P.O. Box 519
Crested Butte, CO 81224
Phone: 970.349.7231
Fax: 970.349.7231
www.rmbl.org

Feb. 23, 2018

Dear Gunnison County Commissioners,

We have previously provided comment on RMBL's proposed use of motorized transport in winter. In advance of Tuesday's public hearing concerning winter motorized use of the Gothic corridor we wanted to provide comment on the Crested Butte Mountain Bike Association's grooming.

We are in favor of continued grooming by CBMBA of the corridor, subject to constraints related to ensure safety and to minimize impacts on non-motorized recreationalists.

We highlight four main points.

1. We continue to support non-motorized recreation as a primary winter use of the valley.

2. CBMBA's grooming improves the non-motorized winter recreational experience. The corridor is heavily used by skiers, fat bikers, and walkers and we believe that grooming and their presence improves the situation for those groups.

3. As a private inholder, CBMBA's grooming and presence helps mitigate the impacts of recreation on RMBL. Since the original closure to snowmobiles, there have been significant increases in recreational use of the corridor. This puts pressure on RMBL, including trespass and impacts to research on our private property. Managing those impacts, including communicating private property boundaries and responding to safety-related events, costs us time and money.

   CBMBA's grooming benefits RMBL by bringing an active, responsible and organized stakeholder into the valley. When people feel that an area is being taken care of, such as through grooming and signage, they are more likely to respect private property and observe norms of behavior. While RMBL invests quite a bit in management, it is beneficial for everyone involved to have multiple stakeholders working cooperatively. Having worked with a wide range of stakeholders, we have found CBMBA, Share the Slate, and the local guiding community to be strong and responsive partners. As the group with the most organized and strongest presence, losing CBMBA would be a blow. Prior to CBMBA's presence, no other groups stepped up. We do not see other constructive partners that would emerge in CBMBA's absence.

4. If Gunnison County decides not to allow CBMBA to groom and maintain a presence in the corridor, we ask that the County figure out how to fill the gap. Recreational use is high enough, even in winter, benign neglect is no longer sufficient. If the County is not comfortable with the organizations currently working to support non-motorized winter recreation, we ask that you develop, build consensus, and implement an alternative vision for nonmotorized winter recreation in the valley that involves something more than just hoping it all works out.

If CBMBA is allowed to continue grooming, we will work with them to coordinate snowmobile use in order to minimize motorized trips and enhance non-motorized winter recreation.

Sincerely,

Ian Billick, PhD
Executive Director

Joshua Ost

From: Xavier Fane <xavi@rmi.net>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2018 3:54 PM
To: BOCC
Subject: Gothic Corridor/Upper East River Valley winter travel issues

To whom it may concern,

Hello, my name is Xavier Fane, I've lived full time in Crested Butte since 1984 and I'm an avid backcountry skier that chooses non-motorized travel to access most locations in our Public Forest Lands. Also I'm currently the president of the Board of Directors of the Friends Hut, a non-profit organization and ski hut that advocates and promotes self-powered, non-motorized travel.

As much as I respect most of the work that takes place at the Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory I also feel the need for them to respect and enforce the resolution that came out of the Gang of Nine Treaty back in the 90's. Given the growth of motorized Winter use in our area and the fact that the Upper East River Valley is the only drainage that provides "quiet users" a sanctuary from all the motor madness in the rest of drainages I wish that RMBL stays true to the Gang of Nine resolution and that they do not engage in the use of snowmobiles to access the Lab.

I was already surprised by the decision of the Forest Service to grant permission for the Crested Butte Mountain Bike Association to groom a track for "Fat Biking" up the road and that RMBL did not object to that. In retrospect, it seems plausible that RMBL saw an oportunity in creating a precedent for motorized use so that that they later could apply for their own permit.

We already have the Schofield land owners (and their friends) motoring up the valley at their own will and now we have all this added threats to dismantle all the provisions we have in place. I'm deeply dissappointed that RMBL will not fight harder to protect the precious valley where they operate, from the encroachment of technology and motorized use that is so pervasive elsewhere. Perhaps we need to take a closer look at what is done in the name of research?

