty  
Blue Heron Yoga  
Bookcliff Vision Center  
Brenda Mavor Photography  
C & R Farms  
Carl Vostatek Architecture  
Catfish Canoe Co.  
Centennial Canoe Outfitters, Inc.  
Chamberlin Architects  
Ciao Bella  
Colorado Environmental Coalition  
Colorado Photo Design  
Colorado West Family Dental Center\*\*  
Concerned Citizens Alliance  
Cookies by Design  
Crescent Moon Gallery  
Crossroads Fitness Center  
Crossroads liquor  
Crystal Books\*\*  
Dos Reales, Inc  
Fine Line Studio  
Flyin' Miata  
FrameWorks and Gallery  
GIMSA Inc  
Grand Junction Athletic Club  
Grand Junction Holiday Inn  
Grand Valley Audubon Society  
Grand Valley Peace and Justice  
Great Harvest Bakery  
Great Old Broads for Wilderness  
Greenscapes West  
Hilderbrandt Construction  
Hilltop Liquors  
Horn O' Plenty  
Il Bistro Italiano  
Jan Cooper Real Estate\*\*  
Just Joan's Pottery and Photography  
Kat'z Lair Day Spa  
Koinonia Church  
La Bamba Restaurant  
LOKI, Inc  
Lotus Therapeutics  
Main Street Bagels  
Mayer Medical  
Meadowlark Gardens  
Mesa County Wilderness Coalition  
Mesa Optical Company, Inc  
Mesa State College Intramural Office  
Mesa State College Outdoor Program  
Mosaic Planet  
My Favorite Muffin  
Native Imports  
Nitro Graphics  
Orchard Mesa Veterinary Hospital  
Performance Horse and Rider  
Planet Earth & Four Directions Gallery  
Rare Earth Science  
Readmoor Books  
Robinson Realty  
Sierra Club-Uncompaghre Group  
Smart Dog Technologies  
Soltec  
Sorensen Realty  
Specialized Service and Repair  
Spiritual Counselor, Sherry Cole RScP  
Spring Creek Ranch  
Steven Tyler Insurance Agency  
Summit Canyon Mountaineering  
Talbott Farms Inc  
Tartan Farms  
The Alderwood Center for Natural Health  
Thunder Mountain Camera Club  
Toys for the Fun of It  
Triple Play Records  
Visual Expressions\*\*  
Vitamin Cottage  
Wallace Music & Sound, Inc.  
Western Anglers Fly Shop  
Western Colorado Action Network  
Western Colorado Congress\*\*  
Whole Life Networks  
Withers, Seidman, Rice & Mueller. PC  
WoodCo





**Dominguez-Escalante Management Area**  
**Grand Junction/Uncompahgre Field Offices**

1. Gunnison Bluffs

This area is the BLM lands lying between the U.S. Highway 50 and the Gunnison River. Access to the Gunnison River may be gained via several routes through this corridor. It is valued for intermittent day use recreation, exploration and sightseeing. Off-highway vehicle use, mountain bike use and horseback riding occur throughout the area. The area is valued by local planning groups for potential trail opportunities connecting Grand Junction and Delta. The Old Spanish National Historic Trail also passes through this area.

2. Gunnison River

The lower Gunnison River area is valued primarily for class 2 rafting and canoeing. Access points are located in Delta, Escalante Bridge, Bridgeport, and Whitewater. River use has increased dramatically, particularly by commercial canoe outfitters as it is an excellent flat water entry level river experience.

3. Cactus Park

This area includes Colorado Highway 141, the northern segment of the Unaweep-Tabeguache Scenic and Historic Byway which is valued as the primary access route to Unaweep Canyon and canyons of the lower Dolores River. Roadside day use along the Scenic Byway includes recreation stops and bouldering. Portions of this riparian zone lying north and west of East Creek also comprise the southern portion of the Bangs Canyon area. This area is valued for diverse double-track motorized recreation use and mountain biking connected to the Tabeguache Trail which traverses its southeastern perimeter. This area also includes the Gunnison Slopes which lies just east of the Tabeguache Trail and west of the Gunnison River. The area is valued for non-motorized recreation, offering panoramic views into the Gunnison River corridor. This area also affords vehicular access to the WSA to the south and on the west end via the Dominguez Campground. The area borders the Uncompahgre National Forest and provides access and limited connectivity with the forest trail system. This area lies closest to the City of Grand Junction for day use recreation.

4. Dominguez Canyons Wilderness Study Area (WSA)

The Dominguez Canyons WSA was recommended by the BLM as suitable for Wilderness designation by Congress in 1992. This area is primarily valued for back country wilderness recreation. The WSA has outstanding scenery, spectacular geologic features, ecological diversity, two major canyon riparian zones, petroglyphs, and outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. The Bridgeport Bridge provides access across the Gunnison River and is the primary access point for most users to explore the lower reaches of both Big and Little Dominguez Canyons within the Dominguez Canyons WSA and Star Mesa.

5. Wagon Park/Bennetts Basin/Escalante Creek/Sawmill Mesa

This area includes 4 sub-areas, and while they are not contiguous, they have common recreational uses. Wagon Park and Bennetts Basin are south of the Dominguez WSA and are highly valued as get-away areas by Off-Highway vehicle users and receive considerable big game hunting use. They are also access points for entering the upper reaches of the Dominguez WSA. The Escalante Creek corridor is the primary access corridor from U.S. Highway 50 to the Uncompahgre Plateau. The area is valued for its scenic and historical backcountry "pioneer" experience, recreation attractions, and for access to the Dominguez Canyons WSA. The area includes the Potholes Recreation Site and an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (sensitive plants, natural seeps, and several globally-unique plant associations). Sawmill Mesa consists of the elevated mesas and canyons including Tatum Draw, Dry Fork, and Cottonwood Creek, lying southwest of the town of Delta and is utilized for day use recreation. It is valued for its dispersed recreational opportunities including diverse motorized recreation and hunting use. Throughout this area, there are historic vegetative treatments, historic grazing uses, numerous utility corridors, and connectivity to Forest Service trail systems.

## **F: Meeting Handouts**

Bureau of Land Management



### Definitions



**National Conservation Areas (NCAs)** are designated by Congress to conserve, protect, enhance, and manage public land areas for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. NCAs feature exceptional natural, recreational, cultural, wildlife, aquatic, archeological, paleontological, historical, educational or scientific resources.

**Wilderness Areas** - The Wilderness Act of 1964, created the National Wilderness Preservation System and a legal designation to protect areas of public lands that are considered "wilderness" in nature. The Act defines wilderness as "an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain...Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions." In order to be designate wilderness, an area must: 1) be a roadless area of at least 5,000 acres, 2) be natural and generally unaffected by man (no building, roads or other artificial developments), 3) provide "outstanding opportunities" for solitude, 4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic or historical value. Only Congress can designate Wilderness Areas.

