



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING AGENDA

February 25, 2025 at 10:00 AM

Commissioners Meeting Room - 401 Main Street, Suite 309, Walsenburg, CO 81089

Office: 719-738-3000 ex 200 | Fax: 719-738-3996

9:00 AM - TREASURER AND ASSESSOR WORKSHOP

9:30 AM - COMMISSIONER'S STUDY SESSION

10:00 AM - PUBLIC MEETING

Join via Google Meet: <https://meet.google.com/pfy-merc-xoc> | Meeting ID: pfy-merc-xoc

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. AGENDA APPROVAL

3. CONSENT AGENDA

- a.** February 18th 2025 Meeting Minutes
- b.** Cheyenne Griego New Hire Treasurer's
- c.** Kieonna Lopez New Hire Dispatch
- d.** Karina Sierra Probationary Period Completed Department of Human Services
- e.** Deah Weller Promotion Department of Human Services
- f.** Rahma Siddiqui Rescind Offer Treasurer's
- g.** Dan Mathews Resignation Sheriffs Office
- h.** Sick Time Donation for Aizlynn Crisp Dispatch
- i.** Sick Time Donation for Hallie Coulter Department of Human Services

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

5. APPOINTMENTS

- a.** Regional Grant Navigator Program
Tracy Gutierrez, Southern Colorado Economic Development District
- b.** Coalition for the Unhoused
Chelsea Meece, Point in Time Count Update

6. PERMITS, LICENCES, AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

7. ACTION ITEMS

- a.** Resolution #25-10 Appointing Ryan Gies to the Huerfano County Building Authority Board

- b. Resolution #25-11 Appointing Carlton Croft to the SCEDD Board of Directors
- c. Letter of Support for Museum of Friends for the Rural Arts Initiative Grant
- d. APCO Membership Approval to Join
- e. Acceptance of Community Wildfire Defense Grant Subaward from Colorado State University
- f. KLJ GIS Task Order 2025
- g. Back Country Search and Rescue Grant Allocation
- h. Purchase Order #2025-041 for Government Jobs.Com
- i. Purchase Order #2025-043 SE Group
- j. Pre Pay CAPP Contribution 2025

8. CORRESPONDENCE

- a. Cuchara Foundation Letter

9. STAFF REPORTS

- a. County Administrator
- b. County Attorney

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a. For a conference with a County Attorney for the purpose of receiving legal advice on specific legal questions under C.R.S. §24-6-402(4)(b). **Arias v. Newman, Burch Case, DeHerrea and Guerrero v. Bensman et al.**

11. ADJOURNMENT

12. UPCOMING MEETINGS

- a. 2PM - Emergency Management Workshop
- b. 1PM - Workshop with Caterpillar

Huerfano County wants to ensure that everyone has equal access to our programs, activities, and services. To request an Americans with Disability Act (ADA) accommodation, please call 719-738-3000 x200. Submit your request as early as possible, and no later than two business days before the event.



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES

February 18, 2025 at 10:00 AM

Commissioners Meeting Room - 401 Main Street, Suite 309, Walsenburg, CO 81089

Office: 719-738-3000 ex 200 | Fax: 719-738-3996

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Sporleder called the meeting to order followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairman Sporleder, Commissioner Chamberlain and Commissioner Wardell were present.

2. AGENDA APPROVAL

Motion to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion made by Commissioner Chamberlain

Second by Commissioner Wardell

Voting Yes: Chairman Sporleder, Commissioner Chamberlain, Commissioner Wardell

Motion Passes

3. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Motion made by Commissioner Wardell

Second by Commissioner Chamberlain

Voting Yes: Chairman Sporleder, Commissioner Chamberlain, Commissioner Wardell

Motion Passes

a. Minutes from the February 11th Meeting

b. Carey Kaestner Termination Department of Human Services

c. Abatement #25-03 for Frederick, Alan M Revocable Trust.

d. Abatement #25-04 for Lumen CenturyTel of Eagle, Inc

e. Abatement #25-05 for Lumen Century Link

f. Abatement #25-06 for Lumen - Qwest Corporation

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

NONE

5. APPOINTMENTS

a. US Forest Service Update

Destiny Chapman, District Ranger, San Carlos Ranger District

Destiny Chapman discussed updates on work being done at Bear and Blue Lakes and an ongoing project on the Panadero Homeowners Association property.

- b. Chae Organics Utility Extension CDBG Application Hearing
Dannah Koeniger, Professional Engineer, GMS Consulting Engineers
Dannah Koeniger discussed the application for a Community Development Block Grant for Chae Organics for the expansion of their business.
- c. Economic Development Update
Lola Spradley, President, HCED Inc.
Lola Spradley discussed current projects Economic Development is undertaking.

6. PERMITS, LICENSES, AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

- a. Liquor License Renewal for Cuchara Spirits
Motion to approve the Liquor License Renewal for Cuchara Spirits
Motion made by Commissioner Wardell
Second by Commissioner Chamberlain
Voting Yes: Chairman Sporleder, Commissioner Chamberlain, Commissioner Wardell
Motion Passes
- b. Liquor License Renewal for the Dog Bar and Grill
Motion to approve the Liquor License Renewal for the Dog Bar and Grill
Motion made by Commissioner Chamberlain
Second by Commissioner Wardell
Voting Yes: Chairman Sporleder, Commissioner Chamberlain, Commissioner Wardell
Motion Passes

7. ACTION ITEMS

- a. Resolution #25-09 Appointing Mary Norby to the Board of Review
Motion to approve Resolution #25-09 appointing Mary Norby to Huerfano County board of review for a term expiring on December 31, 2029
Motion made by Commissioner Wardell
Second by Commissioner Chamberlain
Voting Yes: Chairman Sporleder, Commissioner Chamberlain, Commissioner Wardell
Motion Passes
- b. Chae Organics DOLA CDBG Approval to Apply
Motion to approve Chae Organics DOLA Community Development Block Grant Application for a total of \$517,000
Motion made by Commissioner Chamberlain
Second by Commissioner Wardell
Voting Yes: Chairman Sporleder, Commissioner Chamberlain, Commissioner Wardell
Motion Passes
- c. Brittney Ciarlo Professional Service Agreement for Emergency Management
Motion to approve Brittney Ciarlo Professional Service Agreement for Emergency Management at \$45.00 an hour not to exceed \$9,000
Motion made by Commissioner Wardell
Second by Commissioner Chamberlain
Voting Yes: Chairman Sporleder, Commissioner Chamberlain, Commissioner Wardell
Motion Passes

d. HCSO County Jail Overtime Confirmation

Motion to confirm the approval of overtime payout to County Jail Staff until April 10, 2025 on the following conditions:

1. **Before Friday January 10th, submit: (1) a digital copy of the jail training manual; and (2) copies of all training certificates and performance evaluations and documentation of orientation training.**
2. **Ongoing conditions: (1) at the end of each pay period submit a copy of the schedule for the jail for at least the next pay period and (2) Detention Officers must punch into TCP.**
3. **Before the Board considers extending OT past April 10, 2025 the HCSO will need to submit documentation of new hire training and ongoing training in the Spillman System by all detention officers. Documentation should be pulled from Spillman.**

Motion made by Commissioner Chamberlain

Second by Commissioner Wardell

Voting Yes: Chairman Sporleder, Commissioner Chamberlain, Commissioner Wardell

Motion Passes

e. Purchase Order #2025-034 for Employers Council

Motion to approve Purchase Order #2025-034 for Employers Council for membership dues for a total of \$7,350.00

Motion made by Commissioner Wardell

Second by Commissioner Chamberlain

Voting Yes: Chairman Sporleder, Commissioner Chamberlain, Commissioner Wardell

Motion Passes

f. Purchase Order #2025-036 for Roscoe Engineering

Motion to approve Purchase Order 2025-036 for Roscoe Engineering for Gardner Main Street for a total of \$20,832

Motion made by Commissioner Chamberlain

Second by Commissioner Wardell

Voting Yes: Chairman Sporleder, Commissioner Chamberlain, Commissioner Wardell

Motion Passes

g. Asbestos & Lead Project Proposal for Fox Theatre

Motion to approve Asbestos & Lead Project Proposal for the Fox Theatre for an estimated total of \$7,700.00

Motion made by Commissioner Wardell

Second by Commissioner Chamberlain

Voting Yes: Chairman Sporleder, Commissioner Chamberlain, Commissioner Wardell

Motion Passes

h. February 2025 Vendor Run

Motion to approve February 2025 Vendor Run for a total of \$861,425

Motion made by Commissioner Chamberlain

Second by Commissioner Wardell

Voting Yes: Chairman Sporleder, Commissioner Chamberlain, Commissioner Wardell

Motion Passes

8. **CORRESPONDENCE**

Carl Young, County Administrator reviewed correspondence with the BOCC

- a. **January 2025 CAPP Reports**
- b. **Leave Balances as of February 8th 2025**
- c. **CTSI Technical Update - Contracts in County Operations Key Elements for Success**
- d. **CTSI Technical Update - Contracts in County Operations Understanding Idemnification**

- e. SCEDD Newsletter February 2025
- f. HC Fair Board Appointment Notice February 2025
- g. Board Decision in Case 2023-8407

9. STAFF REPORTS

a. County Administrator

County Administrator Carl Young reviewed the current County job openings including current job duties, qualifications and wages that can be found on the Huerfano County Website and current open slots for Huerfano County boards.

b. County Attorney

NONE

Motion to recess meeting at 11:13 AM

Motion made by Commissioner Wardell

Second by Commissioner Chamberlain

Voting Yes: Chairman Sporleder, Commissioner Chamberlain, Commissioner Wardell

Motion Passes

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a. For the purpose of determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations, developing strategy for negotiations, and/or instructing negotiators, under C.R.S. Section 24-6-402(4)(e). **Negotiations with Huerfano County Water Conservancy District on Badito Ranch Water Right**

Motion to enter executive session at 12:12 PM

Motion made by Commissioner Wardell

Second by Commissioner Chamberlain

Voting Yes: Chairman Sporleder, Commissioner Chamberlain, Commissioner Wardell

Motion Passes

No decisions shall be made during or after executive session

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn meeting at 1:00 PM

Motion made by Commissioner Wardell

Second by Commissioner Chamberlain

Voting Yes: Chairman Sporleder, Commissioner Chamberlain, Commissioner Wardell

Motion Passes

Erica Vigil, County Clerk & Recorder
Clerk to the Board of County Commissioners

COMMISSIONERS:

Karl Sporleder, Chairman

Mitchell Wardell

Jim Chamberlain

HUERFANO COUNTY

GREEN SHEET/STATUS CHANGE	EFFECTIVE DATE
	2/26/2025
NAME: Cheyenne Griego	PAYROLL : 3/14/2025

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/PHONE	STREET
	CITY, STATE, ZIP
	TELEPHONE

CHANGE	FROM (DOES NOT APPLY TO NEW EMPLOYEE)	TO
JOB TITLE		Treasurer Admin/Accounting Specialist I & Public Trustee Aide
DEPARTMENT		Treasurer
HOURS		29 Hour Max / Week
ANNUAL SALARY		
SEMI-MONTHLY SALARY		
HOURLY SALARY		\$18.00/hr
OTHER SALARY		Non-Exempt

REASON FOR CHANGE

NEW HIRE

REHIRED

PROMOTION

DEMOTION

TRANSFER

RESIGNATION

RETIREMENT

LAYOFF

ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE PAID

ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE UN-PAID

LENGTH OF SERVICE INCREASE

REEVALUATION OF CURRENT JOB

INTRODUCTORY PERIOD COMPLETED

OTHER

COMMENTS, IF NECESSARY

Motion to Hire Cheyenne Griego as Treasurer Admin/Accounting Specialist I & Public Trustee Aide for the Department of the Treasury at a Rate of \$18.00/hr. Contingent Upon Completion of a CBI Background Check, and Drug Screen with a Negative Result.

