

ROCC PUBLIC LANDS 9/14/'23 COMMITTEE REPORT

1. Roadkill on HWY 550: No response yet from Tony Gaby, CDOT Regional Director, on when or what kind of sign will be put on Hwy 550 just north of the Ridgway stoplight. Diane will keep trying to get an answer.

2. ORRCA - Rein reported that there's not much new to report except that Ouray County Planning Commission will meet with BOCC on 11/14/'23

3. REVISED MASTER PLAN

BACKGROUND-

Ouray County is 50% Public Lands and 50% private lands. What happens on public lands affects our county concerning recreation, the tourist industry, the scenic value, migration routes of wild animals, the spread of noxious weeds, wildfire risk, clean water flows. Even after gathering much data, the Forest Service has not set up controls for overused and abused camping and hiking areas.

ISSUE-

How can citizens have better interactive communication and more influence with the Forest Service.

POSSIBLE ACTION OPTION-

Add a Public Lands category to the revised Master Plan

RECOMMENDED ACTION-

Encourage the Ad Hoc Committee and all ROCC members to actively support adding a Public Lands category to the Revised Master Plan.

4. THE REVISED GMUG

BACKGROUND-

Since 2017 there's been on-going meetings with the community, intergovernmental tribal consultations, and 18,000 public comments in order to revamp the 1983 Forest plan. The Revised GMUG will provide a roadmap for managing our forests for the next 20 years.

ISSUE-

The Revised GMUG sets up 3 different management approaches for areas that respond to community needs OVER the life of the forest plan but the Forest Service has a Preferred Alternative. Community members are GIVEN UNTIL OCTOBER 30 TO state their objections to the Forest Service's "Preferred Approaches".

RECOMENDED ACTION OPTIONS-

Encourage ROCC and individuals to formally object to the Forest Service's "Preferred Alternatives" and to promote Alternative D in all cases:

A. Extent of recommended wilderness:

The Forest Service's Preferred Alt is 46,000 acres of recommended wilderness

Alt C is no new recommended wilderness

Alt D is 324,000 acres

B. Extent of areas suitable for timber production:

Their preferred Alt is 772,000 acres

Alt C is 863,000 acres

Alt D is 316,000 acres

C. Projected Timber Sale production:

Preferred Alt is 55,000 ccf

Alt C is 75,000 ccf

Alt D is 30,000 ccf

D. Harvest Acres per Year:

Preferred Alt is 5,000

Alt C is 7,000

Alt D is 2,000

E. Amount of Fuels Treatments per decade:

Preferred Alt is 110,000 acres first decade; 150,000 acres second decade

Alt C 130,000 acres

Alt D is 50,000 acres

F. Extent of Wildlife Management Areas:

Preferred Alt is 834,000 acres; several distributed across the Forests

Alt C 36,000 acres; few, limited in range

Alt D is 1,019,000 acres; Maximum extent, with many areas overlapping Special Management Areas

G. Recreation Opportunity Settings (ROS) Summer and Winter

Preferred Alt is very close to existing inventoried settings; reflects effects of existing travel decisions

Alt C is More motorized settings, Fewer nonmotorized settings

Alt D is More nonmotorized settings, Fewer motorized settings

H. Special Management Areas (SMAs) per citizen proposals

Preferred Alt - No SMAs, but aspects of the citizen proposals for each SMS unit were considered in all allocations, e.g., summer ROS, suitable timber

Alt C - no SMAs, but citizen-proposed Recreation Emphasis Areas incorporated in entirety

Alt D - 620,000 acres; all SMAs proposed in citizen proposals

Objections must be submitted to the Objection Reviewing Officer by one of the following methods:

Electronically to the Objection Reviewing Officer: Electronic objections are preferred and may be submitted through the project webpage at http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/gmug/forestplan_objections; Electronic submissions (including all attachments) must be submitted in a format (Word, PDF, or Rich Text) that is readable and searchable with optical character recognition software. An automated response will confirm your electronic objection has been received.

Via regular mail, private carrier, or hand delivery to the following address: USDA Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Region, Attn: Reviewing Officer, C/O Director of Strategic Planning 2nd floor, 1617 Cole Blvd. Building 17, Lakewood, CO 80401. For hand delivery, office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, excluding Federal holidays.