

# HINSDALE COUNTY



# RECREATION PLAN

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*Prepared For the Rio Grande Watershed Emergency Action Coordination and Lake City/Hinsdale County*



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## 6. CONNECTING YOUTH WITH THE OUTDOORS

### Motivations and Barriers to Participation In Outdoor Activities Among Youth

According to the Outdoor Foundations Special Report on the Youth, there are influences, motivations and barriers to youth from participation in outdoor activities. This information will be helpful in recruiting new outdoor recreation participants, volunteers, and potential stewards for outdoor activities and programs.

**Influencers:** *Who influences youth to participate in outdoor recreation?* For children 6-17 years, parents and family are the direct influence for a child's participation in the outdoors. At 18 years of age, this shifts to friends being the predominant influence for outdoor participation.

**Motivations:** *What motivates youth to participate in outdoor recreation?* For children 6-17 years, fun, a sense of discovery and exploration are the major motivators. For young adults aged 18-24 the main motivation for outdoor participation is relaxation and exercise.

**Barriers:** *What keeps youths from participating in the outdoors more?* For children 6-17 years, most youth report that there is not enough time to participate in outdoor activities as well as other competing interests. For young adults it is a lack of time, but also competing interests such as screen time.

**Barriers:** *What keeps youths who don't participate in outdoor activities from participating?* For children 6-17 years, most report a lack of interest. For young adults, they also report a lack of interest and competing screen time. The young adults also report "no one to participate with" as a reason for not getting outside.

### Best Practices for Connecting Youth with the Outdoors and Recreation

#### Making Family Friendly Outdoor Opportunities Easy to Find

Making a list, brochure, website or blogs dedicated to the pursuit of family outdoor fun that is interactive and

has the ability for families to share their experiences will help promote more family involvement in your community. This can include:

- Websites that post events such as environmental education opportunities, outdoor camps and lessons (climbing, hiking, outdoor school)
- Identify areas that would be suitable for children of different ages such as preschool, elementary, etc.
- Promote child fun activities along with adult festivals such as the winter sports activities (snowshoe race for kids and climbing competitions for kids)

#### Promote Existing Lake City/Hinsdale Activities for Youth

Federal Lands such as Fish and Wildlife, the US Forest Service, BLM, the National Park Service, and State Wildlife Departments already have annual programs. Tapping into these resources can allow your community to expand recreation opportunities and marketing as well.

#### Bring To Life Existing Outdoor Spaces for Youth

Improvements in existing public spaces such as parks can help make these areas inviting and fun. Try these in Town or Memorial Parks:

- Build wildzones with boulders, rocks, logs, and tree swings to introduce children to more natural playscapes.
- Use bright colors on the playground.
- Use chalks and paints for temporary games such as twister or four square.
- Designate spaces for nature play and let chil-



Photo Courtesy NationalWildlifeFoundation.org

## 6. CONNECTING YOUTH WITH THE OUTDOORS

Children play in mud pits, climb trees, and build rock sculptures

### Promote Nature

Introduce guided tours of the Ute Ulay, historic features of the Alpine Loop, scavenger hunts in nature, geo-caching in town, and nature discovery tours. Design passports that identify checking off multiple finds, tasks, or activities for kids and families. Offer stickers for completing the tasks.

### Engage Children in the Design Elements of Their Parks

Children have wild, fun, and creative ideas for how to transform their parks. Let them have a say in what happens in their community activities to get them outdoors and into their play spaces.

### Make Sure Recreation Events and Races have Youth Categories

Events such as the Winter Festival can have races for children such as snowshoe cross country ski races, and climbing competitions. Other summer events such as running, climbing, or other race events can be included to encourage outdoor participation.

### Mentor Programs for Children

Mentors and Outdoor Clubs can work with children to help them engage in outdoor programs by taking them to specific locations to learn about activities such as archaeological digs, wildlife studies, outdoor schools, and mountaineering activities.



Photo Courtesy National Park Service -Junior Ranger Program

### Borrow Ideas from National Organizations Engaged in Connecting Youth with the Outdoors

Larger organizations have developed programs that are available nation-wide. The National Wildlife Federation has several programs entitled “Earth Tomorrow”, “Eco-Schools”, and “Schoolyard Wildlife”, and “Trees For Wildlife”. The National Forest Foundation has volunteer programs to learn about habitats, and conservation. ASYMCA programs bring kids and their families together in nature, the Arbor Day Foundation hosts “Nature Explore” projects, and the Nature Conservancy has the “Nature Rocks” program.



Photo Courtesy Michelle Obama’s “Let’s Move” Campaign The Grio.com

### Bring in Sports Idols for Festivals

Sports events such as snowboarding, skateboarding, and extreme sports competitions such as the X-Games have a host of famous competitors that may be willing to show up for your event. This could bring larger numbers of kids to events and promote local Lake City/Hinsdale County activities.



## CASE STUDIES: CONNECTING YOUTH WITH THE OUTDOORS



Photo Courtesy www.outdoors.com

The Appalachian Mountain Club provides Family Adventure Camps and Wee Wanders Programs to get families involved in outdoor activities.



Photo Courtesy Flickr.com

Natural elements on this landscape at Acorn Hill Waldorf School allow children to play in a natural environment setting



Photo Courtesy imgur.com



Photo Courtesy Pinterest.com

Natural elements make parks and playgrounds more appealing and offer a sense of wonder and opportunities to explore.



## CASE STUDIES: CONNECTING YOUTH WITH THE OUTDOORS



Photo Courtesy Pinterest.com



Photo Courtesy Pinterest.com

Make shift environments provide new opportunities for play, solitude, adventure and creative play.



Photo Courtesy ourdayourjourney.blogspot.ca

The Appalachian Mountain Club provides Family Adventure Camps and Wee Wanders Programs to allow kids to get dirty and help get families involved in outdoor activities.



Photo Courtesy learninglandscape.com

This playground structure is located in Silver Falls Park, Oregon and provides natural elements to kids to explore.

## 7. BALANCING RECREATION AND CONSERVATION

Outdoor recreation activities provide a range of benefits to the community and visitors that include solitude, natural sounds, recharging of the mind and body through exercise and physical challenge, time with family, and observing nature and wildlife. Conservation is the practice of protecting and utilizing resources so that future visitors can enjoy them.

Unfortunately, recreation activities can result in human disturbance to natural plant and animal species. This can include the introduction of non-native species of plants, habitat fragmentation, soil compaction, increased wildfire risks, and impacts to wildlife from dogs and human presence, and other activities such as driving nails into tree trunks at recreation sites. Good recreation management can help balance visitor needs and protect fragile resources. Ironically, land conservation is tied to recreation for funding. Sometimes, recreation and conservation cannot be achieved in the same location. The following best management practices will help minimize recreation impacts while maximizing outdoor benefits.

### Minimize Impacts to Wildlife From Trails

Most species need large blocks of natural habitat undisturbed by humans to thrive. There is a delicate balance of how much disturbance species can tolerate before wildlife are displaced. Trails can be one of the main thoroughfares by which recreationists can access some of the most remote areas in Hinsdale County. There are close to 40 hiking trails, 33 horse back riding trails, and 6 ATV trails on the surrounding Gunnison National Forest. Additionally, the Bureau of Land Management has 18 hiking trails, 7 horseback riding trails, and 7 ATV trails. Many of these trails take recreationists to some of the most remote public lands in the State of Colorado. Many of these are located in or near riparian, nesting, and winter and summer habitats for elk, deer and other species. This can cause direct impacts to wildlife and sensitive species.

- Trails and recreation sites have known impacts to wildlife and can range from no activity, to altered activity to abandonment of the site or nest
- Dogs can increase the disturbance to wildlife through presence on the trail to chasing and injuring wildlife
- Influence zones can be up to 300' off either side

of the trail

- Wildlife can become habituated to humans making them a threat
- All activities, including hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, and ATV use affect wildlife to some level

The best way to minimize impacts to wildlife along trails is to:

- Design trails in a way that prevents visitors from cutting trails or goat tracking off the designated trail
- Minimize the number of trails to the same location (especially in critical habitat)
- Avoid layout of trails that cut through critical habitat—instead design the trails adjacent to these habitats or away from these habitats or maintain visual barriers between the trail and habitat
- Take into consideration the potential for the introduction of noxious weeds
- Maintain habitat of sensitive species
- Consult wildlife specialists and conservation groups when planning recreation trails or development



Photo Courtesy mammaling.wordpress.com

### Other Considerations

Many environments can accommodate recreation resources while protecting the environment if carefully planned and executed with management policies in place. This can include asking the following questions about recreation development, such as:

- What is the primary directive—is the area suitable for recreation, if so, what are the trade-offs for the environment and economics?

## 7. BALANCING RECREATION AND CONSERVATION

- Does any trade-off outweigh the others?
- Does the area intended for recreation development contain irretrievable or irreplaceable resources (such as historical elements or pictographs), that if lost are not replaceable?
- Is there law enforcement or a way to protect the area if there are historical elements?
- Is there any oversight of the area?
- Is there a vegetation, wildlife or aquatic species management plan in place?
- Is there a waste management plan?
- Is development of an area cost effective (i.e. the number of visitors compared to cost to construct or operate?)

### Environmental Permits and Considerations

#### Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Wildlife Species

Hinsdale County is home to rare animals, plants and aquatic species that require consideration when planning recreation trails, facilities, or development. The Gunnison Sage-grouse is a candidate for listing under the Federal Endangered Species Act and may be present in potential development areas. Other animal, plant and aquatic species include: Gunnison's prairie dog, the Black-footed ferret, Greater sage-grouse, Yellow-billed cuckoo, Mexican spotted owl, Least tern, Rio Grande Cutthroat trout, Greenback cutthroat trout, Colorado pikeminnow, Dudley Bluffs bladderpod, Dudley Bluffs twinpod, Skiff milkvetch, Kremmling milkvetch, Northpark phacelia, Penland's beardtongue, and Colorado hookless cactus.

All federally listed threatened or endangered species are protected under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) which outlines requirements when actions or development may harm a listed species or its habitat. The following steps need to be taken in order to avoid adverse actions on these species:

- Consult with local land use departments or natural resource agencies, state and federal land management agencies to determine where habitat is located
- Avoid areas of threatened, endangered, or sensi-

tive species

- Where impacts are unavoidable, consult the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service on direction on potential mitigation and permits required

Projects on federal lands or those requiring wetland permits are authorized through the federal permitting process.