**Wilderness Study Areas** - The Federal Land and Policy Management Act (1976) directed the BLM to study and inventory its roadless areas for possible Wilderness designation. The BLM completed its survey in 1980 and made recommendations for those areas it deemed worthy of the wilderness designation. Congress has designated some of these areas as wilderness and others as non-wilderness. Those areas that have been studied but not yet reviewed by Congress remain Wilderness Study Areas. BLM is to manage these areas as wilderness units until Congress either designates the area as wilderness or releases it for non-wilderness uses. To be considered for a wilderness designation, these areas must demonstrate the previously listed wilderness characteristics.

**Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC):** An area established administratively through the BLM planning process as provided in the Federal Land Policy Management Act (FLPMA) where special management attention is required (when such areas are developed or used or where no development is required) to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values; or to fish and wildlife resources or other natural systems or processes; or to protect life and afford safety from natural hazards.

## National Landscape Conservation System



[Previous Page](#)

[NLCS Home Page](#)

# Frequently Asked Questions

## THE WILDERNESS IDEA

### What is "Wilderness"?

Wilderness is a legal designation designed to provide long-term protection and conservation of Federal public lands. Wilderness is defined by the Wilderness Act of 1964 as "an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain...Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value."

### What was the basis of the Wilderness idea?

The wilderness idea — protection of the Nation's most pristine undeveloped lands — was born in the United States. Early supporters of a wilderness system saw a fundamental need to sustain the unique American character shaped by our national encounter with the wild frontier. In 1925, conservationist Aldo Leopold first promoted a "definite national policy advocating a system of wilderness involving the National Parks and National Forests." In a memo to Secretary Ickes in 1934, Bob Marshall, another 20th-century Wilderness advocate, suggested the need for protecting wilderness areas by law. After World War II, rapid development threatened the integrity of the remaining undeveloped tracts of public land. Based on early experiences in wilderness protection, conservationists looked for stronger ways to permanently protect wilderness and drafted the first wilderness bill in 1945.

## THE WILDERNESS ACT

### What is the Wilderness Act of 1964?

The Wilderness Act of 1964 is the general legal authority for Congress to designate and for agencies to manage wilderness.

### What did The Wilderness Act do?

The Wilderness Act did a variety of things including:

1. Established a national policy to preserve wilderness.
2. Established a definition of wilderness.
3. Established a National Wilderness Preservation System.
4. Designated the first 9.1 million acres of legally protected wilderness.
5. Established a single, consistent wilderness management direction.

6. Mandated a wilderness review process.
7. Asserted the exclusive power of the Congress to designate wilderness areas.

#### **Why are wilderness areas designated?**

The Wilderness Act states that wilderness areas are established "to assure that an increasing population, accompanied by expanding settlement and growing mechanization, does not occupy and modify all areas within the United States and its possessions, leaving no lands designated for preservation and protection in their natural condition." Today, wilderness is designated for a variety of benefits, including clean water and air, habitat for rare plants and animals as well as primitive recreation.

#### **How is wilderness designated?**

The Wilderness Act asserted the exclusive power of the Congress to designate Wilderness. Congress can also un-designate a Wilderness Area or change the boundaries of a Wilderness Area.

#### **How much wilderness has been designated by Congress?**

Since Congress passed the Wilderness Act in 1964, over 130 individual wilderness bills have designated more than 680 Wilderness Areas. These areas total over 106 million acres in 44 States. Of this acreage, more than 57 million acres are in Alaska and over 49 million in the coterminous United States and Hawaii. This represents about 2.5 percent of the land in the lower 48 states. To place this acreage in context, the Department of Agriculture estimates that there are approximately 110 million acres of intensively developed land in the coterminous United States (nearly 6 percent).

#### **Which agencies are responsible for wilderness management?**

Wilderness is managed by four Federal agencies: the Bureau of Land Management, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Forest Service, and the National Park Service.

### **BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT - WILDERNESS**

#### **How much Wilderness is the Bureau of Land Management responsible for?**

The BLM manages 182 Wilderness Areas with 7.4 million acres. These areas are located in all the Western States except Wyoming, Hawaii, and Alaska.

#### **What uses occur in BLM-managed wilderness?**

The uses of wilderness include protection of air and watersheds; maintenance of soil and water quality, ecological stability, plant and animal gene pools, protection of archaeological and historical sites, habitat for wildlife; and livestock grazing. Wilderness provides opportunities for outdoor recreation including hunting, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, and camping. Wilderness also provides for the exercise of valid existing rights such as water rights, mining claims, mineral leases, and rights-of-way.

#### **Does BLM manage wilderness differently from other agencies?**

No. Wilderness management is essentially the same from agency to agency, though each agency has its own specific laws and policies for resource management. All agencies respond to the same congressional direction from the Wilderness Act. Differences include the National Park Service prohibiting grazing in its Wilderness Areas, but this is because national parks normally do not allow these activities.

#### **Are motor vehicles allowed in wilderness?**

No. The Wilderness Act generally prohibits the use of motor vehicles in wilderness. The law contains special provisions for motor vehicle use when required in emergencies or as necessary for the administration of the area. Motor vehicles may also be permitted for special uses such as access to a private inholding, to support grazing, or to exercise valid existing rights.

#### **What are some of the other uses that occur in wilderness?**

**Air quality designations** - The majority of BLM Wilderness Areas allow some degradation of air quality associated with moderate industrial and population growth. The Clean Air Act allows states to require that Wilderness Areas meet a more stringent air-quality standard using normal State processes.

6. Mandated a wilderness review process.
7. Asserted the exclusive power of the Congress to designate wilderness areas.

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**Air quality designations** - The majority of BLM Wilderness Areas allow some degradation of air quality associated with moderate industrial and population growth. The Clean Air Act allows states to require that Wilderness Areas meet a more stringent air-quality standard using normal State processes.

**Hunting and fishing** - People hunt or fish in most BLM Wilderness Areas. Some people prefer to hunt or fish in wilderness because they enjoy the primitive experience available there. Hunting and fishing in BLM Wilderness, like other BLM lands, is licensed by the State.

**Outfitters** - BLM-authorized outfitters provide additional recreation opportunities in many Wilderness Areas. Outfitters commonly provide services in river running, hunting, and packing. Outfitters also provide wilderness therapy programs for-at risk youth and wilderness experience programs. Each BLM field office maintains a list of outfitters operating in the local Wilderness Areas.

**Disabled use** - Wheelchairs can be used in wilderness. In addition, people with disabilities use rafts, canoes, and pack animals to access wilderness. Certain outfitters conduct wilderness trips involving people with and without disabilities.

**Search and rescue** - Search and rescue occurs within wilderness, normally without on-the-ground vehicles. Vehicles may be used when required in an emergency.