PLease don't allow further motorized use in the Upper East River Valley.

Xavier Fane

PO BOX 74,
Crested Butte, CO 81224

ph: 970.275. 6226

Joshua Ost

From: Wouter van Tiel <woutervantiel@outlook.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2018 6:23 PM
To: BOCC
Subject: RMBL request for additional snowmobile access not compatible

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

I support RMBL's mission and I recognize the significance of their research, and appreciate their integral and vital role in our community. However, I believe this issue directly impacts quiet users. In the winter months, the Gothic Corridor/Upper East River Valley is the only designated "quiet" use drainage in the Crested Butte area. It should stay that way. RMBL can stock up during summer and researchers and others can ski in to RMBL in winter just fine. There is no need for additional snowmobile traffic in the last valley that is for now still quiet.

Wouter van Tiel

Wouter van Tiel
Custom Home Design + Build, LLC.
970-209-2780 call/text
www.vantiel.com
www.crestedbuttecustomhomedesignbuild.com

Date: 2/23/17

To: Gunnison County Commissioners

Fr: John Norton, Executive Director, GCBTA

Subject: Limited Motorized Use in the Gothic Valley

We support RMBL's right to access its property and to use a snowmobile or snowcat (or some other mechanized vehicle) in the winter. It is our understanding that RMBL desires to do this as infrequently as possible.

We continue to support CBMBA's grooming of the winter trailhead to Gothic. This opens up recreational opportunities in the Gothic Valley, *and that is just the point.* This is a well-loved and well-used trail in the winter. CBMBA's efforts make the trail much more fun for Nordic skiers and fat bikers.

One of my most memorable evenings of the winter of 16/17 was spent in one of RMBL's cabins with ten members of the national outdoor travel media. That evening was made possible by the joint effort of the Lab and CBMBA.

In the "heart" of winter months, December-March, occupancies in the valley run only 52%. We clearly need activities other than alpine skiing to help make the winter healthy. Nordic skiing and fat biking are becoming increasingly popular and important to our valley's economy.

Thank you!

John

Joshua Ost

From: Rock 'N' Roll Sports <rocknrollsports92@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, February 23, 2018 3:06 PM
To: BOCC
Subject: Gothic Grooming

Dear County Commissioners,

We are writing in support of CBMBA's grooming of the Gothic Road in winter. This is a huge asset to the community and the visitors to our valley. While we support keeping motorized use limited on Gothic Road, we don't think the grooming that is being done, or the use of motorized transportation by RMBL, is the type of use to cause concern.

Please allow CBMBA to continue to provide this amenity for our community. It is awesome that they volunteer time and energy to make a better recreational opportunity for all non-motorized use. This is an exceptional benefit for so many.

Also RMBL is an amazing part of this valley's diversity and educational opportunities. We shouldn't limit their ability to operate in the shoulder seasons, and allow limited motorized access in order for RMBL to continue to excell.

Sincerely,
The Staff at Rock N Roll Sports.

Jefe Branham
David Meyer
Tori Porcella
Thomas Bommarito

Joshua Ost

From: Joanne Reynolds <jsreynoldscb@q.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2018 1:05 PM
To: BOCC
Subject: RMBL's snow mobile traffic request

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

As a member of Silent Tracks I urge you all to deny this request. I firmly believe in RMBL's mission, but I don't think adding any snowmobile traffic between Mt. Crested Butte and Gothic will be of benefit. It's just going to add to the noise pollution.
Joanne Reynolds
142 Neville Way
Crested Butte, CO 81224

Joshua Ost

From: Girlyguns G <girlyguns@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2018 1:11 PM
To: BOCC
Subject: Rmbl winter use

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

I do not support allowing any motorized uses n the Gothic corridor. There are not any other drainages where we can currently escape the noise and tracks of motorized snow travel. Please keep the Gothic corridor quiet. Allowing even limited snowmobile use opens the door for future motorized use. We need to uphold the current plan to keep this corridor unmotorized.