Elected Official / Department Head Date

Angela Wakeman 02.18.2025

Human Resources Officer Date

Chair, Board of County Commissioners Date

Budget Officer Date

HUERFANO COUNTY

GREEN SHEET/STATUS CHANGE	EFFECTIVE DATE
	2/26/2025
NAME: Kieonna Lopez	PAYROLL: 3/14/2025

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/PHONE	STREET
	CITY, STATE, ZIP
	TELEPHONE

CHANGE	FROM (DOES NOT APPLY TO NEW EMPLOYEE)	TO
JOB TITLE		Communications Officer /Dispatcher
DEPARTMENT		Dispatch
HOURS		
ANNUAL SALARY		\$42,500.00
SEMI-MONTHLY SALARY		
HOURLY SALARY		
OTHER SALARY		Non-Exempt

REASON FOR CHANGE

NEW HIRE

REHIRED

PROMOTION

DEMOTION

TRANSFER

RESIGNATION

RETIREMENT

LAYOFF

ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE PAID

ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE UN-PAID

LENGTH OF SERVICE INCREASE

REEVALUATION OF CURRENT JOB

INTRODUCTORY PERIOD COMPLETED

OTHER

COMMENTS, IF NECESSARY

Motion to Hire Kieonna Lopez as Communications Officer/Dispatcher for the Department of Emergency Services with an Annual Salary of \$42,500.00. Contingent Upon Completion of a CBI Background Check, and Drug Screen with a Negative Result.

Elected Official / Department Head Date

Chair, Board of County Commissioners Date

Angela Wakeman 12.02.2024

Human Resources Officer Date

Budget Officer Date

HUERFANO COUNTY

GREEN SHEET/STATUS CHANGE	EFFECTIVE DATE
	2/21/2025
NAME: Karina Sierra	PAYROLL: 3/14/2025

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/PHONE	STREET
	CITY, STATE, ZIP
	TELEPHONE

CHANGE	FROM (DOES NOT APPLY TO NEW EMPLOYEE)	TO
JOB TITLE	Accountant I	Accountant I
DEPARTMENT	DHS	DHS
HOURS		
ANNUAL SALARY	\$42,000.00	\$47,000.00
SEMI-MONTHLY SALARY		
HOURLY SALARY		
OTHER SALARY	Non-Exempt	Non-Exempt

REASON FOR CHANGE

- | | | |
|-----------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| NEW HIRE | RESIGNATION | LENGTH OF SERVICE INCREASE |
| REHIRED | RETIREMENT | REEVALUATION OF CURRENT JOB |
| PROMOTION | LAYOFF | INTRODUCTORY PERIOD COMPLETED |
| DEMOTION | ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE PAID | OTHER |
| TRANSFER | ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE UN-PAID | |

COMMENTS, IF NECESSARY

Motion to Increase Karina Sierra's Salary from \$42,000.00 to \$47,000.00 for the Successful Completion of her Probationary Period.

Elected Official / Department Head Date

Chair, Board of County Commissioners Date

Angela Wakeman 02.21.2025

Human Resources Officer Date

Budget Officer Date

HUERFANO COUNTY

GREEN SHEET/STATUS CHANGE	EFFECTIVE DATE
	2/21/2025
NAME: Deah Weller	PAYROLL: 3/14/2025

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/PHONE	STREET
	CITY, STATE, ZIP
	TELEPHONE

CHANGE	FROM (DOES NOT APPLY TO NEW EMPLOYEE)	TO
JOB TITLE	Office Manager	Operations Manager
DEPARTMENT	DHS	DHS
HOURS		
ANNUAL SALARY	\$40,000.00	\$50,000.00
SEMI-MONTHLY SALARY		
HOURLY SALARY		
OTHER SALARY	Non-Exempt	Non-Exempt

REASON FOR CHANGE

- | | | |
|------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| NEW HIRE | RESIGNATION | LENGTH OF SERVICE INCREASE |
| REHIRED | RETIREMENT | REEVALUATION OF CURRENT JOB |
| PROMOTION | LAYOFF | INTRODUCTORY PERIOD COMPLETED |
| DEMOTION | ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE PAID | OTHER |
| TRANSFER | ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE UN-PAID | |

COMMENTS, IF NECESSARY

Motion to Promote Deah Weller from Office Manager to Operations Manager with an Increase in Salary from \$40,000.00 to \$50,000.00 Annually.

Elected Official / Department Head Date

Chair, Board of County Commissioners Date

Angela Wakeman 02.21.2025

Human Resources Officer Date

Budget Officer Date

HUERFANO COUNTY		
PAYROLL STATUS CHANGE	EFFECTIVE DATE	
2/17/2025		
NAME: Rahma Siddiqui	PAYROLL : 2/28/2025	
CHANGE OF ADDRESS/PHONE	STREET	
	CITY, STATE, ZIP	
	TELEPHONE	
CHANGE	FROM <small>(DOES NOT APPLY TO NEW EMPLOYEE)</small>	TO
JOB TITLE	Treasurer Admin/Accounting Specialist I & Public Trustee Aide	
DEPARTMENT	Treasury	
HOURS	29/wk	
ANNUAL SALARY		
SEMI-MONTHLY SALARY		
HOURLY SALARY	\$18.00/hr	
OTHER SALARY	Non-Exempt	
REASON FOR CHANGE		
NEW HIRE	RESIGNATION	LENGTH OF SERVICE INCREASE
REHIRED	RETIREMENT	REEVALUATION OF CURRENT JOB
PROMOTION	LAYOFF	INTRODUCTORY PERIOD COMPLETED
DEMOTION	ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE PAID	OTHER
TRANSFER	ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE UN-PAID	
TERMINATION		
COMMENTS, IF NECESSARY		
Motion to Rescind the Offer of Employment to Rahma Siddiqui Effective February 14, 2025.		
Elected Official/Department Manager	Chairman	
Date	Date	
Date to Finance Office: _____		

HUERFANO COUNTY

PAYROLL STATUS CHANGE	EFFECTIVE DATE
	2/28/2025

NAME: Dan Mathews	PAYROLL :	3/14/2025
--------------------------	-----------	------------------

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/PHONE	<small>STREET</small>	
	<small>CITY, STATE, ZIP</small>	
	<small>TELEPHONE</small>	

CHANGE	FROM <small>(DOES NOT APPLY TO NEW EMPLOYEE)</small>	TO
JOB TITLE	Patrol Deputy	
DEPARTMENT	Sheriff's Office	
HOURS		
ANNUAL SALARY	\$55,000.00	
SEMI-MONTHLY SALARY		
HOURLY SALARY		
OTHER SALARY	Non-Exempt	

REASON FOR CHANGE

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| NEW HIRE
REHIRED
PROMOTION
DEMOTION
TRANSFER | <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">RESIGNATION</div>
RETIREMENT
LAYOFF
ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE PAID
ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE UN-PAID
TERMINATION | LENGTH OF SERVICE INCREASE
REEVALUATION OF CURRENT JOB
INTRODUCTORY PERIOD COMPLETED
OTHER |
|--|---|---|

COMMENTS, IF NECESSARY

Motion to accept the resignation of Dan Mathews effective 02/28/2025.

Elected Official/Department Manager	Chairman
Date	Date
Date to Finance Office:	

SICK LEAVE DONATION AND AUTHORIZATION REQUEST FORM

At times, an employee may require extended leave due to his or her own personal needs, or to care for a family member. When an employee is on FMLA, they must use their "Sick Leave" to cover any employment days missed.

Accrued and earned Sick Leave may be "donated" from one employee to another in certain circumstances when the Board of County Commissioners has approved the "transfer". If approved, the donation of sick leave will reduce the donating employee's sick leave hours and increase the sick leave balance of the recipient employee. Once the "donation" has been approved, the sick leave transaction process will be final and can't be changed regardless of whether the time was utilized by the receiving employee. The maximum number of days an employee is able to donate is 30 days (240 hours max).

Name of Employee to Receive Sick Leave Hours: <u>Aizlynn Crisp</u> (Print Name)	Department: <u>Dispatch</u>
--	---------------------------------------

Name of Employee Donating Sick Leave Hours: <u>Raquel Lopez Rodriguez</u> (Print Name)	Department: <u>Dispatch</u>
---	---------------------------------------

I hereby request 30 hours of accrued and earned sick leave to be deducted from my accrual balance. I understand that once this transfer has been processed that I cannot revoke or change this request.

<u>Raquel Lopez Rodriguez</u> Donating Employee Signature	<u>2/18/25</u> Date Signed
--	-------------------------------

<u>[Signature]</u> Signature of Supervisor	<u>2/18/25</u> Date Signed
---	-------------------------------

_____ Signature of BOCC Chairman	_____ Date Signed
-------------------------------------	----------------------

SICK LEAVE DONATION AND AUTHORIZATION REQUEST FORM

At times, an employee may require extended leave due to his or her own personal needs, or to care for a family member. When an employee is on FMLA, they must use their "Sick Leave" to cover any employment days missed.

Accrued and earned Sick Leave may be "donated" from one employee to another in certain circumstances when the Board of County Commissioners has approved the "transfer". If approved, the donation of sick leave will reduce the donating employee's sick leave hours and increase the sick leave balance of the recipient employee. Once the "donation" has been approved, and the transaction has been processed, the donation will be final. The donation can't be reverted back to the individual who donated the time, nor can the donated hours be re-donated to another employee even if the donated sick time wasn't utilized by the original receiving employee. The maximum number of days an employee is able to donate is 30 days (240 hours max).

Name of Employee to Receive Sick Leave Hours:	Department:
Hallie Coulter	DHS

(Print Name)

Name of Employee Donating Sick Leave Hours:	Department:
Kurt Liebchen	DHS

(Print Name)

I hereby request 16 hours of accrued and earned sick leave to be deducted from my accrual balance. I understand that once this transfer has been processed that I cannot revoke or change this request.



2-20-2025

Donating Employee Signature

Date Signed


Signature of Supervisor

2/20/25
Date Signed

Signature of BOCC Chairman

Date Signed

Item 3i.

SICK LEAVE DONATION AND AUTHORIZATION REQUEST FORM

At times, an employee may require extended leave due to his or her own personal needs, or to care for a family member. When an employee is on FMLA, they must use their "Sick Leave" to cover any employment days missed.

