

Resolution No. 16-03

Resolution of the Town Council of Ridgway, Colorado
Endorsing the Whitehouse Expansion for the Sneffels Wilderness Area

Whereas, the Sneffels range of the San Juan Mountains in Ouray County is an area of extraordinary scenic, environmental, economic, and recreational value; and

Whereas, the existing Mount Sneffels Wilderness boundaries do not protect in perpetuity adjacent public lands in the Sneffels range which are capable and deserving of permanent wilderness designation; and

Whereas, a proposal to expand the existing Mount Sneffels Wilderness boundaries to include these public lands has been presented to the Ridgway Town Council as represented in a map entitled "Whitehouse Expansion Of The Mount Sneffels Wilderness"; and

Whereas, visitors and residents of Ouray County today enjoy these public lands for hiking, camping, photography, mountain climbing, hunting, skiing, scenic enjoyment and other wilderness uses; and

Whereas, recreation and other uses of the public lands of Ouray County are a vital part of the Town's economy; and

Whereas, these public lands include important watershed areas for domestic and agricultural water sources including Beaver Creek, the Town of Ridgway's only source of potable water; and

Whereas, preservation of these public lands as designated Wilderness would better protect their scenic, environmental, economic, and recreational values in perpetuity from the adverse effects of future development; and

Whereas, the proposed Whitehouse Expansion of the Sneffels Wilderness Area does not include the Dallas Trail System so that mountain bikers can continue to enjoy this beautiful and challenging trail; and

Whereas, the proposed Whitehouse Expansion of the Sneffels Wilderness Area likewise does not include any roads currently open to motorized use; and

Whereas, the proposed Whitehouse Expansion of the Sneffels Wilderness Area is already managed by the US Forest Service in substantial measure as wilderness; and

Whereas, the designation as wilderness of the Whitehouse Expansion of the Sneffels Wilderness Area will make this special place part of a system of places wild and free for the permanent good of all.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF RIDGWAY, COLORADO that the Town Council recommends that Congress enact legislation to designate the Whitehouse Expansion of the Sneffels Wilderness Area as permanent wilderness, and that the legislation include appropriate language to protect existing water rights including those of the Town of Ridgway, as well as existing water collection and diversion infrastructure, subject to access by the Town for maintenance and repair purposes.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 11th day of May, 2016.

TOWN OF RIDGWAY



John Clark, Mayor

ATTEST



Pam Kraft, MMC
Town Clerk