**Water rights** - Wilderness designation does not affect existing water rights. Because legislative direction has varied on reserved water rights, some Wilderness Areas have a reserved water right, and some do not. When a wilderness is designated with Federal water rights, the effective date of the right is the date of wilderness designation. A Federal water right does not affect older water rights and uses.

Last updated: 11/01/06

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## BLM Minerals Online Resources

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BLM Interactive Map Site: Search, locate, and map the BLM's land and mineral use records including: Oil & Gas, Agreements, unpatented Mining Claims, and cases that affect the status of the land. Quick access to BLM's LR2000 serial register reports.  
<http://www.geocommunicator.gov/GeoComm/index.shtm>

SouthWest Data Center Site: BLM has partnered with San Miguel, Montrose, Delta and Ouray Counties to provide an online tool for determining whether minerals are privately or federally owned, and if that mineral estate will be available on the next oil and gas lease sale.  
<http://www.southwestdata.org/data/viewer.htm>

BLM National Website for Oil and Gas Lease Sales: View Lease Sale Notices, Schedules, etc.  
<http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/energy.1.html>

BLM Colorado Website for Oil and Gas Lease Sales: View Lease Sale Notices, Schedules, etc.  
[http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/BLM\\_Programs/oilandgas.html](http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/BLM_Programs/oilandgas.html)

Information Regarding Review of BLM Split-Estate Policies and Practices. Learn about BLM's Best Management Practices for Oil and Gas Development on Public Lands.  
<http://www.blm.gov/bmp/>

State of Colorado Site: Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission  
<http://www.oil-gas.state.co.us/>

Regional information on USDA Forest Service parcels  
[http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/resources/mgr/minerals/lease\\_sales/lease\\_sale\\_by\\_state/r2\\_states](http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/resources/mgr/minerals/lease_sales/lease_sale_by_state/r2_states)

Onshore Oil and Gas Operations; Federal and Indian Oil and gas Leases; Onshore Oil and Gas Order Number 1; Approval of Operations; Final Rule  
[http://blm.gov/nhp/news/regulatory/36CFR228\\_3160\\_2007/USF228\\_BLM3160.pdf](http://blm.gov/nhp/news/regulatory/36CFR228_3160_2007/USF228_BLM3160.pdf)  
[http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx\\_02/43cfr3160\\_02.html](http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_02/43cfr3160_02.html)

Questions may be directed to:

Mel Lloyd, BLM Uncompahgre Field Office-Public Affairs, (970) 244-3097  
Barb Sharrow, BLM Uncompahgre Field Office-Field Manager, (970) 240-5300  
Lynn Lewis, BLM Uncompahgre Field Office-Minerals, (970) 240-5300  
Duane Spencer, BLM Colorado-Fluid Minerals, (303) 239-3753

BLM

Uncompahgre Field Office



## G: Background Information

MCA 2001-17

### MESA COUNTY'S WILDERNESS POSITION STATEMENT

Starting in the Spring of 2000, the Mesa County Board of Commissioners began a process to develop recommendations as to the County's position on various proposed wilderness areas within the County. The process employed:

- A stakeholders' group in which 34 key groups were invited to participate. The Commissioners employed a facilitator to assist those groups, as well as assistance from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs and the County's Long-Range Planning staff. In addition, we received the assistance of the U. S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management who were available to provide information and answer questions. The stakeholders' committee held multiple meetings and an open house/debate at which over 200 people attended.
- County Commissioners also held a Public Hearing attended by well over 100 people and reviewed hundreds of letters and cards.
- County staff, at the Board's direction, researched many of the issues raised at meetings or by correspondence.
- Commissioners visited or flew over all of the proposed wilderness areas.

Based on this year-long process, the Mesa County Commissioners hereby support legislation designating both Dominquez Canyon and Sewemup Mesa as National Conservation Areas/Wilderness based on the Colorado Canyons Wilderness legislation recently signed into law. The County Commissioners intend to work diligently with the Colorado Congressional Delegation to support and promote this legislation. The Board understands that this process will require fine tuning and recognition of the unique character of this land. Issues regarding water and grazing rights will need to be protected and boundary adjustments must be made. We believe these two areas are unique and in need of protection. We plan to utilize County staff and resources to work closely with our Congressional Delegation and other counties through Colorado Counties, Inc. to achieve this goal.

Our process also indicated other areas in need of special protection. We intend to continue to work with the Bureau of Land Management, the U. S. Forest Service and others regarding the long-term protection and management of these areas as well.

ADOPTED THIS 26th DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2001.

MESA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



By:

*Kathryn H. Hall*

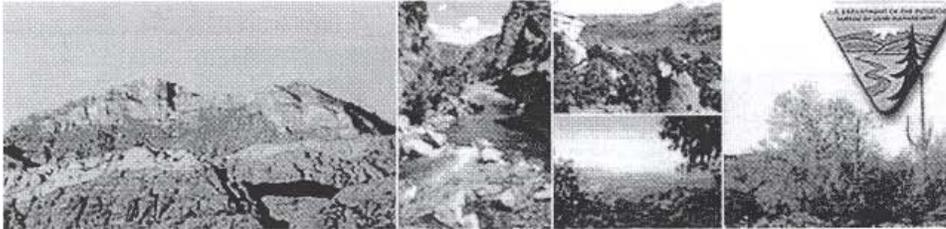
Kathryn H. Hall, Chairman

Mesa County Board of County Commissioners

*Monika Todd*  
Monika Todd, Mesa County Clerk & Recorder

S:\wildernessposition.wpd

## National Landscape Conservation System



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# National Conservation Areas

[Map of National Conservation Areas](#)

[Summary Table](#)

[Detailed Table in MS Excel format](#) (Also available as [27KB Adobe PDF](#))

National Conservation Areas (NCAs) are designated by Congress to conserve, protect, enhance, and manage public land areas for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. NCAs feature exceptional natural, recreational, cultural, wildlife, aquatic, archeological, paleontological, historical, educational or scientific resources.

### Alaska



#### Steese

Steese, a 1,220,000-acre area designated by the Congress in 1980, includes the Birch Creek Wild and Scenic River, wildlife habitat, and diverse recreational opportunities.

### Arizona

#### Gila Box Riparian

Gila Box Riparian, designated by Congress in 1990. This 21,767-acre cool desert oasis features Bonita Creek (popular for birding and picnicking), cliff dwellings, historic homesteads, bighorn sheep,



and more than 200 species of birds.



### Las Cienegas

Las Cienegas National Conservation Area, designated by Congress in 2000. These 42,000 acres of scenic landscape include vast desert grasslands and rolling oak-studded hills. The area is home to a great diversity of plant and animal life, including several threatened or endangered species.



### San Pedro Riparian

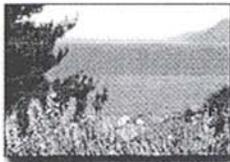
San Pedro Riparian, designated by Congress in 1988. 58,000-acre area that supports over 350 species of birds, 80 species of mammals, and 40 species of amphibians and reptiles.

