

**A RESOLUTION OF THE  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF OURAY COUNTY, COLORADO  
REGARDING PROTECTION OF OURAY COUNTY'S ROADLESS AREAS**

**WHEREAS**, the existing roadless areas of the Uncompahgre National Forest in Ouray County, Colorado ("Roadless Public Lands") have extraordinary scenic, environmental, economic and recreational value in their natural state and are not fully protected by wilderness designation or other federal policies; and

**WHEREAS**, the residents of, and visitors to, Ouray County, Colorado enjoy the Roadless Public Lands which are a part of the Uncompahgre National Forest for hiking, camping, photography, mountain climbing, hunting, skiing, scenic enjoyment and other such uses; and

**WHEREAS**, the Roadless Public Lands which are a part of the Uncompahgre National Forest include important watershed areas for domestic and agricultural water sources, including, Beaver Creek, the Town of Ridgway's only source of potable water; and

**WHEREAS**, the Roadless Public Lands should be officially designated as natural roadless areas and protected to the maximum extent possible to preserve their scenic, environmental, economic and recreational value; and

**WHEREAS**, the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service ("USFS") has released a Draft Environmental Impact Statement ("DEIS") for its proposed Colorado Roadless Rule which analyzes three alternatives; and

**WHEREAS**, Alternative 1 as contained in the DEIS is the existing, nationwide 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule which is the most protective of the natural characteristics and values of the designated roadless areas, but only includes a small portion of the roadless lands in Ouray County which should be protected; and

**WHEREAS**, Alternative 2 as contained in the DEIS establishes a state-specific roadless rule for Colorado which includes additional roadless areas for protection in Ouray County, Colorado (including the Whitehouse Addition to the Mt. Sneffels Wilderness Area and the watershed for the Town of Ridgway) ("Preferred Roadless Boundary") and allows for additional management flexibility in roadless areas; and

**WHEREAS**, Alternative 3 as contained in the DEIS establishes a state-specific roadless rule for Colorado that exclusively uses management direction contained in the land management plans (forest plans) for each of the national forests in Colorado; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of County Commissioners of Ouray County, Colorado ("Board") believes that it is critical to adopt rules that will provide for the maximum possible protection of the natural characteristics and peculiar values of the Preferred Roadless Boundary areas in Ouray County, Colorado; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board recognizes the need for the USFS to promulgate a state-specific rule to manage roadless values and characteristics that will be responsive to the need to balance local, state and national interests in providing management direction for such lands in Colorado; however, the Board's objective in submitting this Resolution to the USFS to be considered as part of the public comments on the three alternatives is to address those interests and concerns that specifically affect Ouray County, Colorado; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board recognizes that it is impossible for one alternative to address all of the complex issues that affect roadless areas throughout the State of Colorado, or more specifically those issues that affect the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests Roadless Areas; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board has determined that there are certain policy issues that affect those roadless areas within Ouray County, Colorado that should be critical to any final decision by the USFS on a "Roadless Rule" for Colorado;

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF OURAY COUNTY, COLORADO, AS FOLLOWS:**

1. That the USFS consider all of the various permutations of the three alternatives described in the DEIS and proceed with adoption of a final "Roadless Rule" that will provide the best possible protection of the natural characteristics and values of those roadless areas within Ouray County, Colorado as identified in Alternative 2, with the following specific criteria being of critical importance:
  - a. Protection of existing grazing rights and necessary access to such grazing rights within the Preferred Roadless Boundary; and
  - b. Protection of access to, and use of, existing water resources within the Preferred Roadless Boundary, such as that utilized by the Town of Ridgway; and
  - c. Maintaining the ability to respond when needed to emergency situations and threats to human life, health and safety within the Preferred Roadless Boundary.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED THIS \_\_\_\_ DAY OF OCTOBER, 2008

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
OF OURAY COUNTY, COLORADO

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
K. Keith Meinert, Chair

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Don Batchelder, Vice Chair

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Michelle Nauer, Clerk and Recorder  
By: Linda Munson-Haley, Deputy Clerk of the Board

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Heidi M. Albritton, Commissioner Member