#### Wetlands

The Clean Water Act-Section 404(b)(1) regulates impacts on wetlands and may require a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reviews projects and issues permits on a case-by-case basis, the following guidelines apply:

- The type and quantity of wetland impacts will determine the level of coordination, permitting, and mitigation
- Projects with minor wetland impacts (less than .1 acre) or those associated with linear transportation projects (including trails) may qualify for a "Nationwide" permit, which is a streamlined, programmatic process
- Projects with larger impacts (larger than .1 acre) or those with impacts associated with seeps, springs, fens, or other special conditions require a more involved "individual" permit or other requirements.



Photo Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

Structures such as this rock weir to improve habitat will require permitting from the Army Corp of Engineers.



## CASE STUDIES: BALANCING RECREATION AND CONSERVATION

### Rio Grande River Corridor, San Luis Valley, Colorado

River rafting in Colorado is a leading industry in outdoor activities. The Rocky Mountains have legendary winter snows and spring run-offs producing desirable conditions on rivers such as rapids. Additionally, Colorado's beautiful scenery makes rafting a popular activity. Like many rivers of the west, the river corridor in the southern San Luis Valley on the Rio Grande Natural Area has competition from recreationists and the needs of wildlife. To protect the numerous birds using the box canyon for habitat and nesting each year, the box canyon is closed to recreationists from January until June 1st each year. The box canyon is a gateway to the Taos Box Gorge for White Water rafting. Golden eagles, Prairie and Peregrine falcons, Swainsons hawks, American white pelicans, Mountain plovers, Western burrowing owls, and the Southwest will flycatcher all call this place home. The rare Swift fox, American river otters, and the Gunnison prairie dog are also found here. Although this does not have enormous recreation pressure, and still remains relatively out-of-the-way, this is a good example of balancing the needs of wildlife with recreation.



Photo Courtesy Loree Harvey

River Otters are a new discovery along the Rio Grande Corridor in the Rio Grande Natural Area.



Photo Courtesy Chris Ortiz

The Rio Grande provides critical habitat for many species as well as recreational river rafting.

### Paradiso del Mare-Gaviota Coastal Trail, Santa Barbara County, California

The Paradiso del Mare project includes a bluff top coastal trail that extends for over 1.1 miles along the Gaviota Coast and is part of a 20 mile long Gaviota Coastal Trail. A cooperating partner, the Bacara Resort and Spa has dedicated 100 acres of the property to a conservation easement which protects the rural character of the property. It provides an example of cooperation between developers and the local community that offer public benefits. The Santa Barbara County Trails Council and the California Coastal Trail Fund are 501c(3) organizations to accept donations for the project. A \$500,000.00 endowment funded by Brooks Street will help with trail construction and public access easements.



Photo Courtesy Santa Barbara County Trails Council



Photo Courtesy Santa Barbara County Trails Council

## 8. PROMOTING RECREATION

This Chapter offers ideas for improving promotion and marketing of recreational opportunities that Hinsdale County and Lake City offers. With outreach, promotion, and partners, Lake City can become a premier recreation destination in Colorado.

### Best Practices For Recreation Promotion

#### Destination Branding

Partners in Hinsdale County and Lake City can work together to promote recreation resources. This area is large in size with many outdoor recreation activities available to the local people and visiting public with a unique sense of place. A brand or logo that captures recreation opportunities for children, families, and many different types of recreation opportunities will help to attract attention to Lake City and Hinsdale County for all it has to offer and give a clear identity to Hinsdale County that visitors can relate to. This can help secure funding and investors to fund new recreational projects and expand programs that currently exist as well as attract visitors who want to experience healthy and rewarding recreation experiences to boost the economy.

#### Take Advantage of Tourism Partnerships and Opportunities to Promote Recreation

Working with the Colorado Tourism Office (CTO) and other recreation partners, communities, and Federal Agencies such as the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management can help inform visitors of available recreation opportunities that have farther reaching effects than one organization may have working alone.

#### Develop Lake City and Hinsdale County Campaigns

Lake City and Hinsdale County can use campaigns to promote the recreational opportunities through the use of film, Youtube, graphics, photographs and artists. These methods can promote the unique qualities of Lake City/Hinsdale County and target visitors from other parts of Colorado, other States and worldwide. Some campaigns can focus on all that is possible to do in one day in Lake City (such as “How Much

Can You Do In A Day In Lake City” or “Is It Possible To Do All That You Love In One Location?”). A good example of one of the most successful campaigns and branding was the “I Love New York” advertisement bringing attention to all the cultural, lodging and restaurant experiences the city had to offer.

#### Take Advantage of Media Partnerships

During special events call major media companies from the front range and recreation partners to give the event more distribution. Continued and repeated media attention will help people remember your event and reinforce your name, product or specialty. There are ways to improve coverage of your event by the media using the following:

- Obtain a media sponsor that will help give your event wall to wall coverage
- Hire a publicity team
- Send press releases
- Host a launch reception and press conference
- Offer to go to media outlets for private interviews
- Invite media to opening or closing receptions
- Be active on social media
- Have professional press releases, photos, and trailers
- Place a media tab on your website with easy access to pages with agendas, photos, videos, press releases, and bios

#### Reach out to spread the word or through public relations

This will help keep initial costs low until the event grows enough to pay for ads. Sometimes this coverage can be more appealing to visitors as it seems as though it is an unbiased opinion. This also helps inform local residents so they support and get involved in the project or event.

#### Use Social Media To Recruit Others

As previously discussed in chapter 2, social media is one of the most powerful tools available to communities and individuals. Sales are made, attention to unique events can be watched, and in the last decade, this media has taken people from obscurity to fame overnight. Interesting and creative filming can bring the same attention to Lake City and Hinsdale County Events.

## 8. PROMOTING RECREATION

### Use Maps

Maps can be used as promotional as well as informational. If completed correctly with interesting photos, features and text, this can be more than a navigation tool and may be a collection and promotion piece.

### Website

Most visitors research their trips to locations online. Websites can be developed that links mapping and identifies all the opportunities. This can be as concise as lists of “What To Do In A Day”, “What To Do In Two Days”, “What To Do In Three Days”, etc. and where to go to do these things. Tour descriptions such as the lists of Heritage Tours on the Scenic Byway and Heritage Tours through downtown can give your Heritage Program a jump start. Encourage different hosts to keep the website up-to-date with the most current information and break out activities in terms of winter, summer, and shoulder seasons.

### Keep Current with Technology and Stay Connected.

Tourism is competitive today due to the amount of information, photos, and Youtube videos showcasing a multitude of opportunities. It is important to keep a current website and use social media to reach out to visitors. Digital outlets like blogs, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and other tools will help to reach a younger generation and build a larger outdoor participant base. Students, interns or social media experts can post in return for school credits and any professional websites should have an expert available to keep the website up-to-date. Local people should be encouraged to share the inside scoop on favorite activities to help travelers feel part of the community.

### Keep a Media Record of Recreation Experiences

Lake City and Hinsdale County can use high quality photos or artists rendition of activities to further promote activities. These photos and art can be circulated through social media to advertise activities to encourage more participation.

### Have Promotional Photo and Art Contests

You know that your activities, settings, trails and amenities are special, so share it! Hire a professional photographer or students specializing in photogra-

phy who can come to your event or area and snap high quality special photos that can entice visitors to spend time in your area. This gives professionals or students an opportunity to showcase their work. These photos can be used on websites or social media to promote your area of event. Pinterest is a great location for large pictures and a great marketing tool. Photo contests encourages visitors to get out and experience what you have to offer and allows your community to use these photos for future promotions. Websites like promosimple.com and wizehive.com can streamline management of online contests from help with entries to voting for favorite photos.

### Use Videos

A short video can go a long way in reaching many new visitors or participants. YouTube is one of the most popular online based video streaming and can help promote your area or event. A professional video that is tied to your website, blog or facebook page can encourage visitors to come and stay,

### Use “Give-Away Items”

Visitors love getting “give-away” items that help capture their experience, this is especially true for kids. Disney makes nearly 4 billion dollars<sup>42</sup> on their merchandise and serves as a reminder to return again. “Give-away” items such as hats and waterbottles help advertise your event and are often associated with memories of the experience.



Photo Courtesy VistaPrint.com

<sup>42</sup> [businessinsider.com](http://businessinsider.com)



## 8. PROMOTING RECREATION

### SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

The following list of recommendations to apply to social media.

- Capture peoples attention and gain their trust
- Keep your customers informed
- Communicate with your customers
- Actively participate with your online visitors
- Tell your success stories
- Maintain many different social media profiles
- Revisit your content frequently, stay on top of posts, and keep your sites relevant
- Link to photos, texts, favorites, etc
- Host “give-aways” or contests
- Update seasonal activities
- Use a hashtag in your posts
- Ask visitors to share



## 8. PROMOTING RECREATION

### SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS (Continued)

- Include community members
- Tuesday ranks as the most effective day for sending emails, so send them on these days
- Integrate your webpages and other accounts
- Share photos and repost others photos and thank them for their contribution
- Use funny photo captions when possible
- Create memorable community experiences

For other tips on Online Community Management. Refer to “Online Community Management for Dummies” by Deborah Ng or attend Social Media Marketing events to help target your key audience to stay on track and optimize your social media techniques. Lightspan Digital has digital marketing media experts that supply media cheat-sheets and ideas to get the most out of social media.