## California



### California Desert

California Desert, designated by Congress in 1976. 9,500,000-acres featuring vast desert areas with myriad wildlife and recreational opportunities.



### King Range

King Range, designated by Congress in 1970. 60,000-acre area with 35 miles of remote coastline known as California's Lost Coast.

## Colorado

### Gunnison Gorge

Gunnison Gorge, designated by Congress in 1999. 57,727-acre



area offers a variety of natural and geologic features and unsurpassed recreational opportunities.



### **McInnis Canyons**

This area is remarkable for its diverse landscape ranging from salt bush desert to the spectacular canyons of the Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness. Located in west central Colorado, the Conservation Area encompasses 122,300 acres, including 75,550 acres of wilderness.

## **Idaho**



### **Snake River Birds of Prey, ID**

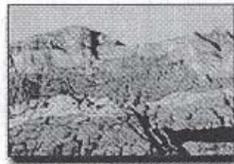
Snake River Birds of Prey, designated by Congress in 1993. 484,873-acre area, home to the largest concentration of nesting raptors in North America and located only 35 miles south of Boise, Idaho.

## **Nevada**



### **Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails**

Designated in December 2000, this area includes nearly 1.2 million acres of public lands in northwestern Nevada and protects wagon ruts, historic inscriptions, and a wilderness landscape largely unchanged from when pioneers moved westward in the 1800s.

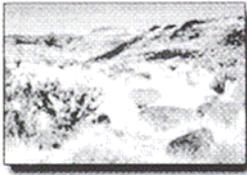


### **Red Rock Canyon**

Red Rock Canyon, designated by Congress in 1990. 195,610-acre area with unique geologic features, plants, and animals that represent some of the best examples of the Mojave Desert, and offers spectacular landscapes, climbing, and hiking opportunities.

### **Sloan Canyon**

The Sloan Canyon is managed to conserve, protect, and enhance cultural, archaeological, natural, wilderness, scientific, geological,



historical, biological, wildlife, educational, and scenic resources of this area. It encompasses approximately forty eight thousand acres and was established in 2002 through the Clark County Conservation of Public Land and Natural Resources Act. The area contains significant archeological sites, scenic vistas, important wildlife habitat and opportunities for primitive recreation.

## New Mexico



### El Malpais

El Malpais, designated by Congress in 1987. 262,100-acre area featuring rugged lava flows with some of the Nation's most significant geological, cultural, scenic, scientific, and wilderness resources.

Last updated: 09/19/05

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## National Landscape Conservation System



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# NLCS Summary Tables

This data is also available in MS Word (120KB) and Adobe Acrobat PDF (92KB) format

National Conservation Areas As of November 2006		
State	Number of National Conservation Areas	BLM Acres
Alaska	1	1,208,624
Arizona	3	112,542
California	2	10,728,368
Colorado	2	185,144
Idaho	1	484,034
Nevada	3	1,043,422
New Mexico	1	339,100
<b>BLM Total:</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14,101,234</b>

National Monuments As of November 2006		
State	Number of National Monuments	BLM Acres
Arizona	5	1,775,007
California	3	291,390
Colorado	1	163,892
Idaho	1	273,847
Montana	2	375,027
New Mexico	1	4,124

[http://www.blm.gov/nlcs/summary\\_tables.htm](http://www.blm.gov/nlcs/summary_tables.htm)

7/11/2007

Oregon/Washington	1	52,947
Utah	1	1,870,800
<b>BLM Total:</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>4,807,034</b>

<b>Cooperative Management and Protection Areas As of November 2006</b>		
<b>State</b>	<b>Number of Cooperative Management and Protection Areas</b>	<b>BLM Acres</b>
Oregon/Washington	1	428,156
<b>BLM Total:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>428,156</b>

<b>National Recreation Areas As of November 2006</b>		
<b>State</b>	<b>Number of National Recreation Areas</b>	<b>BLM Acres</b>
Alaska	1	998,702
<b>BLM Total:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>998,702</b>

<b>Outstanding Natural Areas As of November 2006</b>		
<b>State</b>	<b>Number of Outstanding Natural Areas</b>	<b>BLM Acres</b>
Oregon/Washington	1	100
<b>BLM Total:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>

<b>Forest Reserves As of November 2006</b>		
<b>State</b>	<b>Number of Forest Reserves</b>	<b>BLM Acres</b>
California	1	7,472
<b>BLM Total:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7,472</b>

<b>Wilderness Areas* As of November 2006</b>		
<b>State</b>	<b>Number of Wilderness Areas</b>	<b>BLM Acres</b>
Alaska	0	0
Arizona	47	1,396,466
California	82	3,659,800
Colorado	4	139,524
Idaho	1	802

Montana	1	6,000
Nevada	38	1,758,613
New Mexico	4	150,579
Oregon/Washington	5	193,863
Utah	4	129,120
Wyoming	0	0
<b>BLM Total:</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>7,434,767</b>

\*Three Wilderness area boundaries cross state lines and are counted toward a state total, but not in the BLM total.

Wilderness Study Areas As of November 2006		
State	Number of Wilderness Study Areas	BLM Acres
Alaska	1	784,238
Arizona	2	63,930
California	73	880,832
Colorado	54	621,737
Idaho	66	1,321,298
Montana	40	450,823
Nevada	71	2,877,917
New Mexico	59	959,629
Oregon/Washington	98	2,343,280
Utah	98	3,209,620
Wyoming	42	575,841
<b>BLM Total:</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>14,089,145</b>

National Historic Trails** As of November 2006		
State	Number of National Historic Trails	BLM Miles
Alaska	1	418
Arizona	2	89
California	3	423
Colorado	1	85
Idaho	4	439
Montana	2	347

Nevada	3	1,065
New Mexico	2	156
Oregon/Washington	2	24
Utah	3	569
Wyoming	5	1262
BLM Total:	10	4,877
<b>National Scenic Trails** As of November 2006</b>		
<b>State</b>	<b>Number of National Scenic Trails</b>	<b>BLM Miles</b>
California	1	189
Colorado	1	1
Idaho	1	13
Maryland	1	2
Montana	1	11
New Mexico	1	172
Oregon/Washington	1	42
Wyoming	1	180
BLM Total:	3	610

\*\*National Scenic and Historic Trails cross state lines - There are a total of 10 National Historic Trails and 3 National Scenic Trails in the National Trails System administered by BLM.

<b>Wild and Scenic Rivers As of November 2006</b>		
<b>State</b>	<b>Number of Wild and Scenic Rivers</b>	<b>Miles of Wild and Scenic Rivers</b>
Alaska	6	952
California	6	78
Montana	1	149
New Mexico	2	71
Oregon/Washington	23	802
BLM Total:	38	2,052

Many NLCS units overlap. For example, Oregon's Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Area contains Wilderness Study Areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and a Wilderness Area. Because of these overlaps, it is not possible to arrive at an acreage total for all NLCS units simply by adding the above totals for each type of unit.

