July 3, 2017

Gunnison County Commissioners:
Phil Chamberland
Jonathan Houck
John Messner
Subject: National Wild, Scenic, and Recreational designation for the Crystal River

Dear Commissioners:

A Citizens' Committee has been pursuing Wild and Scenic designation for the Crystal River for the past several years. Our goal with this designation is simple and remains unchanged;

- To prevent the construction of dams, impoundments, and reservoirs on the Crystal River, and
- To prohibit out-of-drainage water diversions from the Crystal River drainage.

A draft of the proposed Congressional Act outlining protections against Federal overreach has been reviewed by the Gunnison County Attorney.

Several committee members and valley residents attended all of the related meetings in Marble and Redstone this past summer, including the town meeting where Marble Town Council voted against Wild and Scenic designation. At a later meeting the then-seated Gunnison Commissioners similarly voted against pursuing Wild and Scenic Designation for the Gunnison County part of the Crystal River.

At all meetings, and in all discussions, there was unanimous agreement that the Crystal River should remain free of dams and diversions of water out of our watershed, and that it should remain a wild and free flowing river. Residents disagreed on how to accomplish this goal.

The Citizens' Committee is at a crossroads. We can either proceed on a track to pursue Wild and Scenic designation for those parts of the Crystal River which are in Pitkin County only, or find a way to join with Gunnison County, excluding the town site of Marble. Clearly, the participation by both counties would allow us to move forward with a stronger case. I am asking if you would be willing to open a dialog with our Citizens' Committee and the Pitkin County BOCC to see if, together, we can find a common ground between our two counties, while honoring Marble's position to not participate.

Chuck Downey and I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you either at a formal BOCC meeting or in a work session to discuss some common ground that would allow us to join forces. Please let me know if there is a way for Gunnison County to join us in pursuing this designation for the Crystal River.

Respectfully,

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