## CASE STUDIES: PROMOTING RECREATION

**COLORADO**  
COME TO LIFE

THINGS TO DO | HOTELS & LODGING | FESTIVALS & EVENTS | TRIP IDEAS | REGIONS & CITIES | SPECIAL OFFERS

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EXPLORE YOUR HOME BASE

**Colorado Vacations: Find Things to Do, Attractions, Places to Visit & More**

Our future is yet to be written. The seconds that pass are ours for the taking. We can turn them into moments that last forever. And it all starts with one choice. Plan your Colorado vacation now. [Plan your Colorado summer vacation now.](#)

**7-Day Family Road Trip**

**4 Ways to Celebrate the National Park Centennial**

**Trip Ideas**  
Get inspired and find things to do on your Colorado vacation.  
Bald eagles soaring between rugged peaks. Meadows of wildflowers dancing in the wind. And sunsets that paint the sky like a canvas. This is a world where wonderful things happen. We just have to be there when they do.  
[See All Trip Ideas](#)

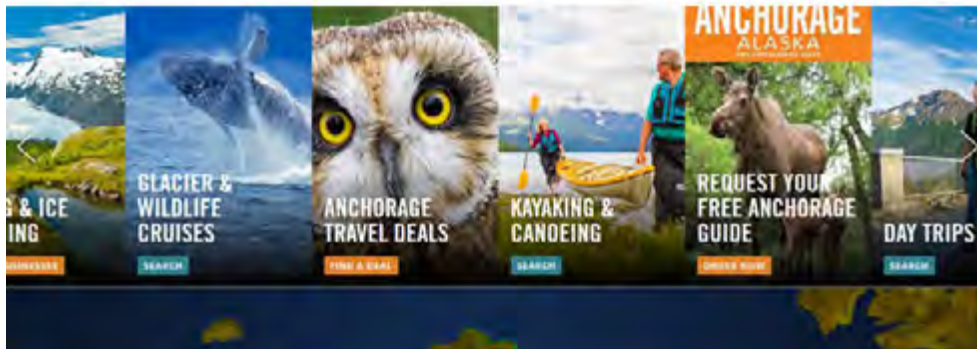
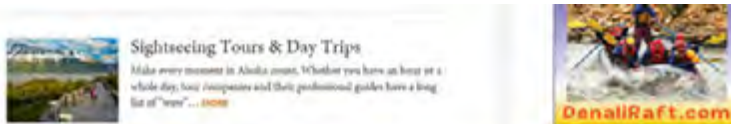
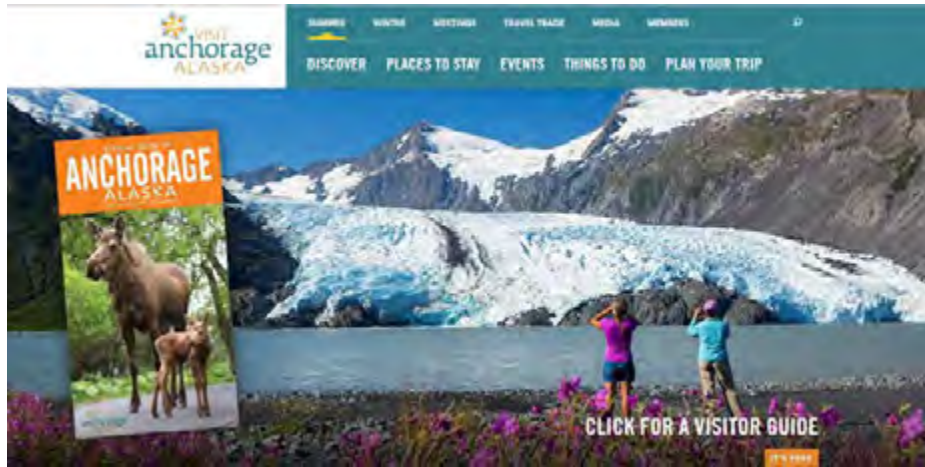
**27 Hot Springs for Serious Soaks**

**99 Gorgeous Places in Colorado**

Websites that offer tips and ideas for adventures in the outdoors can entice visitors to visit and stay longer. This can generate more tourism for the local economy and recreation-oriented businesses.



# CASE STUDIES: PROMOTING RECREATION



Websites that offer categories of events are helpful for visitors to find family events, tours, and outdoor recreation. Websites can be promotional as well as informational. Special offers can be included on websites to encourage participation.



## 9. HOSTING RECREATION

### To Host or Not To Host

The growth in non-traditional race events such as the Tough Mudders, the Spartan Race, or the Color Run have gained in popularity from 2009 to 2013. They overtook half and full marathons combined with more than 4 million participants. While these fun social media driven events are popular, they can present challenges for communities in terms of resource mitigation and cleanup. However, these races have raised millions of dollars for non-profit groups such as wounded warriors. The crowds can drive economic activity, and engage new participants in running and exercised-based activities that improve the overall health of a community.<sup>43</sup>

### Best Practices For Hosting Outdoor Recreation Events

#### Supporting Existing Outdoor Festivals and Events

There are already outdoor events hosted annually in Lake City with an outdoor emphasis. February hosts the Winter Activities Festival and the Ice Fishing Derby. Other events include the Lake San Cristobal Run, San Juan Solstice 50 Mile Run, Rockin' River Beer and Film Festival, OHV Rally, Colorfest Arts and Crafts Festival, the Rubber Duck Race, and the Uncorked Wine and Music Festival. It will be important to recruit new volunteers and utilize existing volunteer organizations to help sponsor events, help with promotions, and lead activities for existing as well as new events.

#### Start Small

Events can seem overwhelming, however, starting small, these can build into a larger venue over time. To begin an event you need a social media announcement and a host location. It is not uncommon to have a small group of people attend (25 or less). The power of social media is the ability to attract those first participants and then spread the word through social media and attract more participants the following year.

### Promote Events Outside Your Area and Recruit Sponsors

Lake City can promote events to other parts of Colorado and on the front range through the use of media, websites, and social media. Partner with front range businesses such as REI, Sports Authority, Cabelas, ect. to promote and even sponsor your event. Many times, these companies can provide demo gear for visitors to try. This increases the chances of success for Lake City's event and boosts sales for the sponsor.

### Build Events Around Recreation Opportunities

Plan activities where there is missing recreation events. Activities for children is always a great way to promote outdoor recreation, healthy lifestyles, and family recreation. Try these:

- Incorporate wintertime activities for kids into adult festivals.
- Have a hunt for footprints along trails to encourage children to get out.
- Plan an unconventional race for both adults and kids such as relay race.

### Appeal to Visitors That Don't Have Interest In Outdoor Recreation

It can be difficult to include all recreationists. However, hosting simultaneous activities can help get all visitors involved. For instance a race or event can also have a festival associated with it. Scavenger hunts that do not require extreme sports events or racing can be popular for older participants and children. Sponsoring events similar to Tuff Mudders for kids but less challenging can allow kids to negotiate obstacles in a safer way.

### Recruit Volunteers

Recruiting volunteers can be work and isn't always easy. Working with groups such as the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, Pathfinders, or school groups can be a way to get kids involved in events. Volunteers usually work hard to pull off events and volunteer their time for more than just the duration of the event. They are usually involved in the planning, setup and breakdown of the event. Communities can offer incentives for volunteers such as free thank you dinner after the event for the hard work of volunteers,

43 <http://www.parksandrecreation.org/2014/September/To-Host-or-Not-to-Host-Nontraditional-Events/>



## 9. HOSTING RECREATION

a special event for kids (such as a day in a makeshift trampoline gym or pizza party). Gift bags and promotional items are a way to entice adults to get involved and this helps businesses get their name on products for marketing during free give-aways.

### Event Promotions

Advertise events early and often to build a constituency to participate in your activity. Promote the event outside as well as inside your area. Encourage your volunteers to use social media to spread the word. Repeat waves of promotions up to the week before the event when you will want to spend time recruiting participants.

### List Potential Outdoor Recreation Events

The following is a list of suggestions for events that

can be sponsored in Lake City or surrounding Hinsdale County:

- Adventure Runs using the Alpine Loop as a venue for extreme mountain runs.
- Mountainbike races
- Winter snow fat tire races
- Observe the night sky festivals
- Outdoor street festivals-similar to the Cirque de Soleil, games, pop up parks, and food events.
- Geocaching
- Music and art festivals
- Film festivals
- Heritage tourism events emphasizing history

## EVENT CHECKLIST

- Choose a venue, date, and time-give yourself at least 2 months or more
- Recruit graphic design help-make your announcement catchy and professional
- Share photos and repost others photos and thank them for their contribution
- Secure donations-look to community organizations or private businesses for donations such as waterbottles, t-shirts, food, drinks, items for kids that can be given away. Keep a list of all in-kind donations and follow up with receipts as needed



## 9. HOSTING RECREATION

### EVENT CHECKLIST (Continued)

- Secure sponsors-ask local and corporate sponsors to assist with events. They usually have the financial, volunteer and media support to launch your event to a larger audience
- Advertise for volunteers-emphasize that volunteers will have fun as well as serve their community. Assign volunteers duties and reasonable shifts (2-3 hours). Have a main point of contact for all volunteers and have a volunteer coordinator
- Initiate advertising-get your event on local calendars, websites, and social media frequently (each week, then 1 week prior to event each day). Post your event throughout town and on flyers
- Collect supplies and stage the event-make sure all supplies are available (tables, chairs, sign up sheets, give away items) for event day. Confirm all food and beverage and drop off locations. Flag event location if needed
- Check in with volunteers frequently during event
- Thank all sponsors, volunteers, participants-follow up with an email thank you or call. Encourage future participation
- Monitor event-follow up to see where improvements can happen, report to your sponsors about the number of people that were reached, success of the event, and the economic impact of the event. This can help encourage sponsors to return and encourage other sponsors to participate



## CASE STUDIES: HOSTING RECREATION



Photo Courtesy Pueblo Nature and Raptor Center

Raptor events such as this one can travel to communities to host demonstrations or participate as part of a larger event.



Photo Courtesy Lantern Festival Boston.com

Night festivals can provide a change of pace and provide kid friendly activities.





## CASE STUDIES: HOSTING RECREATION



Photo Courtesy collfm.co.uk

Themed runs can provide a change of pace and attract youth participants.



Photo Courtesy Extremefielddaysforkids.com



Photo Courtesy Boryeon Mud Festival Korea

Mud festivals can be a great way to engage children and allow them get dirty!



Photo Courtesy Hostkidfriendlydc.com

## 10. FUNDING AND SUSTAINING RECREATION

Funding and sustaining recreation activities, facilities, or events can be difficult. Typically there are many different resources in competition for much needed funds.

### Current Financial Situation

There are many partners in the care of the current recreation resources. Many people are volunteers who care passionately about Hinsdale County and Lake City's recreation resources and spend countless hours maintaining and improving the recreation resources. Additionally the city and county maintains recreation resources on a limited budget. However, to improve or develop recreation opportunities, new funding sources are needed.

Grants and a continual tax base are often difficult to obtain, but are needed as a source of funding to maintain and improve recreation resources. Innovative ideas are needed to fund and sustain future recreation developments.

Currently there are no fees for public land use and very few fees for municipal amenities (such as the Armory). Past funding has been obtained through the grant process, RWEACT, Lake City, Hinsdale County, COGO, USFS, BLM, Federal Highways/Colorado State Scenic Byways and other sources.

### Best Practices For Funding and Sustaining Recreation

Traditional funding sources as well as innovative strategies will help move Hinsdale County and Lake City toward a more comprehensive recreation program.