Last updated: 11/21/06

National Landscape Conservation System National Conservation Areas

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
2	State	Name	Designation	BLM Acres	Other Federal Acres	State Acres	Private Acres	Total Acres	Public Law/E.O.	Date of Designation
3	Alaska	Steese	National Conservation Area	1,208,624	0	14,074	40	1,222,738	PL 96-487	12/2/1980
4	Arizona	Gila Box Riparian	National Conservation Area	21,767	0	1,720	0	23,487	PL 101-628	11/28/1990
5	Arizona	Las Cienegas	National Conservation Area	35,280	0	6,720	0	42,000	PL 106-538	12/6/2000
6	Arizona	San Pedro Riparian	National Conservation Area	55,495	0	280	2,225	58,000	PL 100-487	11/18/1988
7	California	California Desert	Conservation Area	10,671,080	8,658,814	1,019,546	5,557,646	25,907,086	PL 94-579	10/21/1976
8	California	King Range	National Conservation Area	57,288	0	0	4,995	62,283	PL 91-476, PL 94-579	10/21/1970
9	Colorado	Colorado Canyons	National Conservation Area	122,300	0	0	1,865	124,165	PL 106-353	10/24/2000
10	Colorado	Gunnison Gorge	National Conservation Area	62,844	0	0	2,222	65,066	PL 106-76	10/21/1999
11	Idaho	Snake River Birds of Prey	National Conservation Area	484,034	1,616	41,152	64,233	591,035	PL 103-64	8/4/1993
12	Nevada	Black Rock Desert High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails	National Conservation Area	799,165	0	0	16,513	815,678	PL 106-554, PL 107-63	12/21/2000
13	Nevada	Red Rock Canyon	National Conservation Area	195,819	0	610	1,573	196,899	PL 101-621, PL 105-263	11/16/1990
14	Nevada	Sloan Canyon	National Conservation Area	48,438	0	0	0	48,438	PL 107-282	11/6/2002
15	New Mexico	El Malpais I	National Conservation Area	339,100	2,500	0	32,410	374,010	PL 100-225	12/31/1987
16	<b>Totals:</b>			<b>14,101,234</b>	<b>8,662,930</b>	<b>1,082,382</b>	<b>5,685,442</b>	<b>29,530,876</b>		

--H.R.4275--

H.R.4275

**One Hundred Sixth Congress**  
**of the**  
**United States of America**  
*AT THE SECOND SESSION*

Begun and held at the City of Washington on Monday,  
the twenty-fourth day of January, two thousand

An Act

To establish the Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area and the Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness, and for other purposes.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

This Act may be cited as the 'Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area and Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness Act of 2000'.

**SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.**

(a) FINDINGS- Congress finds that certain areas located in the Grand Valley in Mesa County, Colorado, and Grand County, Utah, should be protected and enhanced for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. These areas include the following:

(1) The areas making up the Black Ridge and Ruby Canyons of the Grand Valley and Rabbit Valley, which contain unique and valuable scenic, recreational, multiple use opportunities (including grazing), paleontological, natural, and wildlife components enhanced by the rural western setting of the area, provide extensive opportunities for recreational activities, and are publicly used for hiking, camping, and grazing, and are worthy of additional protection as a national conservation area.

(2) The Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness Study Area has wilderness value and offers unique geological, paleontological, scientific, and recreational resources.

(b) PURPOSE- The purpose of this Act is to conserve, protect, and enhance for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations the unique and nationally important

values of the public lands described in section 4(b), including geological, cultural, paleontological, natural, scientific, recreational, environmental, biological, wilderness, wildlife education, and scenic resources of such public lands, by establishing the Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area and the Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness in the State of Colorado and the State of Utah.

### **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

In this Act:

- (1) CONSERVATION AREA- The term `Conservation Area' means the Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area established by section 4(a).
- (2) COUNCIL- The term `Council' means the Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area Advisory Council established under section 8.
- (3) MANAGEMENT PLAN- The term `management plan' means the management plan developed for the Conservation Area under section 6(h).
- (4) MAP- The term `Map' means the map entitled `Proposed Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area and Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness Area' and dated July 18, 2000.
- (5) SECRETARY- The term `Secretary' means the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the Bureau of Land Management.
- (6) WILDERNESS- The term `Wilderness' means the Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness so designated in section 5.

### **SEC. 4. COLORADO CANYONS NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA.**

- (a) IN GENERAL- There is established the Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area in the State of Colorado and the State of Utah.
- (b) AREAS INCLUDED- The Conservation Area shall consist of approximately 122,300 acres of public land as generally depicted on the Map.

### **SEC. 5. BLACK RIDGE CANYONS WILDERNESS DESIGNATION.**

Certain lands in Mesa County, Colorado, and Grand County, Utah, which comprise approximately 75,550 acres as generally depicted on the Map, are hereby designated as wilderness and therefore as a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System. Such component shall be known as the Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness.

### **SEC. 6. MANAGEMENT.**

- (a) CONSERVATION AREA- The Secretary shall manage the Conservation Area in a manner that--

(1) conserves, protects, and enhances the resources of the Conservation Area specified in section 2(b); and

(2) is in accordance with--

(A) the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.); and

(B) other applicable law, including this Act.

(b) USES- The Secretary shall allow only such uses of the Conservation Area as the Secretary determines will further the purposes for which the Conservation Area is established.

(c) WITHDRAWALS- Subject to valid existing rights, all Federal land within the Conservation Area and the Wilderness and all land and interests in land acquired for the Conservation Area or the Wilderness by the United States are withdrawn from--

(1) all forms of entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public land laws;

(2) location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and

(3) the operation of the mineral leasing, mineral materials, and geothermal leasing laws, and all amendments thereto.

Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to affect discretionary authority of the Secretary under other Federal laws to grant, issue, or renew rights-of-way or other land use authorizations consistent with the other provisions of this Act.

(d) OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE USE-

(1) IN GENERAL- Except as provided in paragraph (2), use of motorized vehicles in the Conservation Area--

(A) before the effective date of a management plan under subsection (h), shall be allowed only on roads and trails designated for use of motor vehicles in the management plan that applies on the date of the enactment of this Act to the public lands in the Conservation Area; and

(B) after the effective date of a management plan under subsection (h), shall be allowed only on roads and trails designated for use of motor vehicles in that management plan.

(2) ADMINISTRATIVE AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE USE- Paragraph (1) shall not limit the use of motor vehicles in the Conservation Area as needed for administrative purposes or to respond to an emergency.

(e) WILDERNESS- Subject to valid existing rights, lands designated as wilderness by this Act shall be managed by the Secretary, as appropriate, in accordance with the Wilderness

(1) conserves, protects, and enhances the resources of the Conservation Area specified in section 2(b); and

(2) is in accordance with--

(A) the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.); and

(B) other applicable law, including this Act.

