

MARCH 5, 2002, UNCOMPAHGRE WORKING GROUP
PUBLIC MEETING (KICKOFF), TWO RIVERS CONVENTION CENTER,
159 MAIN ST., GRAND JUNCTION, CO,
6:30–9:30 PM, CO-HOSTED BY GMUG AND UP

Shared History Timelines. The current conditions on the Uncompahgre Plateau landscape are a result of past activities. The perceptions of conditions and the values different people place on the Uncompahgre Plateau landscape are similarly the result of different perspectives. There is no single history of the Uncompahgre Plateau nor is there a single perspective on how to view this landscape. We asked the working group to give us information about historical events that influenced resource conditions on the Plateau and about their personal connections to this area. The intent was to develop a much richer picture of the historical context surrounding the Uncompahgre Plateau and a better understanding of why this area is special to so many people. The following timelines were transcribed from the personal recollections and thoughts of meeting participants as posted on 5 large posters during the meeting.

Jurassic Period, 208–144 million years ago

- Laramide uplift (Cretaceous)
- Ecosystems – within a few hundred years – learning experience.
- Sculptured rock and water courses, unmarked by human intervention.
- Aspens changing color, ever since aspens grew there.

Dominguez/Escalante Expedition, 1765

- [nothing]

Utes removed to reservations, 1881

- Uncle Nova homesteaded on Glade Park 1880
- 1889 Matt Casto – trapper – step grandfather, Big Creek area. Owned private land since grazed cattle.
- Grandfather killed in gun battle – water rights 1907.
- Family owned grazing rights, western Plateau, before Taylor Grazing Act to future.
- Family came to Western Colorado 1880s mother's side, 1890s father's side
- Oscar Massey family since 1889
- Tall grass growing before cattle grazed.

Great Depression, 1930s

- The hardships of the ranchers in the Depression ERA.

- Grandparents homesteaded on Fruita side – pre-depression.
- Uncle Nova was Power man on Fruita truck [?] CNM 1930s?
- Cowboys were like the coyote – they got blamed for everything.
- I remember weeks in summer at the Standish [?], Boyden [?], Burch, Gray Cow Camps.
- I remember where there were no fences 30s + 40s.
- Cold Springs furnished the only reliable source of water for livestock during the droughts of 1906 + cattle were rotated – and day herded where each ranch herd rotated.
- I've seen evidence from the fires that were supposed to have been set by Indians.

[1940s]

- 1940s Getting snowed in while deer hunting.

[1950s]

- 1956 The old Indian drawing and writings.
- The freedom of the area for all people 1955 until now.
- Boy Scout Camps 50s – 60s
- Sledding 50s – 60s.
- Xmas tree cutting 50s – 60s.
- Family picnics, hiking, camping 50s – 60s.
- 1950s camping at Ironton Park, ATVing in the area.
- Fishing 50s – present.
- 1950? Family constructed Casto Reservoir for irrigation development.
- 1950s? Family constructed Big Creek Reservoir for irrigating use from Plateau to Gateway.
- Summer rides [?] were accomplished by all the outfits, who gathered at Mud Sp + worked the Mesa southward.
- What are the past and present impacts or practices that have placed the UP in the condition it is in today. 1956 Lynx.
- 1950 Smokey Bear ruins forest management.
- Old cowboys talk about more open country 50 – 80 years ago.
- Silesca Ranger Station family picnics 1950s – 1960s. Mother lost/found wedding ring.
- 1957 First trip ever to mtn. for me.
- Farm Springs picnics – when we lived in Olathe. Have cousins in Montrose still ranching, grazing on UP
- Experiences area John Brown's Road + logging; old mines not filled in, camping out since 1960, learning [?] here since 1940. No hunting, photography OK.
- Historically some of best Mule deer habitat.
- Many deer in the 1950s and 1960s in the Glade Park Area.

- USFS map from 1954.
- Traveling on UP in the 1950s with my family. We had a mother bear and 2 cubs run across the road.
- The last lynx that I can remember was in 1956 full with quills.

[1960s]

- Motorcycle riding 60s – present.
- 1960 – Father + Grandfather + I plus other members of family to UP. Every year since I've been on UP at least once – a very special place to me.
- The evolution of the first locally sponsored ski areas was of great interest to me and the resultant growth of activity on the Grand Mesa arrived here in 1965.
- ~1960 hiking + getting caught on a cliff face ! (my husband).
- 1960 John Trammel visits UP for first time deer hunting. Deer everywhere.

