**GJ DRMP Comment- Whitewater Hill OHV Area should remain open.**

My name is Brandon Siegfried and I have lived in Grand Junction since 1994. I decided to stay in Grand Junction after college because of all the recreation offered on the public lands and the good public land motorized access in the area. This DRMP is proposing drastic cuts to motorized access to our public lands, with no consideration or investigation to protecting established legal rights of way, like RS 2477 and prescriptive easements. I feel this DRMP fails to give consideration that the average hunter is now 59 years old, handicapped citizens, seniors, and the long motorized access heritage in Mesa and Garfield Counties. Alternative B and C propose closing 2180 to 2,998 miles motorized access. We currently have 3,632 miles of motorized routes on BLM land in the Grand Junction Travel Management District. This represents a closure rate of 60% to 83% of our current motorized access. It will devastate our local economy and negatively impact my families future recreation and quality of life.

Whitewater Hill OHV Area is proposed for closure in Alternatives B, C and D. The Whitewater Hill Intensive Use Area is located in Zone O of the Grand Junction DRMP. It should remain open "AS IS". This 400-500 acre OHV area has offered the Grand Valley OHV community an alternative place to ride for decades and the Grand Junction BLM DRMP has offered no good reasoning as to why it should be closed. This closing would be arbitrary and capricious because of the prior authorization under the attached April 27, 1995, Gunnison River Bluffs Public Use Plan. This plan discusses the value of the historical OHV use in the Whitewater Hill OHV area. Based on the presence of the Whitewater Hill OHV area in 1995 the BLM suggested the closure of motorized use in the 3,000 acre Spanish Trail Area. It would not be fair to now close down the Whitewater Hill OHV area.

There are many established routes in the Whitewater Hill OHV area that fall under RS 2477 as they were constructed prior to 1976 and the BLM has no legal authority to close these legal ROW's under RS 2477. The routes identified as O69, O457, O468, O405, O490, O432, O1125, O1133, O358, O330 should remain open to motorized use as they are a legal ROW. I claim RS 2477 on these routes.

Having a variety of areas to ride OHV’s in the Grand Valley will offer safer and more enjoyable riding conditions for our youth, visitors and residents. High Density riding situations could prove hazardous and result in injury or death and alter the enjoyment of the experience. Finding peace and solitude is often desired.

In the Grand Junction 1987 RMP, Table 3, Responses 192-194, reveal the following: “all are historical ORV use areas. Designation to smaller acreage…..could create hazardous crowding of casual and competitive use……and would not address public demand. This statement was made by the GJ BLM 26 years ago, ridership has now quadrupled and the BLM wants to reduce OHV intensive use areas by 57% in the 2012 Grand Junction DRMP. This is an indication that the BLM does not value the safety of motorized users or the local economic benefits of these OHV areas. The Grand Junction area needs more OHV areas not a massive reduction. Reducing our Grand Valley OHV Areas would be a huge liability for the BLM, surely the young riders in valley would be put at higher risk in this situation. More riders in a much smaller area???? There was no reasoning behind closing the Whitewater Hill OHV area in the DRMP.

**2012, COHVCO**- motorized recreational provides over 141 million in spending to the GJFO planning area and 214 jobs directly related to motorized rec. every year.

**2012, Colorado Parks and Wildlife** found hunting and fishing in Mesa and Garfield Counties resulted in $130,520,000 annually and accounts for 1392 jobs