### Funding Task Force

Successful funding of recreation resources can take a dedicated staff of people who can stay on top of available money and programs. A fundraising task force can be assembled that represents a cross section of the community and recreation constituents. This task force can seek out and secure grants from private donations, foundations, and government entities. This task force can report monthly findings to the Lake City DIRT, RWEACT, or a special recreation task force on available funds and opportunities. A recreation

task force can seek 501c(3) status or work through another non-profit to obtain funds. The recreation task force that is registered as a 501c(3) can have the following benefits:

- Would be exempt from federal taxes
- Allows federal income deductions for donors whomake charitable contributions to the non-profit

A 501c(3) recreation task force would need to obtain at least one third of its revenue from a broad base of public support, individuals, companies or other public charities. They would be responsible for:

- Fundraising campaigns
- Develop special recreation and cultural taxing district
- Brainstorming new funding ideas
- Promote tax incentives for donors
- Pursuing landowners who wish to donate portions of their land to the community

### Special Districts

One way to raise money to support recreation would be to form a special district under Title 32 of the Colorado Revised Statutes that "will serve a public use and will promote the health, safety, prosperity, security, and general welfare of the inhabitants....". This can include all of Hinsdale County or only the area around Lake City. A special district can utilize ways to raise revenues including:

- Issuing debt
- Levying taxes
- Imposing fees and charges

A formation of a district must be approved by the voters within its boundaries.

### Funding Maintenance

A dedicated sales tax or the establishment of a special district can result in a steady flow of money that can be used for maintenance of facilities. Maintenance funds can be difficult to come by and these funding sources are critical. Without this source, local communities would have to cover the costs of this maintenance. Volunteers that specialize in trail maintenance like Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado, can provide support for trails, however, for facilities, obtaining volunteer maintenance can be more difficult.

## 10. FUNDING & SUSTAINING RECREATION

Funding and sustaining recreation activities, facilities, or events can be difficult. Typically there are many different resources in competition for much needed funds.

### Crowd Funding

Crowd funding is a relatively new tool for funding projects and relies upon social media to gather a lot of funds from many people to finance a project or event. Crowd funding is a system in which pledgers receive incentives to give money to support a cause, community event, or project. Crowd funding can be used to increase exposure to an event, and it can increase community interest and ownership into the project. They work well when the projects are clearly defined. Platforms such as Indiegogo, GoFundMe, Kickstarter, or Community Funded are crowdfunding resources that help get projects funded. Citizinvestor is used specifically for municipal government agencies to raise funds for projects. Crowd funding can require time commitments to run the fund raising campaign and to spread the word about events. The crowd funding platforms can handle a lot of the legwork and will typically take a 4-6% fee to raise funds.

### Revenue Generation

Revenue techniques can include:

- Offer benefits to those who purchase a membership (such as hats, t-shirts, gifts at gear shops)
- Provide outfitter and guide opportunities
- Host events that raise money
- Sell items at events

### Become a Non-Profit 501c(3)

Becoming a non-profit organization can help give credibility and operational sustainability to a group seeking support for recreation events.

#### Pros:

- Eligibility for tax deductible donation
- A legal entity separate from founders with a mission larger than the members
- Founders, directors, board members, and employees are not personally liable for debts
- Advantage for receiving grants
- Eligible for tax exemptions

The cons are typically associated with the time and expense of becoming a 501c(3) and applying for and managing grants.

### Corporate Sponsorship

Corporations can serve as sponsors for events especially if the corporate sponsor can provide equipment needed for the event. Corporate sponsors can help build community relations and raise visibility of the event.

### Volunteers

Building a list of volunteers and employing their service on recreation projects can help with the costs of hosting events. Volunteer groups that specialize in different projects can be grouped and utilized for future projects.

### Inspiring Entrepreneurialism

The recreation plan and ideas for growth of outdoor recreation opportunities can inspire private businesses to fill a need in recreation events or activities. A recreation task force can meet and share entrepreneurial ideas with the local residents, public and tourists. Exchange of these ideas can help build new recreation opportunities, guided tours, or better support services for new and existing recreation opportunities. These ideas can be shared through websites and social media to reach many potential and interested partners.

### Information Exchange

It will be important to share information with organizations such as Lake City DIRT, a potential recreation and funding task force, and Federal and State partners about potential investors, grants, and recreation events. This information may be posted quarterly and these ideas and proposals can be shared through websites and social media. This can increase partnerships, potential funding, and support for the recreation event.

### Partnerships

Partnerships will be key in expanding and promoting recreation. Expanding partners beyond Hinsdale County and Lake City can increase visibility of events and attract new volunteers.

## GRANTS AND FUNDING SOURCES FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION

### Recreation Improvements/Community Enhancement Grants

#### **Adolph Coors Foundation**

<http://www.coorsfoundation.org>

This organization provides support for youth development, volunteerism and helping to improve communities for children.

#### **Colorado Department of Transportation/Safe Routes to School Program**

<http://www.coloradodot.info/programs/bikeped/saferoutes>

#### **Colorado Department of Transportation-Signing**

<http://www.coloradodot.info/programs/logos-tods.html>

#### **Colorado Division of Wildlife Fishing is Fun Grant**

<http://wildlife.state.co.us/Fishing/ResourcesTips/FishingIsFunProgram.aspx>

This grant focuses on river access, habitat development and improvements, and fishing improvements.

#### **Colorado Garden Foundation**

<http://www.coloradogardenfoundation.org>

This organization offers grants for horticulture and horticulture related education, and community improvements.

#### **Colorado Gives Day**

<http://www.coloradogives.org/COGIVESDAY>

Colorado Gives Day is an initiative to increase philanthropy in Colorado through online giving and allows your organization to fundraise with the tools they supply.

#### **Colorado Health Foundation**

<http://www.coloradohealth.org/grantmaking.aspx>

This foundation provides support to organizations that ensure access to the key components of healthy living.

#### **Colorado Parks and Recreation Association**

<http://www.cpra-web.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=26>

This grant provides for up to \$500.00 for tree planting and community gardens with a 50% match.

#### **Colorado Physical Activity and Nutrition Program**

<http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CDPHE-PSD/CBON/1251617572559>

<http://activecommunityenvironment.org/>

Active Community Environment Grants supports communities to be more active through community enhancements such as design projects, sidewalks, parks, lighting, and other features.

<http://www.goco.org/grants/apply/conservation-excellence>

This grant is through the USDA Forest Service and the Colorado State Forest Service and supports urban forestry education, technical assistance and research.

#### **Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) Office of Smart Growth Conservation Trust Fund**

<http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/DOLA-Main/CBON/1251591547558>

The Department of Local Affairs gives funding for outdoor recreation master plans, construction of parks, trails, river walks, open space, or recreation facilities.

#### **El Pomar Foundation**

<http://www.elpomar.org/>

El Pomar provides grants for arts, culture, education, and health and human services projects.

#### **Gates Family Foundation Grants**

<http://www.gatesfamilyfoundation.org/>

This grant focuses on recreation, parks, and conservation focused on protecting natural areas from development, youth education in recreation, and environmental education. Grants awarded from \$25,000-\$750,000.

#### **Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO)**

<http://www.goco.org>

Colorado cities, counties, parks and recreation districts are eligible for GOCO grants to acquire, expand, and improve parks, recreation amenities, and for environmental education.

<http://www.goco.org/grants/apply/local-government-and-mini-grants/lpor-application>

GOCO Park and Outdoor Recreation grants can be awarded \$350,000. Grants are offered

## GRANTS AND FUNDING SOURCES FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION

twice a year.

<http://www.goco.org/grants/apply/local-government-and-mini-grants>

Mini grants for smaller projects costing \$60,000 or less are offered two times a year.

<http://www.goco.org/grants/apply/open-space>

GOCO Open Space grants apply to land along river corridors, urban parcels, agricultural lands and for wildlife habitat.

<http://www.goco.org/grants/apply/conservation-excellence>

GOCO Conservation Excellence grant program provides funding for conservation planning, staff, training, open space, public access, education and activities associated with land conservation.

<http://www.goco.org/inspire>

GOCO is offering between \$1 and \$5 million in grants for communities that encourage kids to have more outdoor experiences. The program focuses on creating outdoor destinations like parks, improving access to outdoor location through new or improved trails, and expanding existing youth programs that introduce kids to the great outdoors.

<http://www.goco.org/grants/apply/school-yard-initiative>

GOCO School Yard Initiative grants support schools and local governments in constructing outdoor spaces where kids have frequent opportunities for unstructured play and outdoor learning. All school yards must be designed, in part, by the student population to ensure the components constructed are the most appealing and beneficial to the users they will serve.

<http://www.goco.org/grants/apply/project-initiative-grants>

GOCO Project Initiative grants may range from conservation of an urban parcel to a ranch that encompasses tens of thousands of acres, but all must present a compelling urgency, involve significant size and/or cost, and be accessible and/or visible to the

public. The minimum request for GOCO funding of these projects is \$1 million. Multiple-parcel or phased projects may be considered but will be limited with regard to substitutions of properties and extensions of grants.

<http://www.goco.org/grants/apply/connect-initiative-grants>

GOCO Connect Initiative will invest \$30 million over the next five years to increase access to the outdoors in communities across the state through the Connect Initiative. The initiative will focus on connecting existing trail gaps, constructing new, high demand trail systems, and providing better walkable and bikeable access for youth and families to existing outdoor recreation opportunities. This grant focuses on non-motorized trails.

For a complete listing of GOCO grants go to:

<http://www.goco.org/grants>

### **Kaboom**

<http://www.kaboom.org>

This organization offers a series of grants for playgrounds. This includes Build It, Build It Yourself, and Creative Play.

### **Keen Outdoor Grants**

[http://www.cybergrants.com/pls/cybergrants/quiz.display\\_question?x\\_qm\\_id=4494&x\\_quiz\\_id=5628&x\\_order\\_by=1](http://www.cybergrants.com/pls/cybergrants/quiz.display_question?x_qm_id=4494&x_quiz_id=5628&x_order_by=1)

Keen shoes introduced grants to support organizations, projects and individuals that are inspiring responsible outdoor participation and building strong communities. Grants of \$100,000 are available.

### **Live Well Colorado**

<http://livewellcolorado.org/healthy-communities>

Live Well community investment strategy funds community coalitions working on healthy eating and active living strategies and providing technical assistance and opportunities for shared learning and collaboration. In 2013, LiveWell Colorado awarded \$2.5 million to 24 communities state-wide.

### **National Endowment for the Arts**

<http://www.arts.gov>

The Endowment supports visual, literary, design, and performing arts.



## GRANTS AND FUNDING SOURCES FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION

### The North Face Explore Fund

<http://www.explorefund.org/>

The Explore Fund provides funding support to organizations that encourage youth outdoor participation, inspiration to explore, increasing access to close to home and backcountry recreation opportunities, and engaging a diverse audience with the outdoors.