(b) USES- The Secretary shall allow only such uses of the Conservation Area as the Secretary determines will further the purposes for which the Conservation Area is established.

(c) WITHDRAWALS- Subject to valid existing rights, all Federal land within the Conservation Area and the Wilderness and all land and interests in land acquired for the Conservation Area or the Wilderness by the United States are withdrawn from--

(1) all forms of entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public land laws;

(2) location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and

(3) the operation of the mineral leasing, mineral materials, and geothermal leasing laws, and all amendments thereto.

Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to affect discretionary authority of the Secretary under other Federal laws to grant, issue, or renew rights-of-way or other land use authorizations consistent with the other provisions of this Act.

(d) OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE USE-

(1) IN GENERAL- Except as provided in paragraph (2), use of motorized vehicles in the Conservation Area--

(A) before the effective date of a management plan under subsection (h), shall be allowed only on roads and trails designated for use of motor vehicles in the management plan that applies on the date of the enactment of this Act to the public lands in the Conservation Area; and

(B) after the effective date of a management plan under subsection (h), shall be allowed only on roads and trails designated for use of motor vehicles in that management plan.

(2) ADMINISTRATIVE AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE USE- Paragraph (1) shall not limit the use of motor vehicles in the Conservation Area as needed for administrative purposes or to respond to an emergency.

(e) WILDERNESS- Subject to valid existing rights, lands designated as wilderness by this Act shall be managed by the Secretary, as appropriate, in accordance with the Wilderness

Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.) and this Act, except that, with respect to any wilderness areas designated by this Act, any reference in the Wilderness Act to the effective date of the Wilderness Act shall be deemed to be a reference to the date of the enactment of this Act.

(f) HUNTING, TRAPPING, AND FISHING-

(1) IN GENERAL- Hunting, trapping, and fishing shall be allowed within the Conservation Area and the Wilderness in accordance with applicable laws and regulations of the United States and the States of Colorado and Utah.

(2) AREA AND TIME CLOSURES- The head of the Colorado Division of Wildlife (in reference to land within the State of Colorado), the head of the Utah Division of Wildlife (in reference to land within the State of Utah), or the Secretary after consultation with the Colorado Division of Wildlife (in reference to land within the State of Colorado) or the head of the Utah Division of Wildlife (in reference to land within the State of Utah), may issue regulations designating zones where, and establishing limited periods when, hunting, trapping, or fishing shall be prohibited in the Conservation Area or the Wilderness for reasons of public safety, administration, or public use and enjoyment.

(g) GRAZING-

(1) IN GENERAL- Except as provided by paragraph (2), the Secretary shall issue and administer any grazing leases or permits in the Conservation Area and the Wilderness in accordance with the same laws (including regulations) and Executive orders followed by the Secretary in issuing and administering grazing leases and permits on other land under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management.

(2) GRAZING IN WILDERNESS- Grazing of livestock in the Wilderness shall be administered in accordance with the provisions of section 4(d)(4) of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1133(d)(4)), in accordance with the guidelines set forth in Appendix A of House Report 101-405 of the 101st Congress.

(h) MANAGEMENT PLAN-

(1) IN GENERAL- Not later than 3 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall develop a comprehensive management plan for the long-range protection and management of the Conservation Area and the Wilderness and the lands described in paragraph (2)(E).

(2) PURPOSES- The management plan shall--

(A) describe the appropriate uses and management of the Conservation Area and the Wilderness;

(B) take into consideration any information developed in studies of the land within the Conservation Area or the Wilderness;

(C) provide for the continued management of the utility corridor, Black Ridge Communications Site, and the Federal Aviation Administration site as such for the land designated on the Map as utility corridor, Black Ridge Communications Site, and the Federal Aviation Administration site;

(D) take into consideration the historical involvement of the local community in the interpretation and protection of the resources of the Conservation Area and the Wilderness, as well as the Ruby Canyon/Black Ridge Integrated Resource Management Plan, dated March 1998, which was the result of collaborative efforts on the part of the Bureau of Land Management and the local community; and

(E) include all public lands between the boundary of the Conservation Area and the edge of the Colorado River and, on such lands, the Secretary shall allow only such recreational or other uses as are consistent with this Act.

(i) NO BUFFER ZONES- The Congress does not intend for the establishment of the Conservation Area or the Wilderness to lead to the creation of protective perimeters or buffer zones around the Conservation Area or the Wilderness. The fact that there may be activities or uses on lands outside the Conservation Area or the Wilderness that would not be allowed in the Conservation Area or the Wilderness shall not preclude such activities or uses on such lands up to the boundary of the Conservation Area or the Wilderness consistent with other applicable laws.

(j) ACQUISITION OF LAND-

(1) IN GENERAL- The Secretary may acquire non-federally owned land within the exterior boundaries of the Conservation Area or the Wilderness only through purchase from a willing seller, exchange, or donation.

(2) MANAGEMENT- Land acquired under paragraph (1) shall be managed as part of the Conservation Area or the Wilderness, as the case may be, in accordance with this Act.

(k) INTERPRETIVE FACILITIES OR SITES- The Secretary may establish minimal interpretive facilities or sites in cooperation with other public or private entities as the Secretary considers appropriate. Any facilities or sites shall be designed to protect the resources referred to in section 2(b).

(l) WATER RIGHTS-

(1) FINDINGS- Congress finds that--

(A) the lands designated as wilderness by this Act are located at the headwaters of the streams and rivers on those lands, with few, if any, actual or proposed water resource facilities located upstream from such lands and few, if any, opportunities for diversion, storage, or other uses of water occurring outside such lands that would adversely affect the wilderness or other values of such lands;

(B) the lands designated as wilderness by this Act generally are not suitable for use for development of new water resource facilities, or for the expansion of existing facilities;

(C) it is possible to provide for proper management and protection of the wilderness and other values of such lands in ways different from those utilized in other legislation designating as wilderness lands not sharing the attributes of the lands designated as wilderness by this Act.

(2) STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION-

(A) Nothing in this Act shall constitute or be construed to constitute either an express or implied reservation of any water or water rights with respect to the lands designated as a national conservation area or as wilderness by this Act.

(B) Nothing in this Act shall affect any conditional or absolute water rights in the State of Colorado existing on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(C) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed as establishing a precedent with regard to any future national conservation area or wilderness designations.

(D) Nothing in this Act shall be construed as limiting, altering, modifying, or amending any of the interstate compacts or equitable apportionment decrees that apportion water among and between the State of Colorado and other States.

(3) COLORADO WATER LAW- The Secretary shall follow the procedural and substantive requirements of the law of the State of Colorado in order to obtain and hold any new water rights with respect to the Conservation Area and the Wilderness.

