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## 2023 NACo Public Lands Committee Delegate Letter of Intent

**Position:** Commissioner

**Name:** Bobbie Daniel

**County:** Mesa County

**Phone:** 970-589-4700

**E-Mail Address:** [bobbie.daniel@mesacounty.us](mailto:bobbie.daniel@mesacounty.us)

**Expiration of Current Term: 2026 Are you term limited?:** No

**Committee(s):Position(s):** Public Lands Committee, Travel Team Delegate

Dear CCI Members,

I, Bobbie Daniel, commit to participating in the encouraged training as described in the bylaws. I would like to serve as a Travel Delegate on the Public Lands Committee so local voices continue to be listened to and advocated for legislatively at a Regional and National level. Mesa County is 74% public lands, and many of the issues and challenges we have, many other counties are experiencing as well.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Bobbie Daniel  
Mesa County Commissioner District 2

- Bobbie Daniel is a voice for Western Colorado and working-class families advocating for empowered citizens and local solutions with a career spanning small business, public policy, and community service. Born in Meeker, Colorado, and raised in Palisade, with deep roots in agriculture, public lands, water, and natural resources.
- Served in AmeriCorps National Civilian Corps stationed at the former Lowry Air Force base.
- Decade of small business ownership.
- Board Chairman of the Colorado Women's Alliance, a state-wide policy organization committed to research, advocacy, and education around issues most important to women.
- Graduate of the Leadership Program of the Rockies, a member of their advisory board, and a founding member of their Western Slope Leadership Ambassador Program Mentor Group.
- Appointment on the Mesa County Citizen Review Board.
- Mesa County Cattlemen's Association Member and Rotarian.

Bobbie and her husband, Nick Daniel, a Rifle, Colorado native and business owner, are making their home in Grand Junction with their four children.

## Public Lands Topics of Concern

### Water

Mesa County is a strong advocate for water rights and is home to some of the most senior rights on the Colorado River. As drought continues and there is a greater demand on this dwindling resource, it is imperative that Western Colorado have a strong voice in discussions surrounding the future of Colorado water.

### Land Use

There are a wide range of land use designations within Mesa County including:

- 4 Special Recreation Management Areas
- 5 Extensive Recreation Management Areas
- 2 Historic Trails
- 3 Scenic and Historic Byways
- 1 Little Book Cliffs Wild Horse and Burro Area
- 1 National Monument
- 2 National Conservation Areas
- 13 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
- 19 Roadless Areas
- 3 Areas identified as Lands with Wilderness Characteristics
- 6 Wilderness Study Areas
- 2 Designated Wilderness Areas

Mesa County is also home to grazing leases and leases for extractive industries (oil, gas, minerals).

### Recreation

With more than 1.5million acres of public lands, recreation is available year-round.

- Hiking- Bangs Canyon, McInnis NCA, Dominguez- Escalante NCA, Colorado National Monument, Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre
- Mountain biking- The Palisade Plunge, North Fruita Desert, Rabbit Valley, Bangs Canyon
- Winter recreation including downhill and cross-country skiing, snowmobiling,
- Off-roading with jeeps, four wheelers, and UTVs
- Hunting and fishing
- Wildlife viewing

### Wildfire

The intensity and frequency of wildfire is increasing throughout the West. Mesa and Garfield Counties saw the third largest wildfire, the Pine Gulch Fire, in Colorado history in 2020. The Pine Gulch Fire burned 139,007 acres.

## Wildlife Management

There are 21 species on the Endangered and Threatened Species list. These listings include habitat designations. Additional efforts regarding wildlife include identifying migration corridors, winter habitat, and Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat to name a few.

The Board has been an active participant in the discussions with CPW and USFWS in reintroduction efforts and ensuring management plans include adequate compensation for depredation and allow the USFWS and CPW flexibility to address problematic wolves as issues arise. Mesa County, situated on the Colorado- Utah border is anchored by the county seat, Grand Junction, the largest city between Denver and Salt Lake City. Mesa County serves as a hub for commerce, health services, higher education, transportation, and recreation for western Colorado and eastern Utah. Given Mesa County's location in rural western Colorado, and the urban service center of Grand Junction, Mesa County has a unique opportunity to understand the values of both rural and urban communities. In 2018, Mesa County adopted a Resolution against the reintroduction of wolves to Colorado. Concerns include safety and welfare of people and their pets, depredation of livestock, and impacts to deer, elk, and moose populations.

Mesa County is comprised of approximately 74% public lands.

- The proximity and abundance of public lands provides substantial socioeconomic benefits to our residents and is a significant attraction for visitors
- Public lands are also an economic contributor for local and county governments. Mesa County is the largest recipient of Payment in Lieu of Taxes ("PILT") in Colorado<sup>i</sup>.
- There are both challenges and opportunities associated with finding balance between protecting resource values of the natural environment and ensuring continued access, use and enjoyment of those resources.

Mesa County strives to be an active partner in federal land decisions and maintains Memoranda of Understanding with:

- the Bureau of Land Management ("BLM")
- US Forest Service ("USFS")
- US Fish and Wildlife Service ("USFWS")
- the Colorado National Monument ("NPS")
- the Department of Energy ("DOE")

Cooperating and Collaborating Relationship with Local Federal Partners

- Mesa County serves as a Cooperating Agency on federal lands and listed species review under the National Environmental Protection Act ("NEPA").
- Mesa County appreciates an open door, collaborative relationship with each of these agencies.

- To enhance open communication, Mesa County Commissioners host a bi-annual meeting with Federal and State Land Resource Managers to discuss projects, areas for collaboration, and other topics affecting wildlife and land use in Mesa County.

Within the County boundaries there are:

- Three National Forests (Uncompahgre, Grand Mesa, and Manti-La Sal)
- Two BLM Districts (Upper Colorado and Southwest District)

Three BLM Field Offices (Grand Junction, Colorado River Valley and Uncompahgre)

### **Mesa County Resource Management Plan**

In 2019, Mesa County adopted the Mesa County Resources Management Plan (“RMP”) to give Mesa County the strongest voice it can have during interaction with the federal agencies. While Mesa County has no direct authority over federal lands decision-making, the RMP helps to establish local policy regarding Mesa County’s desired use and administration of federally managed lands in their jurisdiction.

The RMP is intended to help evaluate, articulate, and protect the local citizens’ interest in, and access to, federal and public lands and resources and to ensure the history, as well as ensuring the economic and socioeconomic well-being of Mesa County are adequately considered as Mesa County participates as a Cooperating and Coordinating Agency in federal decisions.

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<sup>i</sup> [https://pilt.doi.gov/counties.cfm?term=county&state\\_code=CO&fiscal\\_yr=2022&Search.x=26&Search.y=12](https://pilt.doi.gov/counties.cfm?term=county&state_code=CO&fiscal_yr=2022&Search.x=26&Search.y=12)

Total Acres 1,556,766 accounted for in PILT payment of \$3,870,776 in 2022