First Man on the Moon, 1969

- Firefighting 70s
- Firewood cutting 70s – 80s
- 1970s Big game hunting with Dad.
- Riding + hiking + snowmobiling.
- Bought private property + permits around 1973, 1987, 2001
- Oct. 1979 Spending 3 days, 2 nights in a pickup at Thimble Point with my leg in a cast in 3 feet of snow, while my partner went for help.
- 1973 killed first bull elk.
- Sanborn Park School – kept open 'til 1970 = last in the country.
- 1978 – 1986 Back Canyon Music Festival, Olathe.
- 1978 – present John Trammell fishes various streams on the Plateau.
- Hiking in the Indian Creek area down + around to Rim Lake – a 7 mile hike turned into a 14 mile one.
- 1976 Deer hunt, 1st buck.
- Hearing elk bugling.
- Hiking Big Dominguez Canyon + seeing petroglyphs.
- Camping at Alpine CG and walking through a meadow of glacier lilies – no weeds.
- Camping at Divide Forks CG + hearing the coyotes serenade.

1980

- A feeling that I was visiting nature within "sight" of civilization.
- (+) Solitude – sound of water. Wind through the trees, full moon on a clear night.
- Many, many family camping trips + reunions at Dominguez Rec Area during a 40 year period.

- 1994 Colorado Wilderness Network supports Unaweep, Dominguez, and the Roubideaux Addition as Wilderness.
- Solitude.
- 1st trip on the Unc. in mid 80s. Blown away by the diversity (Ponderosa, Manzanita, etc.) and the lack of people + mosquitoes.
- 1985 camping by creek + reservoir – off road motorized vehicles tearing up terrain and creek.
- Oct. 1988 1,000 acre fire in Calamity Basin.
- 1983 Laura Trammell and Jim Wrzeski marry at Mud Springs.
- C. 1982 Grand Valley Anglers chapter of TU did stream restoration work on Little Creek.
- 1980? Iron Springs picnic with niece Kristi.
- 1980s Christmas tree cutting with the family.

Berlin Wall Falls, 1989

- Mountain bike, wildflowers, overlooks, past hard rock cliffs.
- One of first places I went camping with family in Colorado early 90s.
- Saw black bear in 1991. Seen at least one per year since.
- 1990s – present Camping/ motorcycle riding with family.
- ATV riding 90s – present.
- 1991 Hunting + camping experiences
- Readers Digest mountain bike article.
- 1991!...ATVs take over.
- Horse back riding with friends on UC
- 1992 I first traveled thru Unaweep Canyon and camped on the UP. 2000 I moved here to live in Unaweep Canyon.
- Event – Early 90s began seeing recreation activities actually occur during the week days instead of just weekends, holidays + hunting season. `1
- Early 1990s ATVs drive many horse back riders off UC
- Going riding on trails + roads. For the last 15 years.
- Christmas tree cutting is a good memory.
- Watching meteor showers while camping + waking up to a bear near the camp.

1995

- Hunting, saw large 6 point, harvested.
- Group campouts and mountain bike adventures with friends 1996 to present.
- 2000? Basin Trail blowdown, Casto Trail blowdown, serious fire hazard.
- 1992 – 2002 ATV travel, hiking, camping.
- Private lands are being subdivided and developed.
- BBQs at Tam + Deanna's. Near Telephone Trail.

- Unaweep seep, very unique mini environment.
- Petroglyphs, large number unknown to general public.
- Uranium Mining 1900 – 1990s. Roads, Mines. Exploring old mine.
- 1999? Big bear Canyon blow down, serious fire
- 1999 Representative Diana DeGette introduces legislation to make Unaweep, Dominguez + Roubideaux

