



2/2/2006

Dear Task Force Members,

Chaco, Inc. respectfully urges the Governor's Task Force to recommend protective prescriptions for the remaining roadless areas on the GMUG National Forest not already leased for gas, cut through by roads for timber companies, or fragmented by motorized routes.

As a manufacturer of sport sandals, Chaco is part of the outdoor industry that depends on the recreational opportunities offered by protected roadless areas and Wilderness. Not only do protected roadless areas and Wilderness offer consumers an incentive to purchase our product, it actually enables us to attract new staff to our Delta county locations in Paonia and Delta.

Our annual payroll exceeds \$3 million. Our employees have a significant impact on the tax revenue in Delta County through property and sales taxes. Furthermore we donate three percent of our profits to groups that help people and the planet including local community and youth groups.

Because of the recreational and aesthetic opportunities afforded by the remaining roadless areas on the GMUG – places like the Clear Fork, Priest Mountain and the West Elk Roadless Additions at the base of Mount Gunnison - Chaco is able to attract and retain highly skilled employees. Many of our colleagues view these opportunities for recreation as a benefit that is as important as a steady paycheck, health benefits and a savings plan.

Chaco is one of the few remaining footwear manufactures in the United States. In fact, 70% of our worldwide manufacturing occurs right here in Delta County. Many manufacturers have shifted their production to Asia. Protected roadless areas on the GMUG and other Colorado forests are viewed by us as providing a competitive advantage.

The areas designated as Roadless under the RAREII inventory that remain roadless on the GMUG, such as Priest Mountain, the Clear Fork, Kannah Creek, the West Elk Additions, Dominguez Canyon and Escalante Canyon, offer hiking, backcountry camping, hunting, angling and backcountry skiing opportunities that

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sustain the outdoor industry. These opportunities depend on healthy, unroaded, and contiguous forests now and in the future.

The human-powered outdoor industry, of which Chaco is a part, is a \$20 billion business. In Colorado, outdoor enthusiasts spend approximately \$200 million on recreation equipment and gear alone. Our businesses depend upon protection of roadless areas in which to recreate.

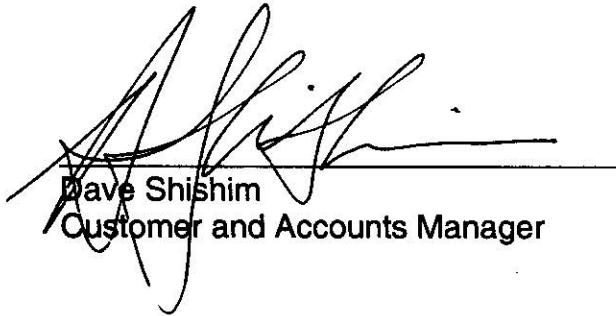
The GMUG Forest has more roadless lands than any other Colorado Forest, but relative to its total size of 3.2 million acres, too few of those acres are permanently protected as Wilderness (only 500,000). We at Chaco again call upon the Task Force to protect that remaining roadless areas on the GMUG Forest.

Thank you for your service on the Task Force and your consideration of our point of view.

For Chaco, Inc.,



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