### Patagonia

<http://www.patagonia.com/us/patagonia.go?assetid=2942>

Patagonia supports grassroots organizations to preserve and protect the environment. An organization must have a 501c(3) status or comparable fiscal sponsor to apply.

### People For Bikes Community Grant Program

<http://www.peopleforbikes.org/pages/applynow>

This grant is to provide bicycling opportunities in communities.

### Red Bull

[http://www.redbull.com/cs/Satellite/en\\_AU/Article/Red-Bull-Under-My-Wing-021242786445765](http://www.redbull.com/cs/Satellite/en_AU/Article/Red-Bull-Under-My-Wing-021242786445765)

Red Bull supports BMX opportunities, but may become a supporter of other sports in the future.

### REI Foundation

<http://www.rei.com/stewardship/community/non-profit-partnerships-and-grants.html>

Your non-profit can partner with a local REI store and then be eligible for future grants.

### Robert Wood Johnson Foundation New Connections

<http://www.rwjf-newconnections.org/apply-for-grant>

This foundation supports programs such as childhood obesity, human capital, pioneer, public health, quality/equality and vulnerable populations.

### The Quick Foundation

<http://www.quickfoundation.org/>

The Edmund T. and Eleanor Quick Foundation is a private foundation that makes grants to smaller organizations that make a big impact. Grants such as historic preservation, education, elder care and services, as well as religious organizations, music education, and public relations. They have given over \$750,000

to over 100 different organizations in Colorado.

### Tony Hawk Foundation Skate Park Grants

<http://tonyhawkfoundation.org/skatepark-grants/apply>

This organization promotes high quality skate parks in low income areas.

### William T. Grant Foundation

<http://www.wtgrantfoundation.org>

This organization supports research to improve the lives of young people

### Whole Foods

<http://www.wholefoodsmarket.com/mission-values/caring-communities/community-giving>

### Trails Funding

#### Bell Built Grant

<http://www.lmba.com/grants/bell-built>

This grant funds technical assistance for mountain bike facilities.

### Colorado State Recreational Trails Grant

<http://www.parks.state.co.us/Trails/Grants/Pages/Grants.aspx>

This grant supports trail planning and support.

### Federal Highway Administration Recreation Trails Program

[http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational\\_trails/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/)

This program supports States to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized trails.

### Colorado State Trails Program OHV Grants

<http://www.parks.state.co.us/>

Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) grants for construction, maintenance, and operations of OHV trails.

### Federal Transit Administration-Transit In Parks Program

[http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants/13094\\_6106.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants/13094_6106.html)

This program provides funding for alternative transportation systems, such as shuttle buses, rail connections, and bicycle trails.

## GRANTS AND FUNDING SOURCES FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION

### International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA)

<http://www.imba.com/resources/grants>

This grant provides help with improving mountain biking opportunities.

### Kodak American Greenways Awards Program

<http://www.rei.com/stewardship/community/non-profit-partnerships-and-grants.html>

### Map-21 Find It, Fund It!

<http://www.advocacyadvance.org/MAP21/finditfundit#>

This organization finds federal funding sources for transportation oriented projects.

### Interpretation and Marketing Funding Sources

#### Colorado Tourism Office (CTO) Heritage Tourism Funding

<http://www.Colorado.com/Industry-partners>

This grant funds heritage tourism projects in Colorado that build on the Strategic Plan for Colorado Heritage

Tourism Enhancement.

### CTO Marketing Matching Grant Program

<http://www.colorado.com/marketing-matching-grant-program>

The Colorado Tourism Office provides tourism industry assistance and awards grants up to \$25,000 to promote the state or region.

### State Historical Fund

<http://www.historycolorado.org/grants/apply-funding>

This fund can provide assistance for educational programming, interpretive signs, and media along trails.

For the latest listing of grantors for the State of Colorado, contact the Community Resource Center at:

<http://www.crcamerica.org>

This resource center has a comprehensive resource guide for technical assistance, foundations and trusts, national foundations, corporations and government programs that provide funding.




**EXPLORE FUND**  
 HELPING KIDS DISCOVER NATURE'S PLAYGROUND.

Photo Courtesy Northface.com



## CASE STUDIES: GRANTS AND FUNDING SOURCES FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION

### Crowd Funding: Delaware State Parks

This project aimed to raise \$30,000.00 toward building and providing accessible trails, ramps and pads to the Delaware Seashore and Fenwick Island State Parks. The project proposes the installation of Mobi-Mats. Mobi-Mats are a lightweight, portable roll-out pathway that will provide people with disabilities access to the beach. The ADA-compliant mats create traction over sand and are a safe and effective beach access route for individuals of all levels of mobility as well as those with visual impairments. This successful campaign raised \$4,000.00 of the funds needed to complete this project with over 70 donors.

The screenshot shows the Fund Your Park website interface. At the top left is the logo for the National Recreation and Park Association's 'Fund Your Park' campaign. Navigation links for 'Home', 'Get Started', 'Info', and 'Sign in' are on the right. A blue banner below the logo reads 'Welcome to Fund Your Park™, the only crowdfunding site dedicated to Parks and Recreation'. The main content area features the title 'Providing Accessibility to Beach Visitors of All Abilities' by Delaware State Parks, with an impact area of 'Social Equity' and a region of 'Northeast'. A descriptive paragraph states: 'We're working to provide inclusive access to the state of Delaware's pristine ocean beaches for disabled visitors.' Below this, a progress bar shows '\$4,021' raised out of '\$30,000', with '70' donors and '0' days remaining. A navigation bar at the bottom of the page includes buttons for 'Campaign', 'Team', 'Donors (70)', and 'Updates (0)'. To the right of the text is a photo of a blue Mobi-Mat pathway on a beach with people walking on it.

About this project.





## CASE STUDIES: GRANTS AND FUNDING SOURCES FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION

### Crowd Funding: Fort Tuthill Bike Park

In 2015, the Flagstaff Biking Organization and Coconino County Parks and Recreation worked together to plan, build, and fund the Fort Tuthill County Bike Park. The free, state-of-art, fully-featured bike park sits on seven acres and offers beginner, intermediate, and advanced flow trails, a tot track, pump track, dirt jumps, and more. This crowd funded project raised more than \$6,500.00 toward their goal and offered t-shirts and stickers as part of the incentive to give to the project.

**Fund YOUR PARK**  
 Home Get Started Info Sign in

Welcome to Fund Your Park™, the only crowdfunding site dedicated to Parks and Recreation

### Fort Tuthill Bike Park

by [Coconino County Parks and Recreation](#)  
 Impact Area: Conservation, Health and Wellness, Social Equity  
 Region: West

Help us build Ft. Tuthill's new bike park, open to all skill levels, and includes flow trails, pump track, tot track, and more.

**\$6,673** **76** **0**  
RAISED OUT OF \$20,000 DONORS DAYS REMAINING

Campaign Team Donors (76) Updates (5)

About this project.

New! Give at least \$100 to get an exclusive Ft Tuthill Bike Park T-Shirt (example below).



Like Share 1,050 people like this

TIME REMAINING

days hours min sec  
 00 00 00 00

\$6,673 raised





## CASE STUDIES: GRANTS AND FUNDING SOURCES FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION

### Partnering: Clarksville Tennessee Parks and Recreation

Clarksville Tennessee began its outdoor program from the ground up. They had no staff, no funding, and no facilities. Volunteers and partners included the Wounded Warriors, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), the United State Olympic Committee-Paralympic Division, the Clarksville Montgomery County School System, Austin Peay State University, the Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency and Progressive Directions, and the employment agency for those with physical and cognitive disabilities. Clarksville secured funding, equipment, and the ability to hire a full time aquatics director to grow the adaptive and therapeutic program. Since the program began, the Clarksville Tennessee Parks and Recreation development project now benefits all ages and abilities and offers a wide variety of recreational facilities, parks, pools, indoor aquatic centers, and splash pads for the communi-



Photos Courtesy Discoverclarkville.com

ty.



Photos Courtesy Discoverclarkville.com



Doggie Pool Parties can encourage people to participate who may not necessarily engage in outdoor recreation opportunities, and provide economic benefits to the community.



# FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Findings

Lake City has a unique niche in outdoor recreation. They provide more diverse activities (and potential new activities) than most communities in Colorado. What makes this area so special is the ability to provide nearly all the recreation activities within close proximity to each other, a large public land base, abundant trails, and historic features. There are opportunities for heritage tourism, right next to ice and rock climbing opportunities. There are wilderness and mountaineering opportunities very close to Lake City and trails intersect and provide links to other activities around town. Additionally, there is a large visitor base that participates in both motorized and non-motorized opportunities. These abundant opportunities can present challenges for the community and visitors. If these activities are not planned or implemented well, there can be user conflicts due to the diversity of uses and proximity to each other.

There are gaps that have been discussed throughout this plan, however, these gaps can be closed with careful and creative planning and implementation.

These gaps include:

- Lack of trail connections
- Lack of support services
- Needs for additional activities to encourage more outdoor participation
- Needs for community facilities
- Needs for recreational facilities to hold events
- More outdoor opportunities for children
- Funding for maintenance and new developments

Funding from specific sources such as grants can drive recreation development projects.

Additionally, local people of Hinsdale County and Lake City share different views about which recreation priorities should be funded and how.