Thanks
Lena Wilensky

Joshua Ost

From: Barbara Kauffman <barbara_kauffman@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2018 6:15 PM
To: BOCC
Subject: Upper Gothic corridor

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

In the winter months, the Gothic Corridor/Upper East River Valley is the only designated "quiet" use drainage in the Crested Butte area. We already have fat tire bikes on the trail from Crested Butte to Gothic; often the ski tracks are obliterated by the grooming for bikes. I would be opposed to changing the only "quiet" drainage.

Barbara Kauffman

Joshua Ost

From: John Holder <joldercb1@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2018 9:16 PM
To: BOCC
Cc: info@silenttracks.org
Subject: Gothic Corridor

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Commissioners,

I would like to comment on the consideration for increased snowmobile use along the Gothic Road. Last year I stated my concern about allowing CMBA to use snowmobiles to groom the gothic road to several of the commissioners. The reply was its only a very small use….however now we are facing increasing use of snowmobiles. My family and I have skied out to Gothic every winter for 40 years. It is a treasure for us as its the ONLY non motorized valley to ski in….no noise, smell…just quite. I am quite concerned we are going to lose that! My proposal would be to go back to NO snowmobiles at all. I would be OK allowing RMBL to use a snow cat in a very limited/controlled manner for transporting supplies to Gothic and it could also groom the trail at the same time for skiers and bikers. It would be much preferred to encounter a quiet snow cat than snowmobiles.

Please keep the last quiet non motorized valley around Crested Butte pristine. Once its opened up I am afraid we will lose it forever.

Thank you for your consideration,

John and Mary Holder

February 20, 2018

Gunnison County Commissioners
200 E. Virginia Ave.
Gunnison, CO 81230
bocc@gunnisoncounty.org

Re: Gothic Road Winter Motorized Use

Dear Gunnison County Commissioners,

Thank you for encouraging the public to comment on the possibility of opening Gothic Road to limited motorized use during winter months. High Country Conservation Advocates (HCCA) is not opposed to Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory's (RMBL) proposal for weekly snowmobile trips to transport supplies. Neither do we oppose the "memorialization" of last year's decision by you to permit the Crested Butte Mountain Bike Association (CBMBA) to groom that road. We do not think that the limited actions proposed by the proponents would lead to conflicts between winter uses within the Upper East River area. On the contrary, with certain stipulations, a clear decision by Gunnison County should minimize conflicts and eliminate public uncertainty.

Both RMBL and CBMBA provide outstanding stewardship work in the Upper East River Valley. But because the Gothic corridor is the only completely non-motorized area outside of wilderness agreed upon by past community decision-making, it is important that clear and enforceable stipulations be applied to any approvals to avoid and minimize impacts to wildlife and quiet use. One of these should be that any trips made by RMBL be paired with CBMBA's grooming, so that instead of two trips, only one is required. We also request that the permit limit RMBL's trip to no more than one round-trip per week. RMBL's trips and CBMBA's grooming should be limited to between the hours of 3 and 10 p.m. on weekdays and non-holidays. RMBL's snowmobiles should be utilized for logistical support only. In addition, there should also be a cap on the number of snowmobiles per weekly round-trip.

Our support is contingent upon not allowing more motorized use along this corridor, now or in the future, than what the proponents are seeking at this time. The intention of Gothic Road winter use should be that it is always non-motorized, subject to the limited exceptions at issue here.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Matt Reed

Matt Reed
Public Lands Director

Joshua Ost

From: Harold Hallstein <hal.hallstein@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2018 1:24 PM
To: BOCC
Subject: Gothic Motorized Use - RMBL

County Officials,

I wanted to write briefly on the topic of expanded snow machine use in Gothic. As a person actively interested in the long-term management of our environmental resources, I have noticed that people who want to make a point that some areas in CB remain quiet will mention Gothic to make their case. If mechanized use is expanded in Gothic that basically means there will be no material quiet area for local human-powered users. Not Kebler, not Slate, not Washington, not Gothic, not Cement, and lack of clarity for in East and West Brush.

I would like to be on record to say that conceding 100% of Crested Butte's main drainages to motorized use is a very short sighted approach that minimizes the concerns of wildlife, spiritual renewal, and environmental stewardship. Peace must be protected some places. We cannot allow the minority who enjoy burning fossil fuels nosily on public lands to dictate the entire land management landscape.