Wilderness

- 1998 Hailstorm in July.
- 1996 Adopt a Trails Partnership with FS of the ATV complex.
- Riding in the Fruita Division and all the wonderful views.
- Staying at Cold Springs Ranger Stn.
- Glade Park active land conservation, West Crk. – brown trout – rare butterflies. Excessive vehicle off road travel. Low level tourist impact – solution improving grazing management.
- Needs some low tech camp sites (small scale). Mtn. Man Rendezvous was great (about years ago--
- Fly fishing West Creek very good.
- Place to be [on] horseback.
- Special Moments: hiking Dominguez Canyon top to bottom 1990. Floating Delores River. Off road vehicle use. 1980s to present new trails + increased use.
- Desert Bighorn sheep.
- 1996 Changed allotment boundaries to try another grazing system again.
- 1995 Began Travel Mgmt. Plan. 2002 still at it.
- Event '94or '95 When it dumped snow during the 1st rifle season trapping many Winnebagos, vans, etc.
- Finding myself between sow bear + cubs 1997.
- In riding on the Fruita Division in the late 1990s I saw a herd of elk with young calves and a young bear that was very beautiful and this was all in the same day.
- 1999 Grand Junction Geological Society proposed preservation of geologically significant gravels at Columbine Pass.
- Dominguez Canyon hikes 2000.
- 5 pt. bull Oct. 10, 1999.
- Oct. 1994 Massive snow storm. I was involved on a search & rescue for hunters.

Present and Beyond

- March 2002 Started meeting folks on the east side of the Plateau, to learn about their concerns.
- ATV riding trails.

- 2001 Mesa County + Delta County Commissioners support Dominguez Canyon as Wilderness.
- Seeing Lynx on Divide Road about 1 1/2 years ago.
- May 2001 Became involved with the PLP – USFS partnership in a research capacity.
- Physical beauty of the area/ solitude.
- Beetle kill apparent in Ponderosa pines, fire hazard.
- Big Creek Reservoir – Gill Creek trout.
- Watching wildlife on UP.
- Cows.
- Watching elk calf on UP.
- Friends who own land there.
- Clear water coming off the Plateau. It tells us something. Nothing in the world is like water. We are water people. Ours is a water planet.
- Dispersed camping is important. Not all "developed" campgrounds.
- Hunting by out-of-staters may not be vested in Uncompahgre.
- ATVers pick up trash; adopt trails – users to help/approve volunteers.
- March 2002 First visited the Plateau today.
- Client base.
- Place to go back to my roots.
- Ranching + cattle grazing 1880s to present. Habitat changes. Fire suppression.
- Manage the UP for my grandchildren and great-grandchildren to use with open roads + trails + cattle + hunting.
- 201 Camped over Memorial weekend...mountain biked, hiked, ran.
- Spent many days in 2001 researching trails in the north portion of the UP from Divide Rd. north. Research material published in March 2002.
- Smokey Bear's demise soon!
- Controversial grazing history and tremendous rangeland recovery from the old days to now.
- Continued uncontrolled use of ATVs and environmental damage, wildlife harassment, etc.
- Man-made changes to natural or historic to natural characteristics of UC – fire suppression, cattle, roads, erosion, mining, clear cuts, etc.
- Future. Hope to find more coop between all groups for future improvements. Has not been in past (multiple use).
- I have a picture of a whole valley of dandelions with La Sals in the backgrounds. June 2001.
- BLM permits for flagstone (keep some for public).
- Seeing wildlife, elk, deer, coyote.
- Views: Lone Cone, La Sals, Grand Mesa. Thick trees – need more fire. Quiet up there.

- Husband + hunting friends have moved to other areas because of too many people, four wheelers, etc.
- The UP is still more intact as a landscape, less busy + crowded than most other Forests in New Mexico + CO.
- Edith and her family became treasured friends when I arrived in 1965. It was painful to learn of the recent fire there.
- New concepts of protecting areas that are failing and need several years of restoration but not put into Wilderness Areas.
- Access to a breath taking area.
- Meteor shower summer 2001.
- Riding on horse back with ranch families passing down knowledge, skills, stories + traditions as they go about their daily work.
- Predation might be an issue (loss of elk, deer, others).
- ATV S&R activities for lost hunters + others.
- Hiking into Carson's Hole + seeing big fish in one of the natural ponds.
- Finding noxious weeds – but not many – yet.
- Recreation, hiking, biking, birding.
- Keep good trail loops open for ATVs/ 4-wheels. Enforce use of trails for motor (make them stay on trails).
- Sense of "quiet" is important. The forest is a place to "get away"...
- Hunting, ATV, four wheeling.