Accrued and earned Sick Leave may be "donated" from one employee to another in certain circumstances when the Board of County Commissioners has approved the "transfer". If approved, the donation of sick leave will reduce the donating employee's sick leave hours and increase the sick leave balance of the recipient employee. Once the "donation" has been approved, and the transaction has been processed, the donation will be final. The donation can't be reverted back to the individual who donated the time, nor can the donated hours be re-donated to another employee even if the donated sick time wasn't utilized by the original receiving employee. The maximum number of days an employee is able to donate is 30 days (240 hours max).

Name of Employee to Receive Sick Leave Hours:	Department:
<u>Hallie Coulter</u>	<u>APS</u>

(Print Name)

Name of Employee Donating Sick Leave Hours:	Department:
<u>Dreama Ortiz</u>	<u>CW</u>

(Print Name)

I hereby request 40 hours of accrued and earned sick leave to be deducted from my accrual balance. I understand that once this transfer has been processed that I cannot revoke or change this request.

Dreama Ortiz
Donating Employee Signature

2/20/25
Date Signed

[Signature]
Signature of Supervisor

2/20/25
Date Signed

Signature of BOCC Chairman

Date Signed

Item 3i.

RESOLUTION NO. 25-10

**THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF HUERFANO COUNTY, COLORADO**

**A RESOLUTION APPOINTING RYAN GIES TO HUERFANO COUNTY BUILDING
AUTHORITY BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING ON DECEMBER 31, 2027**

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners serve as the governing body of Huerfano County and are vested with administering the affairs of the County pursuant to state statutes; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners has determined that the establishment of certain Boards are necessary to help protect the best interests of the County’s inhabitants and promote the health, safety, prosperity, security and general welfare of the County’s inhabitants; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners has determined that it is in the best interest of Huerfano County to delegate representation of the County on certain boards and commissions of public and other bodies to members of the public with particular experience and expertise; and,

WHEREAS, Ryan Gies has submitted a letter of interest and has demonstrated the qualifications to serve on the Building Authority Board for Huerfano County and agrees to serve as a member of the Board while adhering to the principles applicable to governmental units and other requirements of law; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of Huerfano County Commissioners recommends appointing Ryan Gies to serve as a member of the Building Authority Board as a reflection of the values of the Huerfano County Board of County Commissioners.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Huerfano County Board of County Commissioners hereby appoints Ryan Gies to serve as a member of the Building Authority Board until December 31, 2027, and until a successor has been appointed.

INTRODUCED, READ, APPROVED AND ADOPTED THIS 25th day of February 2025.



**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF HUERFANO COUNTY, COLORADO**

BY _____
Karl S. Sporleder, Chairman

Mitchell Wardell, Commissioner

ATTEST:

County Clerk and Recorder and
Ex-Officio Clerk to said Board

James L. Chamberlain, Commissioner

RESOLUTION NO. 25-11

**THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF HUERFANO COUNTY, COLORADO**

**A RESOLUTION APPOINTING CARLTON CROFT TO THE BOARD OF
DIRECTORS OF THE SOUTHERN COLORADO ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT FOR A TERM EXPIRING ON DECEMBER 31,
2026**

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners serve as the governing body of Huerfano County and are vested with administering the affairs of the County pursuant to state statutes; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners has determined that it is in the best interest of Huerfano County to delegate the representation of the County on certain boards and commissions of public and other bodies to members of the public with particular experience and expertise; and,

WHEREAS, Carlton Croft has submitted a letter of interest and has demonstrated his qualifications to serve on the Board of Directors of the Southern Colorado Economic Development District for Huerfano County and agrees to serve as a member of the Board while adhering to the principles applicable to governmental units and other requirements of law; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of Huerfano County Commissioners desires to appoint Carlton Croft to serve as a member of the Board of Directors of the Southern Colorado Economic Development District as a reflection of the values of the Huerfano County Board of County Commissioners.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Huerfano County Board of County Commissioners hereby appoints Carlton Croft to serve as a member of the Board of Directors of the Southern Colorado Economic Development District until December 31, 2026, and until a successor has been appointed.

INTRODUCED, READ, APPROVED AND ADOPTED THIS 25th day of FEBRUARY 2025.



ATTEST:

County Clerk and Recorder and
Ex-Officio Clerk to said Board

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF HUERFANO COUNTY, COLORADO

BY _____
Karl S. Sporleder, Chairman

Mitchell Wardell, Commissioner

James L. Chamberlain, Commissioner

Karl S. Sporleder, Chairman
Mitchell Wardell, Commissioner
James L. Chamberlain, Commissioner



Board of County Commissioners

Laura Jane Musser Fund
Rural Arts Initiative Grant Selection Committee
318 W 48th St, Minneapolis, MN 55419
admin@musserfund.org

February 25, 2025

Subject: Letter of Support for Museum of Friends – Rural Arts Initiative Grant

Dear Laura Jane Musser Fund Selection Committee,

It is our pleasure to submit this letter in support of the Museum of Friends (MoF) as they seek funding through the Laura Jane Musser Fund’s Rural Arts Initiative Grant. As a dedicated cultural institution in Huerfano County since 2005, MoF has continuously provided outstanding artistic and educational programming that fosters creative expression, cultural engagement, and community connection. Their commitment to increasing access to the arts, particularly in a rural community with limited resources, aligns seamlessly with the mission of the Laura Jane Musser Fund.

MoF’s community-driven approach has made it an integral part of the county’s artistic and educational landscape. Through interactive workshops, public art projects, school programs, and STEAM-integrated arts education, MoF has created unique opportunities for residents of all ages to engage in meaningful artistic experiences. These programs not only enrich lives but also promote civic engagement and cultural preservation, ensuring that Huerfano County’s diverse heritage and artistic legacy remain vibrant.

The funding from this grant will allow MoF to expand hands-on learning experiences, scholarships for participation, and public programming, ensuring that cost is never a barrier to artistic engagement. Furthermore, this support will bolster MoF’s ability to strategically plan for long-term sustainability, allowing it to preserve its legacy while adapting to the evolving needs of our rural community.

We urge your favorable consideration of this application.

Sincerely,

Karl S. Sporleder, Chairman

Mitchell Wardell, Commissioner

James L. Chamberlain, Commissioner



MEMORANDUM

MEETING TYPE: Board of County Commissioners

MEETING DATE: February 25, 2025

SUBMITTED BY: Anthony Luginbill & Robert Gilbert, Emergency Services

SUMMARY: APCO is an international organization of public safety communications professionals; joining their organization gives access to professional development, technical assistance, and discounted training options. The APCO Institute training will give us access to multiple certification programs and additional resources for our dispatch team. The membership is an annual fee of \$1,012, renewed yearly, and provides licenses/memberships for a staff of 11-25 people.

RECOMMENDATION: Recommend the BOCC approve joining APCO at the 11-25 person level for \$1,012 annually with the intention of using APCO’s organization to elevate the Huerfano County Communications Center services, performance, and employee retention by pursuing additional training and certifications available through APCO.

BACKGROUND: After reviewing our Communications Center over the last two months and conferring with our dispatchers and supervisory team, Emergency Management believes that it would be of great benefit to the long-term sustainability of the department to join an organization like APCO and give our current and future team members the professional development opportunities that come through said organization. APCO membership will also provide our dispatch team with some perks such as ongoing access to training materials, webinars, and discounts, which is a benefit that we would be able to provide to our dispatch center employees at no out-of-pocket cost to them.

BOARD ACTION TAKEN:

APPROVED

DENIED

OTHER

SIGNATURE OF THE CHAIR: _____

NOTES:

WHY APCO?

When you join APCO International you are connected to the world’s largest organization dedicated to public safety communications—more than 36,000 members strong. Together, we drive the profession forward by providing training and certifications, networking opportunities, advocacy, events and industry-specific products. As an APCO member you also have access to the expertise and resources you need to meet your every day challenges.

“Having an APCO membership has provided our staff with key benefits including excellent networking opportunities, such as the APCO conferences and access to PSConnect. We also appreciate the direct access to high quality training and career advancement opportunities provided through the APCO Institute.”
 -Grayson Gusa, RPL; Full Group Member

We’re with you every step of the way!



Join today at apcointl.org/join

1

Enroll your staff—from individual memberships to several different levels of group membership, you will find an option that suits your organization’s specific needs.

2

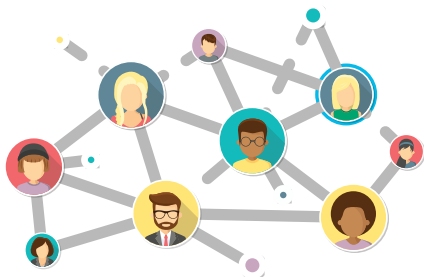
3

Begin training—The APCO Institute provides diverse and affordable training options, certifications and resources for public safety communications professionals at all levels.



4

Connect with your peers—Seek advice, ask questions and have discussions on the PSConnect open forum. Attend chapter meetings or volunteer for a committee.



5

Advance your career—take advantage of free and discounted services to manage your career.

What’s my membership worth?

EVENT REGISTRATION DISCOUNTS

Annual conference | Up to \$300
 Nexus | \$100

TRAINING DISCOUNTS

Training courses | Up to \$40
 Training manual | \$40
 Training scholarship | Up to \$3500

FREQUENCY COORDINATION DISCOUNTS

License management | 10%
 Licensing services | 10%
 Engineering services | 10%
 Microwave & coordination services | 10%

CAREER SERVICES DISCOUNTS

Resume review | \$200
 Job board postings free for job seekers
 Job posting | \$100

WEBINAR DISCOUNTS

Most webinars are free for members and offer CDEs.

FREE

PUBLICATIONS

PSC Magazine
 (\$125 VALUE)

FREE

AFFINITY PROGRAMS

APCO partners with companies to provide members with discounts

COMM CENTER & 9-1-1 SERVICES DISCOUNTS

RETAINS Toolkit 3.0 agency members | \$99
 RETAINS Toolkit 3.0 APCO members | \$129
 APCO Consulting Service for agency members | 10%



MEMORANDUM

MEETING TYPE: Board of County Commissioners Regular Meeting

MEETING DATE: February 25th, 2025

ITEM NAME: Acceptance of Community Wildfire Defense Grant Subaward from Colorado State University

SUBMITTED BY: Ross Hallihan, Mitigation and Planning Specialist

SUMMARY: Formally accept the Community Wildfire Defence Grant funds that Huerfano county applied for through the US Forest Service. These funds will be subawarded to the county through the Colorado State Forest Service and the term of the project runs through 8/31/2027. While the project is a reimbursement grant, the grant is a 100% grant with zero match required from County funds.

RECOMMENDATION: Recommend the BOCC move to accept the FDP Cost Reimbursement Subaward in the amount of \$180,000.

BACKGROUND: The Office of Emergency Management applied for the Community Wildfire Defence Grant in order to create a county wide Community Wildfire Protection Plan. The County was awarded \$180,000.00 through the grant to create this plan. Per Colorado Senate Bill 09-001, Huerfano County is required to develop a Community Wildfire Protection Plan. The project would include all areas of the County with an appendix list of specific communities that have their own CWPP. The County plan would be a large-scale plan identifying landscape-scale fuels treatment projects for the highest risk communities within the project area. The plan will be fully implementable including detailed project designs, layout and execution plans. A community wildfire risk analysis considering fuel hazards, fire history, common structure vulnerability characteristics, and community values to be protected will all be included in the plan. Huerfano County Department of Emergency Management will lead this project and ensure that all necessary plan participants are involved from start to finish. The grant funding is to hire a contractor to help create the CWPP. By signing the FDP Cost Reimbursement Subaward, the BOCC formally accepts the awarded funds.

