



## **Town of Crested Butte, Colorado**

### **For Immediate Release:**

**February 16, 2016**

### **The Town of Crested Butte Collaborates with State agencies, Gunnison County, Mt. Emmons Mining Company and Other Stakeholders to Protect its Watershed and Pursue Further Resolution of Issues Relevant to Mining on Mount Emmons**

The Town of Crested Butte has collaborated with the State of Colorado Department of Health and Environment, Water Quality Control Division; State of Colorado Department of Natural Resources, Division of Reclamation Mining and Safety; Gunnison County; and Mt. Emmons Mining Company (MEMCO), a subsidiary of Freeport McMoRan, Inc., to prepare a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will ensure ongoing water treatment at the historic Keystone Mine as MEMCO takes ownership of the Mt. Emmons Mine site from U.S. Energy Corp.

The MOU addresses community concerns - expressed by the Town in an August 2015 letter to the State - that an industry downturn affecting U.S. Energy could leave the community without resources to operate the water treatment plant, which prevents metals and related contaminants from flowing into Coal Creek in the Town's watershed. The terms of the MOU include a voluntary two-year pre-funding of water treatment plant labor by MEMCO.

The MOU also represents a substantial step forward by creating a collaborative framework through which the parties agree to work toward addressing other mine-related issues that are of interest to the Town, such as: disposition of mining and mill-site claims and fee simple lands, development of site specific water quality standards for Coal Creek, and ongoing protection of the environment. Mayor Glenn Michel said, "We are very excited about the new spirit of corporation and the Town of Crested Butte looks forward to working with all the partners to find a permanent solution to the mine".

The MOU will be presented to the Town of Crested Butte Town Council in a public meeting at a date to be announced and properly noticed and is available for viewing, along with an executive summary, on the Town's website at: [www.townofcrestedbutte.com](http://www.townofcrestedbutte.com).

The Town thanks the many parties whose work over many years has helped to realize this step, including: The State, Gunnison County, Senator Bennett, Coal Creek Watershed Coalition, Red Lady Coalition, High Country Conservation Advocates, the Crested Butte Community at large, and many others.

Under an acquisition agreement, announced last Friday, with U.S. Energy, MEMCO acquired the mine site, including the Keystone Mine and the related water treatment plant and other associated properties. MEMCO replaces U.S. Energy as the owner and water quality permit holder for the treatment plant.