### We Hear You

Based upon the research and visitor surveys, constituents are requesting:

- One location to find all information
- Restaurants and facilities during shoulder seasons/more visitor services
- More connectivity for all trails
- More non-motorized use areas
- More motorized use areas

- The ability ofr OHV's to access facilities in downtown Lake City
- A loop around the Alpine Loop Scenic Byway for OHV's
- More development of the Lake City Ski Area
- New community pool/pavilion
- Improved park uses
- Safety
- Economic growth and diversity
- Affordable housing for local industry workers/such as wait staff
- Ability to attract year-round visitors
- Need for improvements and accessibility at Lake San Cristobal
- Improved trailheads and parking opportunities

### Recommendations

#### *Priorities for Lake City*

The priorities for funding Lake City and Hinsdale County Recreation projects will be dependent the ability to maintain these projects or programs over the long term through funding sources. Grants awarded or partners that contribute to particular projects will cause some projects to have priority and projects should be adaptive to these circumstances. However, thid chapter contains a general list of priority activities and recreation projects that are listed in order of importance for Lake City and Hinsdale County based upon constituents input to the Lake City Recreation Plan over the last 12 months:

1. Ski Area Improvements
2. Swimming Pool
3. More Festivals/Tours
4. Connect Non-Motorized Trails (Lake-To-Lake)
5. ATV Loop
6. Road Improvements
7. Better Communications/Information Availability
8. More Outdoor Activities For Kids
9. More Lodging and Restaurant Availability Year Round
10. School Gym
11. More Opportunities At Lake San Cristobal
12. More Parking At Trailheads
13. Accessibility
14. Heritage Tourism
15. Ongoing Marketing



## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Priority 1-Ski Area Improvements

The Lake City Ski Area has one of the few remaining tow-bar lifts in the State of Colorado-called the Poma Lift. This lift may be eligible for State Historic Preservation listing. Although many respondents loved their small ski hill, they felt that the ski area could benefit from improvements. The ski area currently serves residents and visitors of Lake City and is the training location for the Lake City Ski Team. During the summer months the ski area has a frisbee golf course and hosts mountain biking. Above the ski area is an access road and a potential connection to the Lake-to-Lake Trail (though not many people can

identify this due to it's unmarked location). The ski area uses the road above the ski area as a drop-off location for more extreme skiing with slopes of over 30% on favorable snow days. However, this slope is prone to avalanches. The base of the ski area has private property that extends into skiable terrain. Future efforts should be to aquire an easement across this property or if an opportunity is presented, to purchase these properties to expand the ski area. Future projects for the Lake City Ski Area include repairs to the upper bullhead pole, need for powerpole relocation, a well for water resources for possible snow making, expanded parking, snow cat

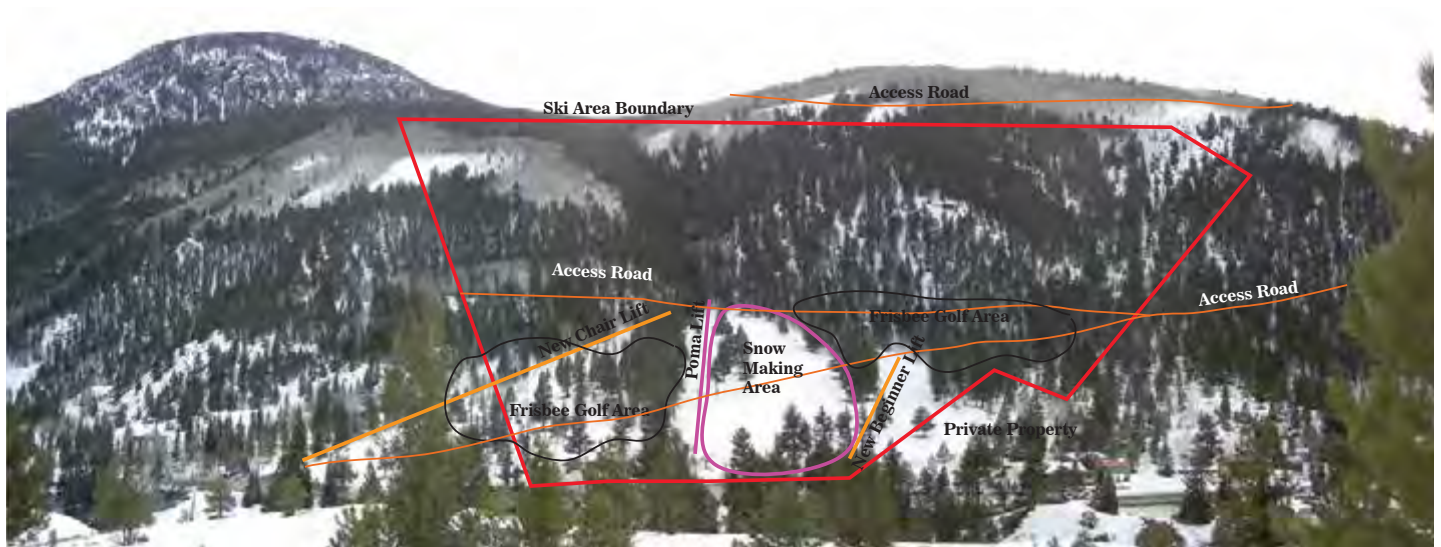


Photo Simulation Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

Simulation of the Lake City Ski Area showing the ski area boundary, current uses and proposed new uses.

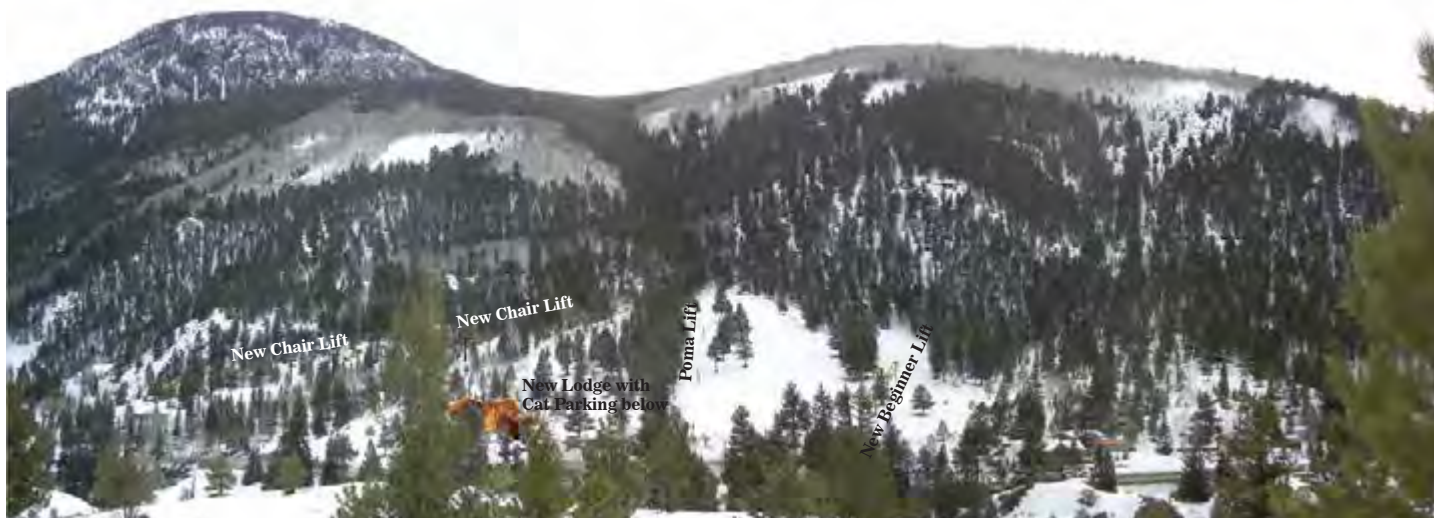


Photo Simulation Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

Simulation of the Lake City Ski Area showing the ski area boundary, current uses and proposed new uses.



## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

storage, and a lodge. Funding will be critical to keep up with maintenance and improvements. Many of the local people who were interviewed during the surveys were concerned that the ski area would be shut down due to lack of funding. There is potential for the ski area to host summer events such as zip lines, ropes courses, downhill mountain biking, and expanded hiking trails.

### *Priority 2- Swimming Pool*

There has been numerous requests for a swimming pool during the survey process. When interviewing local residents and school children this was one of the top requests and an indication that the local residents need for more diverse recreation activities. This is especially evident during the shoulder seasons and during long winters when weather incliment weather prevents outdoor activities. There are many potential locations throughout the city for a new facility that would support a pool. There is room at Memorial Park and an available open lot toward the north end of town that would supply ample room for a swimming pool or pavilion. This does not preclude other appropriate locations for a swimming pool if the opportunity is presented. However, recreation facilities are better

utilized if located in an area that allows residents access by foot, bike, as well as vehicles and closer to town. Look to secure available locations when presented.

### *Priority 3-More Festivals*

For constituents that preferred “in-town” recreation, this was one of the most common responses. Recreationists that preferred to use public lands for their outdoor activities also expressed interest in more festivals. This was especially true of parents with kids. Many constituents wanted to see more kid friendly festivals-such as hosting a kid friendly festival in addition to the Uncorked Festival. The chapter on promoting and hosting recreation events has ideas for other festivals.

### *Priority 4-Connect Non-Motorized Trails (Such As Lake-To-Lake)*

Providing connecting trails was identified by non-motorized trail users. Many constituents identified a need to connect the Lake-To-Lake Trail from Lake San Cristobal, the Waterdog Trail, and the Downtown Lake Fork Trail System. In addition, there are opportunities to connect the loop at Pete’s Swamp



Memorial park conceptual sketch of swimming pool and other potential uses.

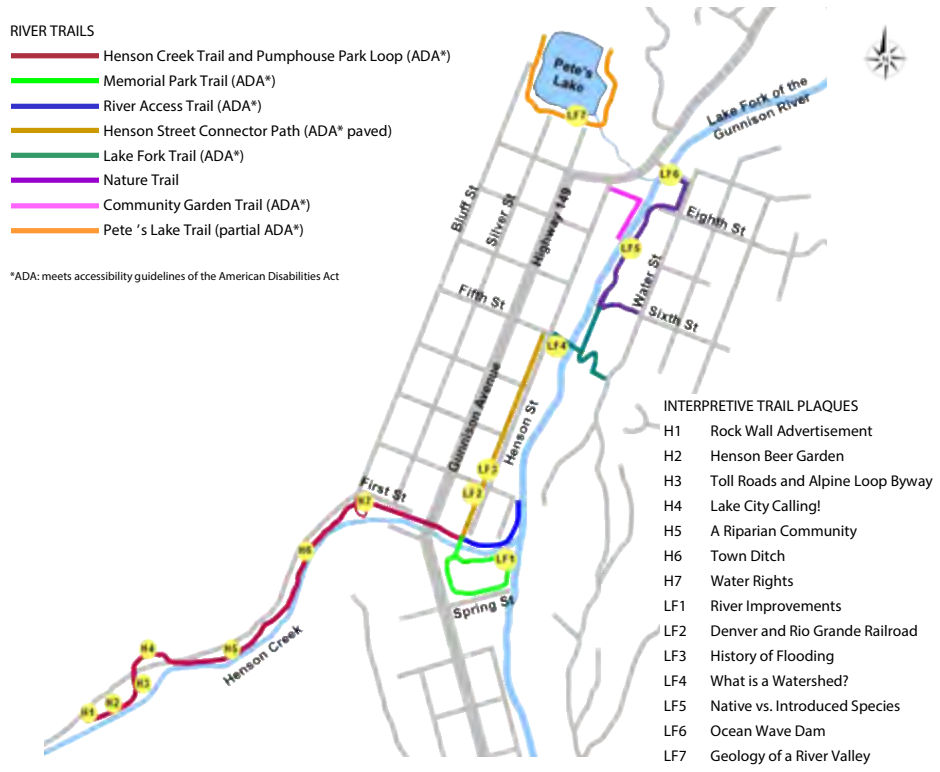
Photo and Simulation Courtesy Google Earth and Kelly Ortiz

# FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



Photo and Simulation Courtesy Google Earth and Kelly Ortiz

## Locations of current recreation trails, parks and proposed new locations for future opportunities.



Graphics Provided Courtesy Camille Richards and The Lake City River Recreation Corridor

Trail connectivity can be marketed and promoted on the website and through social media to bring new visitors to the area. Trails that connect to a larger trail system, are ADA accessible, provide amenities along the way, and allow the trail user to experience different environments, scenery, places to stop and rest or eat, the ability to get from location to another safely, and offer a variety of facilities are attractive to visitors and further promote wellness.

## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

and provide interpretive features along this trail. On the north end of Lake City, Highway 149 is a barrier to accessing Pete's Swamp from the Hensen Creek Trail because this section of Highway 149 can be an acceleration/deceleration point for traffic. This section of the highway needs a safe crossing for trail users accessing either trail. An underpass or overpass will be the safest crossing, however these can be expensive to build. Crossing lines with yellow flashing lights on the road can serve as a crossing, however, not all traffic respect these crossings making this a more dangerous alternative. However, signing and stop lights can help hikers and bikers cross the highway safely.



Photos Courtesy HillsboroughCounty.org

The acquisition of private property along the river will help secure a connection from Hensen Creek Trail to the Waterdog Trail and onto other trails on the BLM and Forest Service. Trail signs at key locations identifying where visitors are and opportunities to ride other trails connecting from their location would also improve the trail experience.

### *Priority 5-ATV-Loop*

This subject was one of the most controversial subjects when the surveys were conducted. Constituents had strong opinions for both allowing OHV's access to downtown and constituents who were against OHV access in town. Many constituents felt that by allowing OHV's access, there would be a large economic boost. However, constituents against allowing OHV's the ability to ride through town felt that OHV's would not have a large effect on the downtown economics and felt that there would be very little control over the excessive use of OHV's riding through town and the pollution and noise associated with them.

These concerns from both sides are valid, however, in order for Lake City to make a determination regarding the use of OHV's, it is important to take into consideration the following:

1. Is Hinsdale County, Lake City, US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management providing enough OHV opportunities for loop trails to support OHV riders.
2. Do OHV riders have appropriate access to support facilities such as restaurants and lodging.
2. A further economic analysis of OHV riders, ages, and how they spend money in Lake City will be helpful in future decisions.
3. Establish limits, rules and conduct for OHV riders. These would be similar to the rules that apply to standard vehicles on roads.

Further information on the economic impacts are available at: <http://www.slideshare.net/COHVCO/final-ohv-econstudies130802>

This recreation plan did find some gaps that can be improved upon. The Alpine Loop Scenic Byway is very popular with OHV riders. However, once OHV's have traveled the Alpine Loop from one end to the other, they need to turn around and backtrack even though they may be less than a mile from their camp or original starting point. Currently there is no access that allows the Alpine Loop to connect all the way around for people using OHV's. Additionally, there is a Colorado State Law (Title 33-14.5-108-Off-highway vehicle operation prohibited on streets, roads, and highways.) that prevents OHV's from traveling on a public roads. One respondent to the survey said "I would love to travel all the way around the Alpine Loop and connect back to my starting point, but if I choose to do this, I know I will be breaking the law". "I would be willing to purchase a permit or a tag that allows me to travel through town". (*Hunter from Oklahoma interviewed near Engineer Pass*). Given the demand for OHV use, it will be important to examine and explore opportunities to give OHV's the ability to ride connecting trails. This can be achieved by utilizing current trails, providing multiple use on existing trails, and building new trails that avoid public roads. There may be opportunities near the ice climbing area to provide a connecting trail to the alpine loop. This would benefit OHV, mountain bikers, and all trail users.



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Potential uses for downtown park.

Photo and Simulation Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

### ***Priority 6-Road Improvements***

Quality roads can provide key access to the surrounding recreation activities, especially in the backcountry. However they can also be harmful to the environment if not maintained properly. Roads can cause impacts to water resources but putting sediment into water bodies, and poorly placed roads can cause problems for wildlife, scenery, and heritage resources. Poorly maintained roads also deter people from participating in activities and cause visitors to create new roads around damaged portions of roads which can cause further resource damage. There may be a need to identify problem roads for repairs, relocation, or closures. It will be important for Hinsdale County and Lake City to work with State and Federal Agencies to make sure roads are maintained to standard to provide quality recreation experiences.

### ***Priority 7-Better Communications/Information Availability/Signage***

As discussed in previous chapters, the use of websites and social media will be critical to reaching out to younger recreationists. This strategy mixed with the use of partners and volunteers can help engage younger audiences in outdoor recreation.

### ***Priority 8-More Outdoor Activities For Kids***

The outdoor activities identified range from events and activities for kids to additional environmental education activities. Providing additional outdoor recreation for kids will be important for recruiting and engaging new outdoor enthusiasts

During the last Winter Festival, many survey respondents identified a need to involve more kids in the activities. This can be accomplished by providing kids races (by age group) for snowshoeing and other competitive sports at the festival. Incorporating kids events into other festivals that take place in Lake City would attract more families to these events. In fact, some of the respondents at the Winter Festival indicated a desire to bring their children back with them next year in hopes that kids events will be incorporated.

The implementation of “night sky” activities are a great way to incorporate children into festivals as do pop-up parks that engage kids to play games. See the Hosting Recreation Events chapter for additional outdoor competitions for kids. Just as large parcels of federal lands can provide opportunities, city parks can be engaging and offer different opportunities to



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explore and have fun. Always look for fun ways to spin off childrens activities from adult activities. It is important to have a mix of activities available during festivals and in town. Downtown Lake City has available parks that can host temporary or permanent new activities to keep kids engaged.

Environmental education activities can be held at any time of the year and can be completed with the help of larger federal agencies and partners. These can take place in conjunction with other outdoor activities or as separate activities. These activities can be part of a larger school curriculum or weekend activities. Many federal agencies have programs in place for outdoor education, but new opportunities can be designed and implemented.

### *Priority 9-More Lodging and Restaurants/Availability of Support Services Year-round*

Not all constituents have the same priorities, but many of them expressed interest in stopping and staying in Lake City longer to see what the area had to offer. Even if visitors were staying in Lake City, they felt they would like more time to explore the area. Any programs that can help delay a visitors departure or special programs that entice visitors to spend an extra day or two, goes a long way in contributing to the economic sustainability of the area. This is particularly important during the shoulder seasons such as spring and fall. Typically, businesses do not stay open if there is limited or no customer base. However, festivals, programs, activities that are strategically planned at the end or beginning of these seasons, will encourage businesses, such as restaurants and lodging, to stay open for additional days. For instance, extending the Uncorked Wine Festival by another day or planning an additional festival the weekend following or in the spring can encourage businesses to maintain services for slightly longer than they normally would. While restaurants can do a number of promotions to increase business such as happy hours, coupons, specials, celebrations for Mother's day, Valentine's day, New Year's Eve, wine and beer tasting, and contests, encouraging a restaurant to extend their season is a delicate balance between recreation programing and business economics. Recreation expansion and success depend on the local support services and the local

support services depend on numbers of visitors who need their lodging and food. These two services are interdependent on each other. The recreation services are only as good as the support services that take care of visitors once they have finished with their recreation activity. If the services are not available, then visitors who want to participate in an activity in Lake City, will find other communities to provide lodging and restaurants for them. Many constituents who responded to the surveys identified that they were staying in other locations due to lack of services. This was especially apparent during the Winter Festival in February.

Business owners who responded to the survey indicated a lack of affordable housing for industry workers. Economic plans that include affordable housing for workers is key to supporting the lodging and restaurant industry that depends upon lower wage workers. It is important to mention that as recreation opportunities grow, there is a potential for property values to rise and then begin to make the community unaffordable for the local residents. This identifies the need for careful consideration and planning for increased recreation opportunities, associated services, and economic growth that will happen simultaneously.

During the winter surveys, many constituents identified their desire to have more restaurant options during their stay. Many ice climbers camped due to shortage of lodging. One of the respondents of the survey said "I wish there were more places to get a good cup of coffee and a bite to eat other than the local gas station". They also expressed that they would probably attend the Ouray Ice Climbing Festival the following year due to the availability of services such as restaurants and lodging.

### *Priority 10-New School Gymnasium*

The availability of a facility to host school sports has been an ongoing issue. Many local respondents to the survey identified a need to have a field or gymnasium available to school kids. Currently, there is no facility that allows the local school to host games to visiting schools. The Armory has been used in the past for practices, and kids that attend the Lake City School travel long distances to play competitive sports due to the lack of a facility. This should be

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considered when planning new activities. Additionally this gymnasium should be part of the larger community recreation program that is able to host a variety of activities from intramural sports for the community and hosting other schools to attend events in Lake City. Intramural sports promotes wellness and community through the sharing of resources.

### *Priority 11-Increase Opportunities at Lake San Cristobal*

Lake San Cristobal is a gem for Hinsdale County and Lake City and often goes un-utilized or under-utilized. This Lake has tremendous potential for increased recreation use. Constituents who were interviewed near Lake San Cristobal and within Lake City and Hinsdale County identified a need for opportunities around Lake San Cristobal. Constituents identified the desire for activities such as paddleboards, kayaks, canoes, and other watersports and the ability to rent this type of gear. One of the most important developments that was identified was the need for accessibility. Access for people with impairments can be better addressed by providing a safe swimming area with accessible entries to the water and fishing piers in different locations to take advantage of fishing opportunities. The Colorado Division of Wildlife typically helps fund projects that improves access for fishing through partnering. The road that goes around the Lake can be dangerous for recreationists walking or on a bicycle from traffic on the dirt road. There are opportunities for a trail along the road and to have this trail be part of a larger network of trails connecting to the Lake City River Recreation Corridor and downtown Lake City. This area also lends itself to interpretation and education given the geologic features of the lake.

### *Priority 12-More Parking at Trailheads*

Many constituents who were surveyed indicated a need for more parking at trailheads. They indicated frustration with not being able to find parking at a trailhead unless they arrived early enough in the morning. This was especially true for trailheads leading to fourteeners. In some cases visitors felt parking a vehicle was not safe along dirt roads due to traffic volume and steep shoulders and wanted to see improvements. This would require Hinsdale County working with the BLM Gunnison Field Office or the Gunnison National Forest to improve access possibly through

the grant process or volunteers.