BOARD ACTION TAKEN:

APPROVED

DENIED

OTHER

SIGNATURE OF THE CHAIR: _____

NOTES:



Subaward Scope of Work/Narrative
Community Wildfire Defense Grants (CWDG)
Huerfano County CWPP Development
Huerfano County, Ross Hallihan

Colorado State Forest Service Financial Assistance Program
Attachment A

Lead Contacts

CSFS Principal Investigator/Cooperator Program Contact:

Name: Chad Julian

Job Title: Wildfire Mitigation Program Specialist

Colorado State Forest Service

5060 Campus Delivery

Fort Collins, Colorado 80523-5060

Phone: 303-579-7957

Email: chad.julian@colostate.edu

Subrecipient Principal Investigator/Administrative Contact:

Name: Huerfano County, Ross Hallihan

Title: Project Coordinator

Employer: Huerfano County

Mailing Address: 401 Main Street

City, State, Zip: Walsenburg, CO 81089

Phone: 719-431-4006

Email: rhallihan@huerfano.us

CSFS Account Number: 2024 Community Wildfire Defense Grant – Underserved Fed Grant
 #24-DG-11021600-067, 9/1/2024-8/31/2027

Work to be completed/deliverables:

This project will develop and implement a Community Wildfire Protection Plan for Huerfano County. The importance of this project is to organize strategies around and direct resources toward mitigating wildfire risk across the 1,593 square miles of Huerfano. The CWPP will outline mitigation goals as well as proposed and active projects across the county and layout a broad overview of the mitigation needs and wildfire response challenges of WUI's and communities throughout Huerfano County.

This document will address the four broad challenges of the Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy and the "Living With Wildfire" forest priority of our state's Forest Action Plan. The proposed and ongoing mitigation work that will be featured in the CWPP will focus on managing vegetation

and fuels through the strategic creation of shaded fuel breaks in priority areas, fuel reduction along county road ways, community "chipper days" to reduce slash in WUIs and NFPA aligned home assessments which advise methods of fuel reduction on private properties. These fuel reduction projects will help to protect communities, critical infrastructure and ecosystem resilience. Informational pieces contained within the "story map" that will accompany the CWPP will point homeowners to the basics of hardening structures, the importance of adhering to burn permits and bans, safe campfire use and resources for helping their communities become Firewise. This component will address protecting homes and managing human caused ignitions. The three fire protection districts will be major stakeholders in the creation of this document and the mitigation work outlined in the CWPP that will be done on roads to improve ingress and egress alongside fuel reduction in priority areas. This will improve the ability of our county to effectively and efficiently respond to wildfire. Taken together, the educational and mitigation components of this CWPP will be inline with our state's Forest Action Plan tenet of "living with wildfire" by implementing risk reducing projects and community education to lessen the impacts of inevitable, ecologically necessary wildfires.

This county features heavy Pinon Juniper forests in the North and Northwest, which rise up into the mixed Conifer forests along Greenhorn Mountain and the Wet Mountains range. It also has Spruce-Fir, Ponderosa, Gambel-Oak shrublands and mixed conifer forests along its western edge in the Sangre de Cristo and Culebra mountain ranges as well as mixed conifer forests around the Spanish Peaks and the Highway of Legends in its Southern and South-Western borders. These lands fall under the jurisdiction of one of our three fire protection districts (La Veta, Huerfano and Upper Huerfano) and feature public lands under the stewardship of BLM, USFS, CSFS and the Colorado Dept. of Parks and Wildlife. A county-wide CWPP will help to coordinate and standardize efforts to control the risk of future wildfires between and across these jurisdictions.

The county Department of Emergency Management will be working with a contractor to develop the CWPP, and once the document is complete, Emergency management will use the CWPP to coordinate with stakeholders to prioritize and carry out mitigation work across the county. Preliminary discussions with prospective contractors lay out a tentative timeline of 12-20 months. During this time we will be meeting with stakeholders and updating our communities with the CWPP development progress and soliciting their input.

Huerfano County is considered "underserved", and the CWPP will make sure that mitigation resources and fire fighting strategies are applied to those WUI's in the Northern and Western areas of our county that fall within the "Social Vulnerability Index" on the CSFS Forest atlas, as well as mitigating forests that may affect economically disadvantaged communities within Huerfano.

Though the CWPP will be developed to address the needs and conditions within Huerfano county, the planning process will recognize our borders with economically disadvantaged communities in neighboring Custer, Saguache, Alamosa, Costilla and Las Animas Counties; with an eye towards communication and collaboration around wildfire mitigation along those borders going forward.

This project will commence with bidding from contractors to help write the document itself. Once the contractor has been chosen, we will begin pulling together relevant stakeholders (Fire chiefs, CSFS Regional Manager, USFS District Ranger, BLM Fire Management Officer for the Rocky Mountains, Area Wildlife Manager and the county commissioners). We will also begin public outreach to our various WUIs and the boards of the Huerfano Firewise Communities. Emergency Management Departments of our neighboring counties will likewise be informed of the CWPP

development. These stakeholders will be formally made aware that the process of CWPP development is beginning through email.

Community outreach and input is a crucial piece of CWPPs, so once we have our contractor chosen we will begin community meetings concerned with the CWPP. These meetings will be advertised through our county government's facebook page, the community newspaper and hanging/handing out fliers. Additionally, Huerfano County plans to adapt an electronic community survey that Chafee County used to gauge community perceptions of forest health, wildfire resilience, mitigation activities and preparation for major wildfire disasters. Chafee County's CWPP contains the template of the community survey they used and lists the survey itself as a "transferable tool available to other communities upon request". Huerfano County will reach out to Chafee for permission to use the survey, and adapt it as needed to better fit Huerfano.

Because of the size of the county and the space between our disparate communities, it will be necessary to hold these meetings in different locations across the county and have a recorded component. These meetings will be an excellent opportunity to not only get the public's input and feedback on the document, but also to provide them with literature (like the Home Ignition Zone pamphlet from the CSFS) and education about how doing mitigation on their own properties is an integral piece of the wider county mitigation strategy.

These meetings, both with jurisdictional stakeholders and the community, will be documented with: sign in sheets, meeting minutes and recordings/transcripts of any digital meetings/meeting components. For community meetings, we are planning to have most of them carried out in Walsenburg, which is the seat of the county. Our initial meeting will outline what the CWPP is and why its needed. After the initial meeting, others will be held throughout the development of the document to garner feedback. This will allow the community insight into our process and the ability to lodge suggestions, questions and concerns. We will also hold meetings in the other major communities in our county; La Veta, Cuchara and Gardner. These communities will be closer to the mitigation projects outlined in the CWPP and meetings in those locations will be a chance for community members who can't travel to Walsenburg to attend. These will be held around the "halfway point" of the CWPP's completion to ensure the attendees have time to reflect on its progress and make suggestions.

For the stakeholders, we will hold meetings with all identified stakeholders, and smaller meetings with stakeholder groups like the three fire district chiefs as needed since their input may need to be more ongoing and granular than say the BLM representative's.

Throughout this process, we will make sure to coordinate with our contractor so that information gleaned from community and stakeholder meetings is translated into the CWPP in an actionable manner. It will be important for representatives from our contractor to attend some of our community and stakeholder meetings themselves in order to speak to questions and concerns from these groups.

Milestone dates:

The final measurable artifact will be the completed CWPP which will contain relevant data on structure number within WUIs as well as acreage managed in proposed and already existing mitigation projects throughout the county. Early discussions with prospective contractors describe a timeframe for completing this document to fall within 12-20 months. As the process begins, we will create a "roadmap" with timeframes for particular milestones in the CWPP development and document the completion of these accordingly.

Year 1: Creating team, establishing meeting times, data collection, community outreach

Year 2: Compiling/analyzing data, drafting plan, sharing draft with community

Year 3: Project review, community review, Finalization

Total Project Deliverables: 1 CWPP developed and signed

Standards or Guidelines: (list if applicable)

The following CWPP minimum standards apply and are found at [Colorado State Forest Service \(colostate.edu\)](http://coloradostate.edu)

The following are updated minimum standards and guidelines for developing Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs), as originally directed per Colorado Senate Bill 09-001.

I. Plan Participants

A. Planning involves a core team that includes a representative from the local government, the local fire authority, and the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS). These representatives must agree that the CWPP is viable, complete, and realistic in terms of risk reduction and implementation. Each of these representatives possesses signatory authority for the plan.

B. Additional participants should include community members and local, state, and federal organizations and land management agencies, or their chosen representatives.

C. The plan must exhibit diverse collaboration with emphasis on involvement of community members/representatives.

- Community involvement and participation can be documented through meeting minutes, meeting rosters, or community surveys that clearly document meeting results including participant's name and affiliation. Tracking techniques vary, but providing evidence of a collaborative process is essential.

II. Plan Components

A. CWPPs must include:

- A definition of the selected planning area outlined on a map with an accompanying narrative. Delineate wildland-urban interface (WUI) areas within the chosen boundary.
- Identification of adjacent landowners (land that touches the community's external boundary)
- A community wildfire risk analysis that considers (at minimum) fuel hazards, fire history, common structure vulnerability characteristics, and community values to be protected (e.g., watershed, infrastructure, recreation features, wildlife habitat). Consider recent wildfire impacts in this discussion.
- Recommended methods to reduce structural ignitability

- An implementation plan that includes:
 - o Identification of wildfire risk reduction projects and activities (e.g., fuels reduction treatments, education campaigns, community demonstration site development)
 - ☐ Hazardous fuels reduction treatment projects must include treatment types (e.g., thinning, fuel break, prescribed burning) and methods (mastication, hand crew thin and pile, timber harvest) on federal and non-federal land as applicable within the planning area.
 - o A project area map that illustrates all proposed treatments
 - o A narrative and table that details the relative priority of each project and recommends an agency, group, or other entity as an implementation leader

B. CWPPs should include:

- Locally appropriate emergency notification resources
- Evacuation information
- Socially vulnerable population considerations (e.g., elderly, disabled, or alternate language)
- Commitment for revision, preferably 5 years

C. CWPPs may include:

- Post-fire considerations (e.g., flood hazard analysis, infrastructure concerns)
- Integrated Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Plan elements

III. Level of Specificity

A. A CWPP may be developed for any level of community (e.g., homeowners' association, mountain town, fire protection district, or county). Large-scale plans (e.g., county or fire protection district) must contain an appendix listing all communities within the planning area.

B. In order to qualify as an approved CWPP, large-scale plans must identify landscape-scale fuels treatment projects (e.g., fuel breaks and cross-boundary treatment opportunities) for the highest risk communities within the project area. Include a map(s) that details project locations and approximates project boundaries.

C. While county-level plans may be used as umbrella plans for smaller communities, each community should develop an effectively scaled CWPP that supports their needs.