(4) NEW PROJECTS-

(A) As used in this paragraph, the term 'water resource facility' means irrigation and pumping facilities, reservoirs, water conservation works, aqueducts, canals, ditches, pipelines, wells, hydropower projects, and transmission and other ancillary facilities, and other water diversion, storage, and carriage structures. Such term does not include any such facilities related to or used for the purpose of livestock grazing.

(B) Except as otherwise provided by section 6(g) or other provisions of this Act, on and after the date of the enactment of this Act, neither the President nor any other officer, employee, or agent of the United States shall fund, assist, authorize, or issue a license or permit for the development of any new water resource facility within the wilderness area designated by this Act.

(C) Except as provided in this paragraph, nothing in this Act shall be construed to affect or limit the use, operation, maintenance, repair, modification, or replacement of water resource facilities in existence on the date of the enactment of this Act within the boundaries of the Wilderness.

(5) BOUNDARIES ALONG COLORADO RIVER- (A) Neither the Conservation Area nor the Wilderness shall include any part of the Colorado River to the 100-year high water mark.

(B) Nothing in this Act shall affect the authority that the Secretary may or may not have to manage recreational uses on the Colorado River, except as such authority may be affected by compliance with paragraph (3). Nothing in this Act shall be construed to affect the authority of the Secretary to manage the public lands between the boundary of the Conservation Area and the edge of the Colorado River.

(C) Subject to valid existing rights, all lands owned by the Federal Government between the 100-year high water mark on each shore of the Colorado River, as designated on the Map from the line labeled 'Line A' on the east to the boundary between the States of Colorado and Utah on the west, are hereby withdrawn from--

- (i) all forms of entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public land laws;
- (ii) location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and
- (iii) the operation of the mineral leasing, mineral materials, and geothermal leasing laws.

## **SEC. 7. MAPS AND LEGAL DESCRIPTIONS.**

(a) IN GENERAL- As soon as practicable after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a copy of the Map and a legal description of the Conservation Area and of the Wilderness.

(b) FORCE AND EFFECT- The Map and legal descriptions shall have the same force and effect as if included in this Act, except that the Secretary may correct clerical and typographical errors in the Map and the legal descriptions.

(c) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY- Copies of the Map and the legal descriptions shall be on file and available for public inspection in--

- (1) the Office of the Director of the Bureau of Land Management;
- (2) the Grand Junction District Office of the Bureau of Land Management in Colorado;
- (3) the appropriate office of the Bureau of Land Management in Colorado, if the Grand Junction District Office is not deemed the appropriate office; and
- (4) the appropriate office of the Bureau of Land Management in Utah.

(d) MAP CONTROLLING- Subject to section 6(1)(3), in the case of a discrepancy between the Map and the descriptions, the Map shall control.

## **SEC. 8. ADVISORY COUNCIL.**

(a) ESTABLISHMENT- Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall establish an advisory council to be known as the 'Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area Advisory Council'.

(b) DUTY- The Council shall advise the Secretary with respect to preparation and implementation of the management plan, including budgetary matters, for the Conservation Area and the Wilderness.

(c) APPLICABLE LAW- The Council shall be subject to--

(1) the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.); and

(2) the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).

(d) MEMBERS- The Council shall consist of 10 members to be appointed by the Secretary including, to the extent practicable:

(1) A member of or nominated by the Mesa County Commission.

(2) A member nominated by the permittees holding grazing allotments within the Conservation Area or the Wilderness.

(3) A member of or nominated by the Northwest Resource Advisory Council.

(4) Seven members residing in, or within reasonable proximity to, Mesa County, Colorado, with recognized backgrounds reflecting--

(A) the purposes for which the Conservation Area or Wilderness was established; and

(B) the interests of the stakeholders that are affected by the planning and management of the Conservation Area and the Wilderness.

## **SEC. 9. PUBLIC ACCESS.**

(a) IN GENERAL- The Secretary shall continue to allow private landowners reasonable access to inholdings in the Conservation Area and Wilderness.

(b) GLADE PARK- The Secretary shall continue to allow public right of access, including commercial vehicles, to Glade Park, Colorado, in accordance with the decision in Board of County Commissioners of Mesa County v. Watt (634 F. Supp. 1265 (D.Colo.; May 2, 1986)).

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Vice President of the United States and

President of the Senate.

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## S.323

### Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park and Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area Act of 1999 (Reported in House)

#### SEC. 10. WATER RIGHTS.

(a) EFFECT ON WATER RIGHTS- Nothing in this Act shall--

- (1) constitute an express or implied reservation of water for any purpose; or
- (2) affect any water rights in existence prior to the date of enactment of this Act, including any water rights held by the United States.

(b) ADDITIONAL WATER RIGHTS- Any new water right that the Secretary determines is necessary for the purposes of this Act shall be established in accordance with the procedural and substantive requirements of the laws of the State of Colorado .

#### SEC. 11. STUDY OF LANDS WITHIN AND ADJACENT TO CURECANTI NATIONAL RECREATION AREA .

(a) IN GENERAL- Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary, acting through the Director of the National Park Service, shall conduct a study concerning land protection and open space within and adjacent to the area administered as the Curecanti National Recreation Area .

(b) PURPOSE OF STUDY- The study required to be completed under subsection (a) shall--

- (1) assess the natural, cultural, recreational and scenic resource value and character of the land within and surrounding the Curecanti National Recreation Area (including open vistas, wildlife habitat, and other public benefits);
- (2) identify practicable alternatives that protect the resource value and character of the land within and surrounding the Curecanti National Recreation Area ;
- (3) recommend a variety of economically feasible and viable tools to achieve the purposes described in paragraphs (1) and (2); and
- (4) estimate the costs of implementing the approaches recommended by the study.

## H: Participants in the Process

Last Name	First	Organization or Interest	14-Jun	Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3	Zone 4	Zone 5
Acquafresca	Steve	Board of County Commissions	X			X	X	
Alberton	Stan		X					
Alward	Rich	Scientist	X				X	
Baca	Richard	Cong. John Salazar	X					X
Badg	John	WSATVA	X					
Bailey	Janine	WSATVA	X					
Banulis	Tanya	USDA-NFCS						X
Banulis	Brad	CDOW						X
Bastable	Clare	CMC	X					X
Benduha	Peter	BLM				X	X	X
Blackburn	Walt	Thunder Mt Wheelers			X			
Bonfrever	Gordon	TMV			X			
Bovat	Heather	Mesa County	X					X
Boyd	Lary							X
Boyd	Wanda	Rancher						X
Bray	Brian		X					
Brown	Gloria	WSATVA	X		X	X		
Brown	Terry	WSATVA	X		X	X		X
Campbell	Bill	Rancher				X		
Capearell	Dawn						X	
Cavothers	Ken	Western Slope ATV Association	X					
Chapel	Steve	Western Slope ATV Association	X			X		X
Chapman	Mary	Personal						X
Chowen	Carole	WCC and Sierra Club	X			X	X	
Clametsom	Connie	USFA	X				X	
Clark	Mike	Delta					X	
Clement	Crawford						X	
Cook	Art	West Slope ATV Association	X			X	X	
Cooper	Audrey	WCC					X	
Corbin	Beverly	Daily Sentinel			X			
Costello	Daniel	KUNF				X		
Cridler	Reg				X			
Crowell	Claudia	WCC	X					X
Crum	Sally		X					
Curtis	Jan	WSATVA	X					
Daniels	Gregg		X					
Dashner	Dave	Backcountry Horsemen		X			X	X
Davis	Kent	Esalante Rance	X		X		X	X
Delahante	George	Congressman Salazar					X	
DelPiccolo	Renzo	CDOW					X	
Derryberry	Tom	WSATVA	X			X		
Didiee	Fran	WCC	X					
Dunn	Riley	Land Owner			X			
Dunn	Dorthey	Land Owner			X			
Fencel	Larry	Thunder Mountain Wheelers			X			
Fencel	Joy	Thunder Mountain Wheelers			X			
Files	Ralph	PLP Exec					X	
Fulmer	NJ	Sierra Club					X	
Gardner	Chris	WWC					X	X
Giggenbotham	Sherry	GPAA				X		
Gillman	Gene	WSTAVA				X		X