Those who want to look for the deeper meaning outdoors deserve some places to do so. In fact, I would say 50% might be a reasonable split. 0% is not functional for either the human spirit or the animal spirit. If sled expansion is really needed in Gothic, extensive restrictions will be needed elsewhere, perhaps with a focus on Washington Gulch, and strict limitations to on-road use in Slate as well.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best,

Hal Hallstein
(303) 895-8500

Joshua Ost

From: gareth & linda roberts <glbutte12@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2018 4:34 PM
To: BOCC
Subject: RMBL winter access request

Dear commissioners,
RMBL's request for increased winter motorized access is a head scratcher, to be sure. While they own property up that corridor, this request is out of character to their mission statements and prior attempts to restrict summer access to the same area.
I, for one would enjoy no motorized winter access to Gothic. I believe allowing CMBA to groom for bike riding was a mistake. Let's not make another one!
Sincerely,
Gareth Roberts
Po box 3546
Crested Butte, CO 81224
970-381-1547

Joshua Ost

From: Patricia Del Tredici <pdel_tredici@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2018 8:28 PM
To: BOCC
Subject: Re Winter use of the Gothic Corridor

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear BOCC,

Thank you for seeking public input regarding the proposal from RMBL to use motorized vehicles on Gothic Road from Mt. Crested Butte to the town of Gothic.

I support RMBL in their scientific research endeavors, however I am **opposed** to motorized vehicles using this corridor during Winter for the following reasons:

1) It is currently the only drainage in the north end of the valley that is closed to motorized vehicles during Winter.
2) It is currently heavily used by human powered recreation; the only 'quiet' corridor available.
3) Allowing motorized, even on a limited basis, would set a precedent for future requests.

Please consider these concerns and base your decision on what is best for the majority of Gunnison County residents and tourists, now and in the future.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Del Tredici

311G Cement Creek Rd.
Crested Butte, CO 81224

Joshua Ost

From: Carol <cbdale@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2018 2:46 PM
To: BOCC
Subject: RMBL

Dear Sirs,

I strongly disapprove of any additional motorized use in the Gothic Road area during winter.
Despite their lofty stated ideals RMBL
Has become their own worst enemy
Their summer offerings are out of control, an attractive nuisance to themselves.
They have become back country developers.
Thanks for reading this. I am in New Zealand for 2 months and learning much about how to control before it controls you.
This is the last quiet valley. Please keep it that way.
Thanks,
Brian Dale
From Mt. Cook N. P. New Zealand
198 Shavano CB South
Gunnison Country resident since1969.

Joshua Ost

From: Frank Stern <franksternco@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 25, 2018 10:49 AM
To: BOCC
Subject: RMBL motorized use of Gothic Corridor

Follow Up Flag: Follow Up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Commissioners:

Regarding Rocky Mountain Biological Lab (RMBL) requested a permit to increase its snowmobile use (up to once a week) along Country Road #317 between Mt. Crested Butte and the Gothic town site.

I support RMBL's mission, recognizes the significance of their research, and appreciates their integral and vital role in our community. However, I believe this issue directly impacts quiet users. In the winter months, the Gothic Corridor/Upper East River Valley is the only designated "quiet" use drainage in the Crested Butte area.

Please deny this permit.

Frank

Joshua Ost

From: Honeydew Murray <honeydewmurray@me.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 25, 2018 4:36 PM
To: BOCC
Subject: Gothic Corridor

Follow Up Flag: Follow Up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to state my concern over the proposed use of snowmobiles in the Gothic Corridor . As much as I appreciate the concerns of RMBL , I feel the quiet use of the corridor is extremely important. The remainder of our corridors are ever increasingly crowded with Snowmobile use ; I live at Nicholson Lake on the Slate River trailhead where the snowmobile use has dramatically increased over the last 5 years. To release the Gothic corridor to that use would be an impact on the wildlife as well as those who enjoy the quiet of that only quiet use corridor.

