**Thank you Ouray Commissioners for Support of Public Lands Protection!!**

Wildlife and public lands advocates couldn’t be more thrilled to learn that the Ouray Board of County Commissioners unanimously endorsed a recommendation to add Baldy Mountain and the Bear Creek drainage to the existing Uncompahgre Wilderness in their comments to the GMUG Forest planning team. Thank you Commissioners Niece, Padgett and Tisdel!!!

These lands are not just valued for their exquisite scenic values and recreation opportunities including hunting, but also their critical wildlife habitat for bighorn sheep, elk, deer, bear, grouse, raptors and other species. These landscapes are also included in the Community Conservation Proposal (CCP) to the GMUG National Forest for which Great Old Broads for Wilderness members and coalition partners have been advocating since the forest plan revision process began in 2018. The CCP also recommends increased protection (though not wilderness) for Hayden Mountain and its surroundings (approximately 10,000 acres) and Mount Abram/Brown Mountain (~3000 acres) as these parcels function as wildlife migration corridors and habitat for all the species above plus Canada lynx and moose as well as biologically diverse and significant plant species including those unique to the Ironton Fen. Remember that Wilderness designation requires an act of the US Congress, however recommendations in the forest plan are a step toward possible permanent protection.

We also applaud the Commissioners’ support of designating Cow Creek and its tributaries as eligible for Wild and Scenic River consideration. Broads agrees wholeheartedly and also advocates that Bear Creek deserves the same status.

You can find out more about the CCP (and lend your support via a link) at gmugrevision.com or stop by the Broads’ table at Ridgway’s RiverFest on August 28. Also note that the draft GMUG Forest Plan is scheduled for release to the public tomorrow/August 13, which starts the 90-day comment period during which you can lend your voice to the process that will determine the management of our national forest for the next couple of decades. Please don’t hesitate to contact us at northernsanjuanbroadband@gmail.com if you have questions, desire more information, or wish to participate in our efforts to protect wild lands and waters in Ouray County. Please thank our commissioners for their support of public lands protection and wise land and water management practices for present and future generations.

With wild gratitude,

Linda McNeill

Great Old Broads for Wilderness

Ridgway