

News Release



USDA Forest Service
Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests
2250 Highway 50
Delta, CO 81416-2485

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact(s): Judy Schutza, Norwood District Ranger, 970-327-4261
Steve Marquardt, Renewable Resources Staff Officer, 970-874-6670**

ROCKY MOUNTAIN ELK FOUNDATION AWARDS GMUG BIOLOGIST

Delta, CO. (April 4, 2007) – The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation has awarded its 2007 Elk Country Achievement Award for individual accomplishment to Forest Service Biologist Craig Grother. The award cited Grother’s, “long-standing commitment to excellence in elk management and habitat enhancement.” Mr. Grother works as a zoned wildlife biologist on the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests (GMUG) on the Norwood and Ouray Ranger Districts.

Over the past 18 years Craig has developed approximately 51 partnership agreements, valued at over \$360,000 to improve wildlife habitat on the Forest -many of which were with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. Norwood District Ranger Judy Schutza stated, “We are very proud of this recognition of Craig’s efforts and commitment to wildlife management. He is very deserving of this award.” She went on to cite, “Craig’s good working relationships with these partners and their confidence in his ability to accomplish the work is a primary reason this forest continues to receive contributed partnership dollars annually.”

The Uncompahgre Plateau is known throughout the West for its quality elk hunting opportunities, including unit 61, which is specifically designated as a “quality hunting unit” by the Colorado Division of Wildlife. Partnership efforts and support, combined with national forest staffing and additional funding, has resulted in thousands of acres of habitat improvement for elk, mule deer and bighorn sheep on the Uncompahgre Plateau and in the San Juan Mountains.

Likewise, partnership contributions and cooperative projects with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and other partners (e.g. the Colorado Division of Wildlife) to manage access and motorized use has also significantly contributed to improved habitat effectiveness for elk.

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