Gunnison County believes it is our responsibility to protect the environment. It is a strategic goal of the County's strategic plan.

We can fundamentally change how we use energy and where we get energy from. We will identify sources which are neglected, which we have control over, and sources which impacts can be locally debated and weighed against their usefulness. We are biased toward action (what can be done now however imperfect). And look forward to new and better opportunities in the future and will position ourselves for future action.

CNG : For our fleet we have an opportunity to use a fuel which emits far less pollutants into our lower atmosphere (the air we breathe) and also less greenhouse gasses which contribute to global warming. Natural gas vehicles also use a fuel which is produced locally and we have local regulatory control over the wells from which it is sourced. We realize that there are environmental consequences to the extraction of natural gas as there is for oil for gasoline and diesel, for natural gas we locally have at least some say in how impacts are mitigated through our planning process for new well permits. Conversely the impacts of oil are far from us and largely out of our control locally. There are also opportunities to develop sources of collecting methane (natural gas) from sources that now simply emit the methane into the atmosphere. As a start we have secured commitment for enough renewable natural gas (sourced elsewhere) to be delivered to the CNG station to run the RTA bus fleet. We look forward to developing local sources if renewable natural gas and look to examples of communities that have done so; like the City of Grand Junction which fuels its fleet with methane harvested from wastewater. Currently there are no other alternative fuels for heavy vehicles that can meet our needs, reduce emissions, and are available now. CNG is available now, it has been proven, and it represents very limited risk operationally and financially.

By converting our fleet now to CNG and encouraging others to begin using CNG vehicles we will develop a market which could support the development of renewable sources of methane for use in CNG vehicles. The use of CNG now will reduce the emissions from our heavy vehicles substantially:
20-30% less carbon dioxide (CO2)
Carbon Monoxide (CO) 75% less
Nitrogen Oxide (NOx) 50% less
Particulate Matter (PM) 95% less
Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) 55% less

Further the County supports efforts to clean up the natural gas extraction industry including the proposed BLM rules. Colorado was the first state to regulate methane emissions and Colorado's regulations exceed the new EPA rules.

Gunnison County is entering into a fuel purchase agreement with Trillium CNG. The County is committing to specific volumes of fuel over 3 year time periods. In turn Trillium will construct and operate a CNG station and will guarantee the County's fuel price for 10 years. This agreement gives Trillium confidence there is a market for CNG and secures fuel prices for the county for 10 years, protecting us from fuel cost variations. Financial savings predictions vary depending on what gasoline and diesel prices may do over the next 10 years but conservative estimates, which only project inflationary cost increases not large oil commodity price changes, project a savings of nearly $500,000 for the County. We have already begun to purchase vehicles that utilize CNG and we look forward to

partnering with and supporting others who are ready to convert to CNG use. These efforts not only have positive environmental effects but also support local economies; utilizing fuel sources which are derived and regulated in the county.