D. Communities represented in a large-scale plan that wish to receive credit for having an approved CWPP must:

- Identify and prioritize risk reduction activities unique to their subset community boundary
 - o Treatments should be supported by stakeholders, including representatives from the community (e.g., homeowners' association board, Firewise USA® Committee, city council).
- Develop an implementation plan specific to that community
- Include information in the plan at a level of specificity appropriate for the size of the community being addressed

E. The resulting document must be implementable, which means adequate detail about project-level design, layout, and execution is provided to allow work to begin, and the plan is supported by those who will put it into action.

IV. Approved CWPP

A. The Colorado State Forest Service will only accept CWPPs that contain the signatures of all core team members, including local fire department(s), local government(s), and a CSFS Supervisory Forester. Please note that CSFS personnel are not permitted to sign plans that do not clearly meet CWPP minimum standards.

B. After an approved CWPP has been submitted to the CSFS State Office, it will be posted on the CSFS website unless otherwise instructed.

V. Plan Lifetime & Update Process

A. In order to serve their intended purpose and remain useful, CWPPs must be updated on a regular basis. Plans should be updated every 5 years, at minimum. CWPPs greater than 10 years old are outdated and will not be prioritized when considered for competitive funding opportunities.

B. Updates may either be a preface to a previously approved plan or a new document with updates integrated into an existing plan.

C. CWPP updates must:

- Describe progress made and list all accomplishments since plan creation or last revision
- Address demographic changes (e.g., population flux, new housing development, infrastructure)
- Identify new risks that may have developed
 - o An updated community risk analysis is encouraged, at least for plans aged 5 years or more.
- List new risk reduction projects in a prioritized fashion
 - o Maps must accompany proposed fuels treatments.

D. Suggested update process:

- Review existing CWPP
- Engage stakeholders that have a vested interest in the plan (e.g., federal, state, tribal, emergency management, political subdivision)
- Host collaborative meetings
- Document completed projects and demographic and landscape changes
- Develop updated wildfire risk reduction priorities
- Update maps
- Distribute updated drafts to key stakeholders for review and input prior to final approval
- Finalize with core team signatures and submit to CSFS State Office

Additional Guidance to Consider when developing CWPP (Won't be applied to standards for reimbursement)

- Leaders Guide for developing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan https://static.colostate.edu/client-files/csfs/pdfs/CWPP_LG.pdf
- Community Guide to Preparing and Implementing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan https://static.colostate.edu/client-files/csfs/pdfs/CWPP_Report_Aug2008.pdf
- CSFS HIZ Guide: https://csfs.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/2021_CSFS_HIZGuide_Web.pdf
- Low Flammability Landscape Plants: https://csfs.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/CSFS_CSU-Ext_Fact-Sheets_LFLP_FINAL_web.pdf
- Fire-Resistant Landscaping: Currently being updated but CSFS can share the unpublished details to inform metrics for Zones 1, 2 and 3 on grass height, tree number/cover, maintenance timing/frequency, defensible space, building damage potential, etc.
- Fuelbreak Guidelines for Forested Communities and Subdivisions: https://static.colostate.edu/client-files/csfs/pdfs/fuelbreak_guidellines.pdf
- Colorado Forestry Best Management Practices Forest Stewardship Guidelines for Water Quality Protection https://csfs.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/2021_BMP_Report.pdf
- “Nine Fact Sheets That Will Make Your Job Easier: NFPA Resources about Wildfire-Resilient Homes” <https://fireadaptednetwork.org/nine-fact-sheets-that-will-make-your-job-easier-nfpa-resources-address-questions-from-residents-about-home-hardening/>
- “Basic Principles of Forest Fuel Reduction Treatments” [https://www.fs.usda.gov/psw/publications/skinner/psw_2005_skinner\(agee\)001.pdf](https://www.fs.usda.gov/psw/publications/skinner/psw_2005_skinner(agee)001.pdf)

- “Integrating Potential Operational Delineations (POD) Into Community Wildfire Protection Plans: Guidance for Community Planners” https://csfs.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/PODs_CWPP_Guidance_August2022.pdf
- “Metrics and Considerations for Evaluating How Forest Treatments Alter Wildfire Behavior and Effects” https://www.fs.usda.gov/rm/pubs_journals/2023/rmrs_2023_vorster_a001.pdf
- “Evidence for widespread changes in the structure, composition, and fire regimes of western North American forests” https://www.rmtrr.org/data/Hagmann_etal_2021.pdf
- USFS-RMRS-GTR-373 “Principles and practices for the restoration of ponderosa pine and dry mixed-conifer forests of the Colorado Front Range”: https://www.fs.usda.gov/rm/pubs_series/rmrs/gtr/rmrs_gtr373.pdf
- USFS-RMRS-GTR-365: “Visualization of heterogeneous forest structures following treatment in the southern Rocky Mountains” https://www.fs.usda.gov/rm/pubs_series/rmrs/gtr/rmrs_gtr365.pdf
- USFS-RMRS-310 “Restoring Composition and Structure in Southwestern Frequent-Fire Forests: A science-based framework for improving ecosystem resiliency” https://www.fs.usda.gov/rm/pubs/rmrs_gtr310.pdf
- “San Juan Mixed Conifer Guidelines” https://cfri.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2022/03/MixedConiferForests_Chambers_Remke_Dec2021_FINAL.pdf
- “Gambel Oak Ecology and Management in the Southern Rockies: The Status of Our Knowledge” https://www.fs.usda.gov/rm/pubs_journals/2016/rmrs_2016_kaufmann_m001.pdf
- “Piñon and Juniper Field Guide: Asking the Right Questions to Select Appropriate Management Actions” <https://pubs.usgs.gov/circ/1335/circ1335.pdf>
- “A Field Guide for Selecting the Most Appropriate Treatment in Sagebrush and Piñon-Juniper Ecosystems in the Great Basin” https://www.fs.usda.gov/rm/pubs/rmrs_gtr322.pdf
- “Historical and Modern Disturbance Regimes, Stand Structures, and Landscape Dynamics in Pinon-Juniper Vegetation of the Western United States” https://rmtrr.org/data/Rommeetal_2009.pdf
- CFRI “Sage-Oak 1 year Post Treatment Study Summary Report” https://cfri.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2024/02/SageOakSummaryReport_Weimer_Chambres_CFRI2401.pdf
- “CLIMATE AND DISTURBANCE FORCING OF EPISODIC TREE RECRUITMENT IN A SOUTHWESTERN PONDEROSA PINE LANDSCAPE” https://rmtrr.org/data/Brown&Wu_2005.pdf
- “Changes in forest structure since 1860 in ponderosa pine dominated forests in the Colorado and Wyoming Front Range, USA” https://www.rmtrr.org/data/Battaglia_etal_2018.pdf

- “Identifying Old Trees to Inform Ecological Restoration in Montane Forests of the Central Rocky Mountains, US”
https://www.rmtrr.org/data/Brown_etal_2019_TRR.pdf
- “Gradient analysis of latitudinal variation in Southern Rocky Mountain forests” (This is a study of vegetation on the east side of the Sangre’s, let me know if you want a copy)
- “Wildfire Risk Transmission in the Colorado Front Range, USA”
https://www.fs.usda.gov/rm/pubs_other/rmrs_2014_haas_i001.pdf
- “The Cameron Peak Fire: Use of Potential Operational Delineations and Risk Management Assistance Products” <https://cfri.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2021/06/CameronPeakFirePODsReport.pdf>
- USFS-RMRS-GTR-289 “Fourmile Canyon Fire Findings”
https://www.fs.usda.gov/rm/pubs/rmrs_gtr289.pdf
- Grassland Overview Report (Link to be provided once it goes live in the next few weeks)
- Great Plains Fire Science Exchange (Information on Grassland and Rangelands)
<https://gpfirescience.org/>
- Saving the Farm and Ranch From Wildfire <https://extension.okstate.edu/fact-sheets/print-publications/e/wildfire-preparing-the-ranch-and-farm-e-1048.pdf>
- “Cottonwood Management: Ecology, Rehabilitation, Wildfire and Other Considerations”
https://csfs.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Cottonwood_Management_QuickGuide_26June2015.pdf
- Great Basin Fire Science Exchange (Information on PJ/Sagebrush, etc)
<https://greatbasinfirescience.org/>
- Pike San Isabel National Forest, Forest Plan
<https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/psicc/landmanagement/planning>

Please complete Attachment B: Detailed Budget and Budget Justification

(Separate Excel Spreadsheet)

This is Task Order No. 2303-00118.05, consisting of 3 pages.

Task Order

In accordance with Paragraph 1.01 of the Agreement Between Owner and Engineer for Professional Services – Task Order Edition, dated [April 17, 2023] ("Agreement"), Owner and Engineer agree as follows:

Background Data

- a. Effective Date of Task Order: February 19, 2025
- b. Owner: Huerfano County
- c. Engineer: KLJ Engineering LLC
- d. Specific Project (title): GIS Assessment Services
- e. Specific Project (description): Engineer will provide GIS Services as listed in Services of Engineer to the Owner. These services will include updates to the GIS database based on monthly parcel changes.

Services of Engineer

- A. The specific services to be provided or furnished by Engineer under this Task Order are as follows:

Task 1.1 Project Management

This task will consist of project meetings & updates, monthly invoicing, and quality control/quality assurance reviews.

This task will include the following deliverables: monthly invoices.

Task 1.2 Updating GIS Parcels

Parcel geometry will be maintained in map (not survey) grade, and KLJ will keep master copies of the data electronically for the duration of the project. Updates will be provided monthly or as requested to Huerfano County. The reviewed parcels shapefile has $\pm 13,680$ gaps & overlaps which KLJ will leave as-is.

- KLJ receives proposed parcel geometry information from the county, including any received CAD/GIS electronic files, or parcel deeds which KLJ will use to implement in GIS. Updated parcels will remain in map grade which has the potential to create additional gaps & overlaps. KLJ is not responsible for fixing gaps & overlaps due to errors in new parcels matching into existing.
- KLJ receives monthly updated assessor's attribute table, which will be joined to the parcel geometry by matching the field "Account #" to the parcel field "PRCLNM". The reviewed assessor's attribute table has ± 13 records which don't match the parcels. KLJ

Task Order Form

EJCDC® E-505, Agreement Between Owner and Engineer for Professional Services – Task Order Edition.
Copyright © 2014 National Society of Professional Engineers, American Council of Engineering Companies,
and American Society of Civil Engineers. All rights reserved.

will not be responsible for updates to records where there isn't a match between the assessor's attribute table and the parcels.

This task will include the following deliverables: updated GIS parcels shapefile containing assessor's attribute data in NAD_1983_UTM_Zone_13N (meters) coordinates.

Additional Services

No additional services.

Owner's Responsibilities

Owner shall have those responsibilities set forth in Article 2 of the Agreement and in Exhibit B, subject to the following:

In addition to Exhibit B, the County shall be responsible for supplying the following items:

- The latest GIS shapefile of parcel geometry, for which KLJ is to start.
- GIS shapefiles of PLSS points, sections, or townships used by the county (if available).
- CAD/GIS electronic files received for parcels, parcel deeds, or at minimum a monthly notice of no changes.
- Monthly updated assessor's attribute table, prepared for joining to the GIS parcels.
- Reviewing KLJ data edits for completeness and communicating changes back to KLJ.

