

## **Values Statement for the East and West Forks of the San Juan River**

(This version was approved in May 2010)

The East and West Forks of the San Juan River and the surrounding watersheds are integral to the vitality, health and economic well-being of the adjacent communities. This stunningly beautiful area has two wilderness areas, a roadless portion, areas of multiple use, and private property.

There is a “wildness” and rural character about the area that is valued by locals and visitors alike.

The watersheds and the water quality are important for many reasons including:

- they serve as the headwaters for the local communities’ municipal water supply;
- they serve as an important link to the surrounding counties’ and communities’ economies;
- downstream agricultural lands depend on the water for irrigation; and
- many people and groups use the area for a wide range of purposes.

The private lands in the area are important, and the property and water rights as well as property values associated with these lands are respected. Landowners want to be good stewards of their properties.

The area is notable for its wide range of plants, wildlife species, geology and other ecological values. Locals and visitors use the areas for a very diverse mix of recreation, fishing, hunting, grazing, outfitting and a whole range of economic and leisure uses including the enjoyment of nature and the scenery.

The area is historically important as people have been tied to these lands for generations.