Thank you, Honeydew Murray

Joshua Ost

From: Karen J <karenj@rmi.net>
Sent: Saturday, February 24, 2018 8:12 AM
To: BOCC
Subject: Gothic Corridor/motorized use

Follow Up Flag: Follow Up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Board of County Commissioners,

I'm writing this email to express my opinion in regards to the Rocky Mountain Biological Lab's request for a permit to increase snowmobile use along County Road #317. Though I support RMBL's mission and respect their longstanding presence in the valley, I feel very strongly that this permit request should be denied. As I'm sure you know, the Gothic Corridor/Upper East River Valley is the only designated quiet use drainage in the entire Crested Butte area. This 'quiet' designation has already been breached, in part by a homeowner up valley who often lets friends snowmobile to his cabin, and in part by the grooming that now takes place by CBMBA for fat bikers. (This is a confounding thing to me…when there are numerous other places for the bikes to ride, why, in the ONLY quiet use corridor, does this grooming need to occur? I'll be honest, I wonder if RMBL's support of that initiative the other year was a planned attempt to open the later avenue for their motorized needs.)

Again, though I deeply respect RMBL and all that they do, I feel that they should continue to operate within the parameters set by the Gang of Nine long ago. Silence is an increasingly rare commodity, and I would think that the researchers, as much or more than anyone, should appreciate that. The experience of a quiet backcountry ski, of parallel ski tracks unmarred by a snowmobile or snowbike, is hard to find. I feel quite certain that if RMBL is granted these privileges, the motorized community will be jockeying for full use as well, despite the fact that every other drainage has access.

Please think about the ever-changing nature of the Gunnison Valley's backcountry before granting this permit.

Thanks for taking the time to read this email, and for all your hard work as representatives of our county.

Sincerely,

Karen Janssen
108 Teocalli Ave.
Crested Butte, CO 81224

Joshua Ost

From: Joe Frank <jfrank@hydrogeo.com>
Sent: Monday, February 26, 2018 9:06 AM
To: BOCC
Subject: RMBL motorized use

I do not support the regular winter motorized access proposal by RMBL. The Gothic corridor is designated non motorized in the winter. This would open the door to other commercial and non commercial winter access permit applications. I think it was a mistake you authorized motorized trail grooming for bikes. Keep the Gothic corridor non motorized in the winter! Please! Sincerely, Joe Frank (full time resident since 1994).

Sent from my iPhone

Joshua Ost

From: Stephen <snelldobert12@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, February 24, 2018 10:42 AM
To: BOCC
Subject: snowmobiles

Follow Up Flag: Follow Up
Flag Status: Flagged

Please keep this area limited to amount of snowmobile access. This winter quiet zone is invaluable to keeping our valley extra special. Stephen Dobert Gunnison resident

Joshua Ost

From: Holly Annala <hollyannala@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, February 24, 2018 11:34 AM
To: BOCC
Subject: RMBL request for snowmobiles once per week, CBMBA snowmobile grooming

Follow Up Flag: Follow Up
Flag Status: Flagged

Good morning Jonathon, John and Phil,

I would like to register a comment regarding snowmobile and snowcat traffic to Gothic. I think there should not be any snowmobile traffic encouraged out that drainage; it is one of our only ones without snowmobiles on a regular basis. I was and still am totally against the grooming by CBMBA out there, there is no reason they should be allowed when no one else is. Now a bad precedent is being set. I have noticed a big increase in walkers, not fat bikes, out there since the grooming. The trail is in terrible shape for skiing after all the walking, also. There is a lot bigger draw in the winter to cross country skiers than fat bikers, also, which should be considered. Fat biking is a very limited sport with only a few enthusiasts and only a little economic benefit.

I do realize that RMBL likely has a right to use snowmobiles to access their property, however I don't think it should be guaranteed or encouraged by an agreement. They no longer seem as interested in science as they are in tourism. This seems like a contradiction to their alarm at all the impact out there by tourists, they want the place closed off except to their interests.

Thanks for taking comments on this. Once again I feel we are losing our valley's soul and uniqueness to money interests. We are becoming an urban community instead of a small, quiet town. The peace, solitude and beauty people live and visit here for are slowly eroding so some businesses can make more money.

Sincerely, Holly Annala