Task Order Schedule:

This task order schedule is the agreement term as set forth in Article 3 of the Agreement.

Payments to Engineer

- A. Owner shall pay Engineer for services rendered under this Task Order as follows:

Estimated amount not to exceed \$25,000.00 without prior authorization. Task order effective through December 31, 2025.

- B. The terms of payment are Standard Hourly Rates (plus any expenses expressly eligible for reimbursement) as set forth in Article 4 of the Agreement and in the applicable governing provisions of Exhibit C.

Consultants retained as of the Effective Date of the Task Order: None

Other Modifications to Agreement and Exhibits: 2025 Rate Sheet is attached

Attachments: 2025 Rate Sheet

Other Documents Incorporated by Reference:

A. April 17, 2023, Agreement between Owners and Engineering for Professional Services,
Task Order Edition

Terms and Conditions

Execution of this Task Order by Owner and Engineer shall make it subject to the terms and conditions of the Agreement (as modified above), which Agreement is incorporated by this reference. Engineer is authorized to begin performance upon its receipt of a copy of this Task Order signed by Owner. The effective date of this Task Order is February 19, 2025.

OWNER: Huerfano County

ENGINEER: KLJ Engineering LLC

By: _____

By: _____

Print Name: Karl Sporleder

Print Name: Luke LaLiberty

Title: Chair, Board of County Commissioners

Title: Associate Senior Vice President

Firm's Certificate No. (if required): _____

State of: _____

DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVE FOR TASK ORDER:

DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVE FOR TASK ORDER:

Name: Carl Young

Name: Ryan Sundberg

Title: County Administrator

Title: Engineer

Address: 401 Main Street, Suite 201
Walsenburg, CO 81089

Address: 400 Inverness Parkway, Suite 150
Englewood, CO 80112

E-Mail cyoung@huerfano.us
Address: _____

E-Mail Ryan.sundberg@kljeng.com
Address: _____

Phone: 719-738-3000 x110

Phone: 720-738-7930

Task Order Form

EJCDC® E-505, Agreement Between Owner and Engineer for Professional Services – Task Order Edition.
Copyright © 2014 National Society of Professional Engineers, American Council of Engineering Companies,
and American Society of Civil Engineers. All rights reserved.

Page 3

2025 KLJ Rate Sheet

KLJ Staff Type	Standard Rate	KLJ Staff Type	Standard Rate
Archaeologist I	\$93	CAD Technician I	\$102
Archaeologist II	\$112	CAD Technician II	\$112
Archaeologist III	\$155	CAD Technician III	\$133
Archaeologist IV	\$219	CAD Technician IV	\$171
Archaeologist V	\$222	GIS Specialist I	\$90
Paleontologist	\$161	GIS Specialist II	\$133
Environmental Specialist I	\$110	GIS Specialist III	\$142
Environmental Specialist II	\$126	GIS Specialist IV	\$173
Environmental Specialist III	\$179	Intern	\$101
Environmental Specialist IV	\$190	Associate Planner	\$118
Environmental Specialist V	\$206	Planner	\$173
Environmental Specialist VI	\$264	Senior Planner	\$237
Government Relations Specialist I	\$135	Senior Public Engagement Strategist	\$167
Government Relations Specialist II	\$142	ROW Associate	\$131
Government Relations Specialist III	\$173	ROW Agent	\$180
Graphic Design Specialist	\$143	Project Controls Specialist I	\$111
Engineering Technician I	\$101	Project Controls Specialist II	\$205
Engineering Technician II	\$116	Survey Technician	\$93
Engineering Technician III	\$137	Crew Chief	\$112
Engineering Technician IV	\$174	Senior Crew Chief	\$155
Engineering Technician V	\$280	Professional Land Surveyor	\$183
Designer Technician	\$125	Principal Land Surveyor	\$224
Associate Designer	\$140	1 Person Survey Crew	\$186
Designer	\$164	2 Person Survey Crew	\$248
Senior Designer	\$227	Project Manager	\$212
Engineer in Training I	\$129	Senior Project Manager	\$290
Engineer in Training II	\$139		
Associate Engineer	\$153		
Engineer	\$197		
Senior Engineer	\$264		
Project Assistant I	\$94		
Project Assistant II	\$114		
Project Assistant III	\$137		
Time and Half for Overtime		Included in Hourly Rate	

Reimbursable Expenses (if applicable)		
ATV, UTV, Snowmobile	Included in Hourly Rate	
Survey Equipment	Included in Hourly Rate	
CAD and GIS Work Station	Included in Hourly Rate	
Postage and Routing Printing Cost	Included in Hourly Rate	
Mileage	Included in Hourly Rate	
Special Equipment/Software	Per Project Basis	
Subsistence (Per Diem) - Lodging	Actual Cost	
Subsistence (Per Diem) - Meals	\$45 / Day per Person	
Misc. Project Related Expenses	Cost plus 15%	
Sub-Contracts	Cost plus 15%	

**Rates to be renegotiated after January 1st of each calendar year.

20241113_Municipal_Rate_Sheet



Project Budget

County Name Name Huerfano County
County Allocation 2-Year Budget SFY 2025 and 2026

Project Costs **Allocation Amt Ttl**
 \$ 19,800.00 \$ 18,828.00

		Purchase/Acquisition Cost					
Year 1 - SFY 2025		7/1-9/30/2024	10/1-12/30/24	1/1-3/31/2025	4/1-6/30/25		
Purchase Category	Item(s)	SFY Q1	SFY Q2	SFY Q3	SFY Q4	Total Cost	Allocation Amt.
						\$ -	
On Road Vehicles/Access	Repurpose donated F250 for SAR			\$ 2,500.00		\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
Communications Equip	VHF Radio for donated F250			\$ 1,500.00		\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00
Subscription Services	CALTopo; 6/30/25 - 6/30/26				\$ 700.00	\$ 700.00	\$ 700.00
Data Base/IT Systems	Lap Top Computer-rugged				\$ 800.00	\$ 800.00	\$ 800.00
Communications Equip	Starlink Mini System				\$ 800.00	\$ 800.00	\$ 800.00
						\$ -	
Subtotal						\$ 6,300.00	\$ 6,300.00

		Purchase/Acquisition Cost					
Year 2 - SFY 2026		7/1-9/30/2025	10/1-12/30/25	1/1-3/31/2026	4/1-6/30/26		
Purchase Category	Item(s)	SFY Q1	SFY Q2	SFY Q3	SFY Q4	Project Total	Allocation Amt.
Communications Equip	Replace old VHF Portables (15)	\$ 4,500.00				\$ 4,500.00	\$ 4,500.00
On Road Vehicles/Access	Tires/tune up SAR vehicles (2)		\$ 1,500.00		\$ 1,500.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
SAR Purchased Training	Basic Search Management (3)				\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
General SAR Equipment	To be determined			\$ 2,000.00		\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,028.00
SAR Purchased Training	NOLS Medical or TBD			\$ 2,000.00		\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
						\$ -	
						\$ -	
Subtotal						\$ 13,500.00	\$ 12,528.00

The original legislative intent of the County Allocation, administered by Colorado Parks and Wildlife, is to support BSAR volunteers. With this in mind, Principal Representative from the County and a representative from the coordinated volunteer BSAR Search and Rescue team(s) must sign the County Allocation plan document to signify agreement with the plan.

County Approved By:  Date: 2/18/2025

In consultation with the Coordinated Backcountry Search and Rescue Team

BSAR Representative: Jim Berg Date: 1-27-2025
 BSAR Representative: _____ Date: _____
 BSAR Representative: _____ Date: _____
 BSAR Representative: _____ Date: _____

PURCHASE ORDER

Huerfano County

Purchase Order#: 2025041

Purchase OrderDate: 2/20/2025

Vendor: **GOVERNMENTJOBS.COM, INC. / 8112**
DEPT LA 25067
PASADENA, CA 91185-5067

Ship To: **401 Main Street -**
Walsenburg CO, 81089
719-738-3000 ext. 210

Order Description:

DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL COST	LEDGER
Subscription	1	\$7,068.99	\$7,068.99	001-47900-51719
TOTAL:			\$7,068.99	

NOTES:

Candidate Text Messaging Subscription, Insight Subscription

APPROVALS:

Approving Authority:

Budget Officer:

0014790051719

NEOGOV

INVOICE

Vendor Information / Contact:

2120 Park Pl, Suite 100
El Segundo, CA 90245
Email: billing@neogov.net
Phone: (310) 426-6304
EIN: 33-0888748

Need a W-9? Click here: [W-9 PDF](#)

Invoice Summary:

Invoice No.: INV-130612
Invoice Date: 02-17-2025
Due Date: 04-18-2025
Payment Terms: Net 60
Purchase Order No.:
Customer No.: A-699117

Customer Billing Information
Angela Wakeman Huerfano, County of (CO)
401 Main St Ste 201 Walsenburg, CO 81089 United States

Customer Shipping Information
Huerfano, County of (CO)
401 Main St Ste 201 Walsenburg, CO 81089 United States

Invoice Details:

Product	Start Date	End Date	Quantity	Total Price (\$USD)
Candidate Text Messaging Subscription	04-18-2025	04-17-2026	115	\$645.39
Insight Subscription	04-18-2025	04-17-2026	115	\$6,423.60

SUBTOTAL (\$USD)	\$7,068.99
Sales Tax	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$7,068.99
Payments	\$0.00
Credits	\$0.00
Balance Due (\$USD)	\$7,068.99

Payment Instructions:

Remit checks to: Governmentjobs.com, Inc. DEPT LA 25067 Pasadena, CA 91185-5067	Remit electronic payments to: Silicon Valley Bank Name: Governmentjobs.com, Inc. Account #: 3302022848 Routing #: 121140399 Swift Code: SVBUS6SIBO	Credit card payments: Credit Card Payment Portal Link
---	--	---

By making the payment specified in this invoice, customer agrees that the terms and conditions of the agreement previously executed by the parties shall apply to this purchase, or if there is no prior agreement, the terms and conditions of the NEOGOV Services Agreement set forth in the quote previously provided to Customer shall apply. Any other terms and conditions provided by customer to NEOGOV purchase order or otherwise shall be deemed void.

PURCHASE ORDER

Huerfano County

Purchase Order#: 2025043

Purchase OrderDate: 2/21/2025

Vendor: SE GROUP / 7619
4609 South 2300 East, Suite 204
Salt Lake City, UT 84117

Ship To: 401 Main Street -
Walsenburg CO, 81089
719-738-3000 ext. 210

Order Description:

DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL COST	LEDGER
Additional Changes to County Comp Plan	1	\$2,100.00	\$2,100.00	001-40124-51310
TOTAL:			\$2,100.00	

NOTES:

APPROVALS:

Approving Authority: _____

Budget Officer: _____



Project Change Order Request

Project Title: Huerfano County Comprehensive Plan
Client: Huerfano County, Carl Young
Project Number/PO: 22161
Project Manager: Gabby Voeller

	Contract Total
Current Contract Amount	\$102,000.00
Proposed Amendment	\$2,100
Proposed Contract Amount	\$104,100.00

Identify Change:

This Change Order includes additional fees associated with the following:

1. Additional edits to the comprehensive plan.

These fees were not anticipated in the original contract.