Last Name	First	Organization or Interest	14-Jun	Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3	Zone 4	Zone 5
Gillman	Pat	WSATVA			X			
Gore	Jo				X	X	X	
Goryca	Jeff					X	X	
Graham	Tam	Permitee	X					
Grant	Bill	WCC	X			X		
Grazano	Jim	Monitor Mesa Ranch					X	
Green	Nate	WSATVA	X					X
Green	Debbie	WSATVA	X					X
Green	A	WSATVA					X	
Gunderson	Steve	BLM RAC Motorized	X					X
Hamilton	Amy	Daily Sentinel	X					X
Hansen	Susan	Delta County			X			
Harns	Bill	COPMOBA					X	X
Hielle	Kris	CO Alpine Desert Adventures	X					
Hill	Lu Anne	CEC					X	
Hill	Barbra						X	
Houghton	Sami				X			
Houghton	Kim				X			
Houghton	Jessie				X			
Houghton	Jeff				X			
Hubbard	Lynan			X				
Kareus	Trudy	Sen. Salazar	X	X		X		X
Kauffman	Dave	BLM	X		X		X	X
Kerr	Charlie	WCC	X					X
King	Bob					X		
King	lynn					X		
Kofman	Beverly	WCC	X			X	X	X
Krebs	Stu	PLP			X			
Lakwood	Carm	USFS						X
Lattlefield	Marlin	CO GPAA	X					
Lemaster					X			
Limmerick	Pattie				X		X	
Lloyd	Mel	BLM	X					
Lockwood	Carmine	USFS GMUG					X	
Loupe	Lee Anne	USFA	X					
Loyd	Mel	BLM					X	
Macfarlane	Jeannie							X
Magill	Bobby	Daily Sential		X				
Massey	Oscar	Rancher	X	X	X	X	X	
Massey	Austin	Rancher			X	X	X	
Mathes	Mike	Western CO GPAA	X	X				
Mc	Mary	CMC				X		
McCarthy	Maggie	Monrose			X			
McCombs	Mathew	Sen. Salazar	X		X	X	X	X
McCutchan	Mary	CO Mountain Club & WCC	X				X	
Mcfeana	Bill							X
McFetridge	Wayne	WSATV and MTRA	X			X		X
McIllehil	Linda	CO West Arabian Horse Club		X			X	
Meinhart	Brian J	US Senate Wayne Allard	X		X	X	X	
Miller	Dick	Escalante Ranch			X		X	
Miller	Lauren	sen.Salazar's office	X					

Last Name	First	Organization or Interest	14-Jun	Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3	Zone 4	Zone 5
Miller	Rich	Escalant Ranch	X					
Mills	Beth	Sonoan Inst.	X					X
Moon	JoAnn		X	X				
Morales	Raul	BLM	X	X			X	
Motley	Pam	PLP	X		X	X	X	X
Neuhof	Joe	CEC	X					
Olsen	Brian	WCC				X		
Olsen	Joyce	WCC				X		
Ott	Rich	DARG				X	X	
Page	Kenton	WSATVA				X		
Palmer	Jeannie	Thunder Mountain Wheelers			X			
Palmer	Richard	Thunder Mountain Wheelers			X			
Parker	Fran	WCC				X	X	X
Pearsol	Ed				X			
Potter	John	Bookcliff Rattlers Motorcycle Club	X					X
Preay	E.H.		X					
Quintana	Rafael	WSATVA	X				X	
Ranzenberder	Dede	Water Storage	X		X			
Redhel	Eric A	Sierra Club	X			X	X	
Reed	Susan				X	X		
Rice	Anna May		X		X		X	X
Richmond	Charlie	USFS	X					
Riddle	Jim	CO Enviromental Coalition	X		X	X	X	X
Rieves	Clark	COPMOBA	X					
Robinson	Andrea	WCC SWRAC WSERC			X		X	X
Rohde	Tracy	WSATVA			X	X		
Roper	Sharon	Backcountry Horsemen		X			X	
Ross	Allen							X
Ross	Dohn							X
Round	Romaine	Western CO GPAA	X					
Rowland	Janet	Mesa County	X					
Sanders	Ken		X			X	X	X
Schenk	Sherry					X		
Schofield	Mark	WCC	X			X	X	
Sharron	Barbra	BLM				X		
Shaw	Gary	WSATVA				X		
Shepherd	Janice	CMC	X					
Sigrist	S						X	X
Sims	Cindy	Siera Club					X	
Sims	Bryan						X	X
Slay	John						X	X
Small	Allen	GPAA			X	X	X	X
Snidow	Pat					X		
Spehar	Jim	Sonorm Inst.	X					
Stotler	Julie	BLM				X	X	X
Stroley	Ken	BLM	X	X			X	
Stuelpuogel	Pat	OTH ATV				X		
Styer	Harold						X	
Sullivan	Sherm	Free Press	X	X				
Taylor	Lonnie		X	X				
Todd	JW						X	

Last Name	First	Organization or Interest	14-Jun	Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3	Zone 4	Zone 5
Traylor	Helen	AUPUBON	X	X				
Tschbein	Geoff	WCC, WEC	X	X				
Tucker	Karen	BLM	X	X	X			
Upcharch	Dave			X				
Wells	Don			X				
Wells	Kari	Horsement		X				
Whinmeyer	Honk							X
Whippie	Andy	WCC	X	X		X	X	
White	Henry					X		
Whitman	Hank	D4			X			
Wilson	Mike	Thunder Mountain Wheelers			X			
Woodruff	Neville						X	X
Woods	Jay	GPAA	X	X				
Woodworth	Joan	WCC	X	X			X	X
Wright	John	WSATVA				X		



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