### *Priority 13-Accessibility*

Accessibility along trails as well as other recreation activities was mentioned as a priority. Whenever any new developments are planned, accessibility should be taken into consideration as much as possible. Many constituents felt that providing accessibility at Lake San Cristobal was important, and others felt that accessibility along all downtown trails was a priority. Additionally, all future constructed facilities should be accessible. This includes sidewalks, play structures in parks, benches, picnic tables, restrooms, and paths to these features.

### *Priority 14-Heritage Tourism*

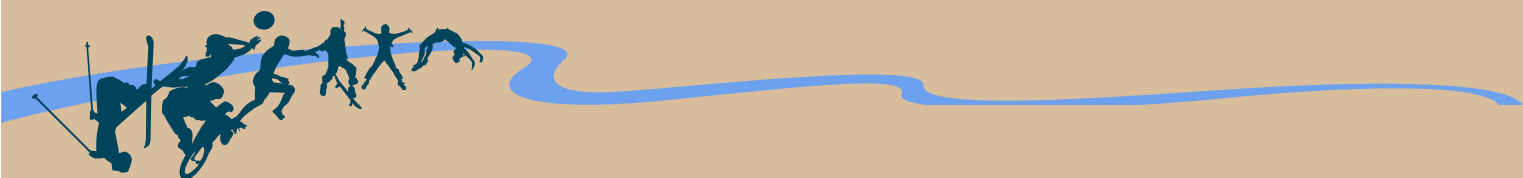
Lake City and the surrounding Hinsdale County Area has great potential for Heritage Tourism. Heritage Tourism can be promoted and developed simultaneously with other priorities. Visitors are always looking for new and exciting adventures and opportunities and many visitors are asking for more information on the historic features around Lake City. Tours of heritage areas can be as simple as providing a way-finding app challenge for younger visitors to identify a location and the history of events, to guided tours that tie the history of the area together, to re-enactments of events at different times of the year,

### *Priority 15-Marketing*

Marketing is a must and should be ongoing and completed simultaneously with all projects events and activities. Marketing directors and a good team will find creative ways to promote your next event. Events can be as small as craft fairs, as large as trail building or construction and events sponsored by large corporations. All your events can succeed with some creative promotions and marketing. This is especially true when working with high profile partners. Marketing will help your event get on the map and stay on the map if done right. Finding Lake City's niche and continuing to promote all the activities that fit within this niche will build a strong visitor base. These visitors will further your marketing by spreading the word when they are having fun participating in your event. Pictures go a long way on the internet and Youtube provides instant promotion-let your community event be the next overnight sensation!



# APPENDIX





## VISITOR SURVEY RESULTS

### Visitor Participation

A public outreach was conducted in 2016 and the winter of 2016. These surveys were conducted on the ground during local festivals, activities and at local parks and places of business. The majority of the surveys conducted were completed using face to face interviews on site, during events or recreation activities. This process provided more quality in the survey responses. Most of the constituents that were interviewed would elaborate on their answers and talk about the details of why they answered the question in the way they did. Constituents also shared their experiences with their favorite recreation locations from around Colorado and the country. They talked about the reasons they liked a particular location and what Lake City and Hinsdale County could do to provide quality experiences. They also took the opportunity to share more of their opinions about what recreation activities they would like to see or what needed improvements. Respondents also identified the recreation activities that they participate in on a regular basis. The following is a complete list of all the activities that the survey respondents reported participating in. This is in addition to the top 16 activities as discussed on page 12 in Chapter 2.

- Time With Family
- Walking
- Horseback Riding
- Zumba/Exercise Class
- Waterskiin
- Shooting
- Ice Skating
- Dirtbiking
- Snowshoeing
- Snowmobiling
- Road Biking
- Back-country Skiing
- Trail Running-Running
- Golf
- Visiting Museums
- Visiting Beaches

### Visitor Demographics

The public outreach that was conducted in 2015 and 2016 identified visitors from all over Colorado, the United States and the world. The Colorado residents

were primarily from Hinsdale County and Lake City, however many respondents reported residing in Denver, Colorado Springs, and other locations on the front range of Colorado. Some visitors were from Crested Butte, Gunnison, and areas near Grand Junction. There were a number of residents of California, Texas, Iowa Oklahoma, and New York. The California and Texas residents were traveling along the SilverThread Scenic Byway, and the visitors from Oklahoma and Iowa were hunters. The residents of New York came to the Lake City Ice Climbing Competition looking for a different experience.

### Visitor Preferences

Visitors shared their favorite locations from other locations around the country and what they liked best about what they had to offer. A couple traveling along the SilverThread Scenic Byway that were interviewed at North Clear Creek Falls Overlook commented that they loved the scenery along the SilverThread Scenic Byway, but would love to know more about what to do at some of the locations along the Byway other than just get out of the car and read an interpretive sign. They suggested that the website in Hinsdale County or Lake City could offer a page that talks about “What To Do In A Day” or “What To do In Two Days”. Additionally, they wanted to know at what turnouts along the Scenic Byway offered the best trails, best overlooks, and some of the “Best” the Silver Thread Byway had to offer. They referenced the Idaho Scenic Bway Website where visitors can find these items. Another couple at Windy Point wanted to know more about what to do along the Byway with signing showing designated stops along the road where they could get out and take a short hike. They also wondered if there was a way to get better reception for their cell phones. Most visitors preferred to camp “in comfort” and wanted to see better WiFi coverage. Campers from Wupperman Campground felt that Lake City was missing tremendous economic gains and opportunity by not allowing OHV’s to loop through the town. Some local Lake City residents wanted to allow OHV’s through town to boost business, other local residents felt that allowing OHV’s through town would increase noise and pollution. The winter recreationists were interviewed at event locations such as the ice climbing event, snowshoeing event at Lake San Critobal, and in town at local



## VISITOR SURVEY RESULTS

businesses. They felt that many more opportunities for children needed to be incorporated. Other winter visitors asked for trail maintenance in the winter so that peaks such as Wetterhorn and Uncompaghre could be climbed in the winter. This is similar to what European communities offer in the winter time. Other visitors felt that lodging and restaurant options were key to expanding the Winter Festival. Some respondents felt that businesses should be kept open even if the businesses had to be subsidized. Business owners that were interviewed felt strongly that affordable housing was the only way for Lake City to begin to grow economically. Ski area participants felt that the ski area should grow but were concerned that unless a funding source was secured, that the ski area would eventually be closed. Local skiers said they felt better off having the ski area in place rather than growing it and then being forced to close it because there was no funding to maintain new facilities. An overall response from the local survey respondents were that Lake City needed to provide more opportunities for the local children. Local full-time residents felt that the part-time residents are making decisions for the community as a whole and that they were having to live with those decisions that may not benefit the whole community who lives here year-round. They wanted to see Lake City attract younger people with families to the area that were full-time residents. The part-time residents that were interviewed felt strongly that the local small town elements and beauty of the area should be maintained and that Lake City did not become like many of the big ski area towns. Another camper at Wupperman suggested changing the double yellow lines in downtown to allow visitors to turn into businesses without having to go to the other end of town to turn around. In addition, many respondents asked for more campgrounds with amenities, such as hot water and showers.

### Requests for Additional Recreation Opportunities

Many requests were made for additional opportunities in Hinsdale County and Lake City. The following is a list of additional opportunities not identified as part of the top 8 requests by survey respondents in Chapter 2 on page 18. The most frequently requested items

are listed first. Many of the following items were requested by one to three survey respondents:

- Connect the Lake-To-Lake (and other) Trails
- Gymnasium
- ATV Loop
- More Rock Climbing Opportunities
- More Lodging and Food Choices
- Water Sports at Lake San Cristobal
- Climbing Walls (indoor)
- More Short Hiking Trails
- Additional Biking Opportunities
- Affordable Housing
- Bowling Alley
- **Road Improvements**
- **Accessible Trails**
- **Businesses To Stay Open Longer**
- **Ski Touring Trails**
- **Volley Ball League**
- **More Fishing Access To Lake Fork**
- **Forest Service Office to Remain Open on Week-ends**
- **Map/Brochure of Scenic Byways “Where To Go/ What To Do” at each location**
- **More Activities For Kids**
- **Full-Time Residents Have Heavier Vote Than Seasonal Residents**
- **Ice Skating Rink**
- **Ice Hockey On Lake San Cristobal**
- **Zamboni**
- **Marina On Lake San Cristobal**
- **Keep Lake City Remote/Intact As Is**
- **More Winter Events**
- **More Trail Races**
- **Positive Business Atmosphere**
- **Economic Growth**
- **Vegetarian Restaurant**

### Visitor Requests for Priority Funding

There is a list of the top 18 funding priorities that were requested by survey respondents in Chapter 2 on page 18. There were other requests listed here that did not rank as highly as the funding priorities in Chapter 2, but they are worth mentioning. Many of the requests have cross-over from the question on the survey that asks Constituents “what recreation activities would you like to see available to you?”. The following is a list of additional requests that visitors wanted to see Hinsdale County and Lake City focus

## VISITOR SURVEY RESULTS

on in the future:

- Improved Signage
- Want Forest Service To Be Open on Weekends
- More Trails
- Public River Access
- More Picnic Areas
- Get Permission For Boating Use of Rivers From Private Land Owners
- Kayak/Paddleboard Rentals
- Better Education At Trailheads/Rivers (including topics such as Ecology, Ecosystems, History, Aquatics, Weed Control, and Recreation Impacts)
- More Food Choices
- Accessible Trails
- Green Projects/Sustainable Recreation Initiatives
- More Campgrounds
- Restaurants To Stay Open Year Round
- Improve Signing
- End Hunting Draw/Make Open
- More Infrastructure For Ice Climbing
- More Ice Climbing
- Give Subsidies to Businesses To Stay Open
- Cafeteria at School
- Improved Information on Things To Do/ List Requirements to Participate Such as Easy or Strenuous Hikes
- Ice Rink/Pavilion
- Safe Trails Along Roads
- Outdoor Education
- Better Marketing/Advertizing
- Improve OHV Staging Area
- Rock Climbing Access Across From Ice Climbing
- Maintain Winter Trails So Climbers Can Have Access to Fourteeners in the Winter
- Snowshoe Trail Loop For Kids At Winter Festival
- Public Recreation Center
- Adequate Parking at Trailheads
- More Recreation Sites
- Accessibility at Lake San Cristobal

Many of these funding requests were generic in nature and not tied directly to a location, such as more picnic areas, river access, and rentals for water sports. Some of these have been identified in the Findings and Recommendations Chapter.



**Henson Creek**

Photo and Simulation Courtesy Kelly Ortiz

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