This Project Change Order Request is in accordance with the contract.

Impact To:

Budget: \$2,100 - raising the overall contract to \$314,105.

Schedule: The plan is expected to be adopted in March or April.

Other: None

Authorization to Proceed With Change:


 Mark Kane, Director of Community Planning

 Carl Young, County Administrator
 Date:

Invoice Initial Approval

Huerfano County

Batch ID: Pre Pay CAPP

Batch Post-On Date: 2/20/2025

Status	Invoice	Vendor Name	Invoice Date	Due Date	Invoice Amount	Approved Amount	Wire?	Approved?
--------	---------	-------------	--------------	----------	----------------	-----------------	-------	-----------

O	2025 CAPP CONTRIBUTION	COLORADO COUNTIES CAS	2/20/2025	2/20/2025	\$407,558.00	\$407,558.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
---	------------------------	-----------------------	-----------	-----------	--------------	--------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

2025 CAPP CONTRIBUTION

Bank: 3 031236331 Entered By: ktrujillo

GL Account	Distribution Description	GL Amount
001-50200-51301	JUDICIAL	\$47,602.77
001-40127-51301	GF, WASTE, HEALTH DEPT, DHS	\$231,819.00
002-43080-51301	2025 CAPP CONTRIBUTION	\$111,507.87
069-49000-51301	EMS	\$16,628.36
Invoice GL Total:		\$407,558.00

Grand Total - Invoices:	\$407,558.00	\$407,558.00
--------------------------------	--------------	--------------

Fund Totals for Selected Batch

Fund	Fund Name	Fund Total
001	GENERAL FUND	\$279,421.77
002	ROAD & BRIDGE FUND	\$111,507.87
069	EMERGENCY SERVICES F	\$16,628.36
Total All Funds:		\$407,558.00

Operator: ktrujillo

Report ID: APLT12

2/20/2025 9:59:35 AM

Page 1 of 1



February 20, 2025

Huerfano County Commissioners
401 Main St.
Walsenburg, CO 81089

Subject: Opposition to Proposed Development at Cuchara Mountain Park

Dear Huerfano County Commissioners,

The Cuchara Foundation is writing to express its strong opposition to the proposed development plan submitted by Buckhorn Ridge Outfitters for Cuchara Mountain Park. As stated on our website, the mission of the Cuchara Foundation is "to honor its history, respect the environment, and support opportunities to learn and have fun in the Cuchara Valley." The park was purchased with donations from the community through the Cuchara Foundation and was intended to be a free and open park space for public enjoyment.

In December 2024, representatives from the Cuchara Foundation met with Buckhorn Ridge Outfitters, during which the development plan was shared with our Board. We were dismayed to learn of the proposal to construct 20 tiny home lodging units and other commercial amenities within the park. This plan directly contradicts the original intent of maintaining the park as a public space free from commercial exploitation. It is also out of alignment with the SE Group's proposed "[master plan](#)" for the Cuchara Mountain Park, which was commissioned by the Huerfano County Board of County Commissioners and funded by a DOLA Planning Grant, The Virginia Wellington Cabot Foundation, and the Cuchara Foundation, and which has guided decision making and planning for Cuchara Mountain Park until now.

It has come to our attention that the Huerfano County Commissioners are now attempting to finalize a lease agreement with the developer without opening the process for public comment. This lack of transparency and public involvement is deeply concerning, especially given the significant impact such development would have on the community. The residents of Huerfano County have a vested interest in the future of Cuchara Mountain Park, and bypassing public discourse undermines the democratic process and erodes public trust.

While we appreciate and fully support the County's decision to continue partnering with Panadero Ski Corporation for winter operations, we firmly oppose any for-profit development within the park. The introduction of commercial enterprises not only violates the park's founding principles and contradicts our commitment to pursuing "Dark Sky" designation and complementing existing activities provided by local organizations, but it also sets a dangerous precedent for future exploitation of public lands.

We urge the Huerfano County Commissioners to halt any agreements with Buckhorn Ridge Outfitters and to engage in an open, transparent process that includes ample opportunity for public input. Preserving Cuchara Mountain Park as a free, public recreation space is essential to honoring the commitments made to the community and the donors who made this park possible.

Sincerely,
Cuchara Foundation Board of Directors

Cuchara Foundation
PO Box 316
La Veta, CO 81055



CUCHARA MOUNTAIN PARK Master Plan

Acknowledgements

This master plan is a result of a collaboration of the following groups:

HUERFANO COUNTY

Gerald Cisneros, Commissioner

Max Vezzani, Commissioner

Ray Garcia, Commissioner

John Galusha, Administrator

CUCHARA MOUNTAIN PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Sue Alt

Bob Jacobs

Lois Adams

Jim Littlefield

Bob Bennhoff

Mike Moore

Bill Coppola

Deb Nott

Mike Fleener

SE GROUP

Claire Humber, Director of Resort Planning & Design

Mark Kane, Director of Community Planning & Design

Pete Williams, Senior Associate

Jason Hoover, Senior Associate

Gabby Voeller, Associate

Liz Grades, Staff

Ellie Wachtel, Staff

This plan was made possible through contributions from:

DOLA Planning Grant

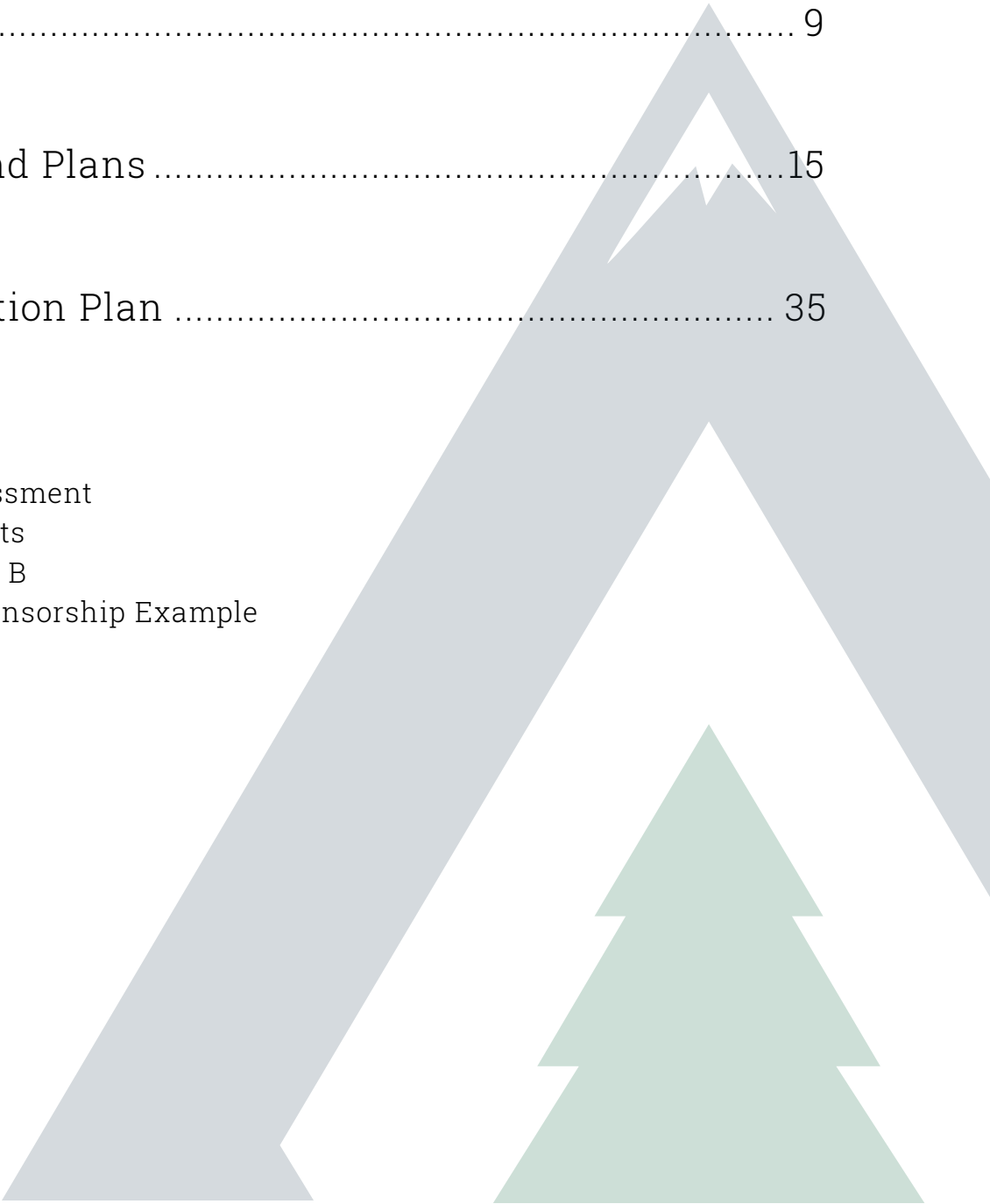
The Virginia Wellington Cabot Foundation

Huerfano County Board of County Commissioners

Cuchara Foundation

Contents

1 Introduction.....	5
2 Process.....	9
3 Activities and Plans	15
4 Implementation Plan	35
 Appendices	
I. Market Assessment	
II. Survey Results	
III. Concepts A & B	
IV. Business Sponsorship Example	



Page Intentionally Left Blank



CHAPTER ONE

Introduction



Introduction

Cuchara Mountain Park is a new county-owned recreation facility located in the Spanish Peaks of Huerfano County. In 2017, the Cuchara Foundation provided Huerfano County the money to purchase 47 acres at the base of the former Cuchara Mountain Resort for use as a public mountain park. Efforts began immediately to refurbish existing structures and build a new trail on the property. Looking towards the future, this master plan lays out a long-term vision for the park. This plan envisions the park revived with outdoor activities, programs, and events for both residents and visitors. The community's mission and goals, developed through a public process, guided this vision and the recommendations, financial analysis, and priorities that will bring about its implementation.

MISSION

The Cuchara Mountain Park, as created by Huerfano County, is an environmentally friendly destination for year-round recreation, education, and cultural programs in harmony with nature.

GOALS

- Offer residents and visitors a place to recreate, gather, and connect with nature
- Attract tourists be self-sustaining, and provide economic benefits to Huerfano County
- Provide a pleasant venue for music, arts, and cultural events and programs
- Increase access to and use of the San Isabel National Forest through partnerships with the Forest Service
- Offer outdoor experiences that are accessible to all
- Offer eco-friendly facilities and activities

LOCATION MAP



LOCATION

The park, at the former Cuchara Mountain Resort, is in southwestern Huerfano County. The park is located a mile up Panadero Avenue from State Highway 12. State Highway 12 is a Colorado Scenic and Historic Byway known as the Highway of Legends. The village of Cuchara, a small historic commercial center with bed and breakfasts, shops, and restaurants, is three miles north of the park on State Highway 12. Cuchara has a small year-round population but is a popular summer destination with multi-generational cabins and people staying in the area for many weeks. Cuchara is 11 miles from La Veta, a larger town with a thriving art scene, many retirees, and heavy summer visitation. Walsenburg, the county seat, is 27 miles from Cuchara, and has a younger, largely working class and year-round population. Walsenburg is located on I-25; 50 miles south of Pueblo, 92 miles south of Colorado Springs, and 163 miles south of Denver.



PLAN PURPOSE & ORGANIZATION

This master plan is a long-range strategic plan to create an accessible and enjoyable year-round hub for recreation, education, entertainment, and social events that is financially responsible and ecologically friendly.

The planning process considered the area’s existing demographics, tourism, and recreational opportunities to determine the programming best suited for the site. Studies of other ski areas, the history of skiing at Cuchara, industry trends, and financial estimates guided an analysis of possible ski operations at the resort.

The plan shows a park that is well-suited to the natural environment and surrounding community. It includes recommendations for facilities and associated activities, programs, and events, and estimated costs and potential revenue for each. A priority phasing plan offers a strategy for progressing the park goals.



HISTORY

The ski area, then known as Panadero Resort, first opened for the 1981/1982 season. It operated on and off for the next two decades under many different owners. The resort had five lifts, snowmaking on the entire mountain, and averaged 22,000 visitors annually. A ski area Special Use Permit (SUP) allowed the resort operate on surrounding National Forest System (NFS) land. The ski area last operated in the 1999/2000 season. In 2002, the Forest Service terminated the ski area’s SUP, based on the limited snowfall and the ski area’s inability to draw enough visitors to be financially viable. The NFS land remained open to public use but the lower area, the base of the ski area became private property closed to the public. In 2017, the Cuchara Foundation raised and donated \$150,000 for Huerfano County to purchase 47 privately-held acres at the base for use by all Huerfano residents as a county-owned park. The Foundation remains involved in the park and led efforts in summer 2017 to rehabilitate the day lodge building and construct a hiking and cross country ski trail on the property.





CHAPTER TWO

Process



Process

The Community Vision Plan for Cuchara Mountain Park (see Chapter Three) was the result of a robust public engagement process and an analysis of the market and the site itself. The public engagement process involved both residents and visitors in the planning of the park. The market assessment explored area demographics, existing recreational opportunities, and industry trends. The site analysis considered the physical condition of the parks. To guide the plan’s implementation, the planning team conducted an analysis of potential ski area operations and costs and revenues (see Chapter Four). This plan is a high-level analysis and strategy; it is up to the committee to carry it through and conduct more detailed planning and analysis as necessary.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

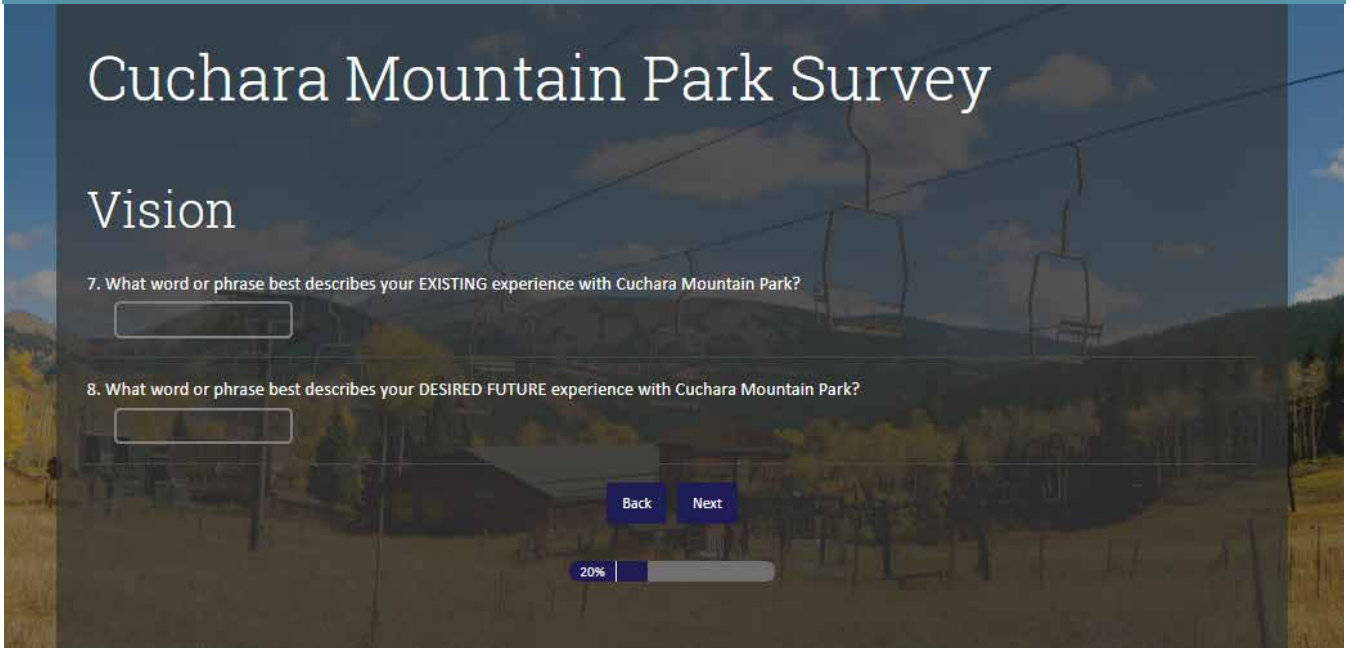
The Cuchara Mountain Park planning process was driven by area residents and visitors’ vision for the park. This was discussed through stakeholder discussions, a survey, and two open houses.

Stakeholder discussions were held on February 26th at the La Veta Community Center. 56 people attended these small group discussion sessions, representing the local tourism and real estate industries, Huerfano County government, the

arts community, outdoor recreation groups, and the residents around the park. The stakeholders discussed existing recreational opportunities in the county, a vision for the park, and ideas for activities, events, facilities, and programs. Other focus groups were held in Walsenburg with students and leaders of the Sangre De Cristo Center for Youth and with La Veta School District teachers and administrators.



ONLINE SURVEY



Immediately after those discussions, a survey was launched to gather feedback on a vision and specific activities, programs, events, and facilities. The survey was available online and as a hard copy at local libraries. Nearly 700 people viewed the survey online with 481 complete responses. Approximately 2/3 of respondents listed their primary residence as outside the county and 83% had visited the park before. See a summary of survey results in Appendix II.

A final open house was held on September 2nd at the park to share the plan with the community, celebrate the park, and gather any last comments.

The Cuchara Mountain Park Advisory Committee (CMPAC) met throughout the process to provide their input and ideas and discuss the implementation of the plan. Two of three County Commissioners actively participated on the committee.

The survey results guided the development of two draft Community Vision Plans for future layouts of the park (see Appendix III). These plans were shown to the community at an open house at the La Veta Library on April 24th. 40+ people attended to offer feedback on the plans and the draft mission statement and goals. The plans were also posted online for those who could not attend the open house.



MARKET ASSESSEMENT

The planning team prepared a market assessment to provide perspective on the potential for Cuchara Mountain Park as a viable winter and summer recreation area. The assessment looked at demographics, tourism statistics, and outdoor recreation participation to understand the size and characteristics of the market. A regional competitive analysis considered trends in the ski and outdoor recreation industries, existing recreational opportunities and attractions in the area, and comparable nearby winter and summer destinations. See Appendix I for the full report.

Key Findings

- » The year-round population of Huerfano County is small (6,521) but does grow significantly in the summer months, especially around Cuchara. Over half of the homes in the Cuchara and La Veta zip code are second homes, primarily used during the summer months.
 - » Second homeowners typically visit with large family groups interested in recreational activities, programs, and events. Their incomes tend to be higher than the Huerfano County average. **Exploring options to embrace the seasonal boom of second home visitors and seasonal residents would be advantageous for Cuchara.**
 - » Visitors come to the area for the natural beauty, arts, the scenic Highway of Legends, small-town charm, and outdoor recreation. **Summer activities at Cuchara Mountain Park could encourage visitors to stop or extend their trips, spending money in the county.**
 - » The area’s winter visitation is low and many businesses close for the winter. The county’s small population would make it more difficult to generate revenue at the park in the winter. **Long-term, winter activities at the park could bring new visitors, encourage second homeowners to visit during the winter, and support a year-round economy.**
- » The county’s year-round population is older (median age 54.5), especially compared to the state as a whole (median age 36.3). The county residents have lower incomes than the state average, with a median household income of \$33,257, compared to \$62,520 statewide.
 - » Nationally, participants in outdoor recreation tend to have higher incomes and are younger than Huerfano County residents. **Cuchara Mountain Park could offer accessible and affordable activities to match the county demographics and encourage under-represented groups to partake in outdoor recreation.**
- » Existing summer recreation opportunities in the county include lake-based activities and golfing at Lathrop State Park; hiking, fishing, and camping in the San Isabel National Forest; the Walsenburg Wild Waters water park; and horseback trail rides. **Activities at Cuchara Mountain Park should complement rather than compete with the existing opportunities.**
- » Monarch Mountain and Wolf Creek are small, successful Colorado ski areas with significant and consistent snowfall. Their adjacent towns, Salida and Pagosa Springs, have strong local skier bases, amenities for destination visitors, and strong summer tourism. The ski areas, in turn, provide winter tourism to keep local businesses open year-round. **Monarch and Wolf Creek are slight competition, but primary models for Cuchara given their snowpack, local skier base, and support of the local economy.**
- » Festivals and events draw many visitors to the area throughout the summer. **Cuchara Mountain Park could be a venue for existing festivals or host new festivals to draw additional visitation.**



EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Cuchara Mountain Park is 47 acres at the base of the former ski area. The old ski lifts and snowmaking systems are in place but a full assessment by certified professionals is necessary to evaluate the infrastructure and begin repairs. The day lodge building has been rehabilitated for public use and has some basic amenities. The adjacent former ski patrol building, pictured below, would require significant work to reopen. Some shrubs and trees have grown in the ski trails, but they are otherwise intact. A trail along Baker Creek on the eastern edge of the property was constructed summer 2017 but no trails

currently exist to hike or bike up the mountain.



EXISTING CONDITIONS





CHAPTER THREE
Activities
and Plans





Activities and Plans

Based on public input, the planning team developed a Final Community Vision Plan for Cuchara Mountain Park, with general locations of proposed facilities. Descriptions of the proposed facilities and associated activities, programs, and events can be found on the pages following the maps. A financial analysis, priority phasing plan, and best practices for sustainable design and management are in Chapter Four. Additional planning, design, and feasibility studies are necessary before constructing many of the elements of the plan.

The Community Vision Plan maps show the park at three different scales - an overview map with the park and proposed trails on adjacent NFS land, a full property map, and a base area detail map.

PLANS A & B

At the April Open House, attendees were presented two Community Vision Plans for the park, Plan A and Plan B (see Appendix III). Plan A had minimal new activities and facilities, with little intended to generate revenue. Plan B had more activities and facilities, including some intended to generate revenue



such as downhill skiing and tubing. In general, open house attendees were open to all the activities included in Plan B but emphasized that development should occur carefully and slowly. They advocated for an initial build-out resembling Plan A, with the Plan B activities and facilities added as the park raises money and gathers momentum. These sentiments were taken into account in developing the priority phasing plan for the park, found in Chapter Four. In the end, the Final Community Vision Plan closely resembles Plan B, except with an on-property hiking trail to the top of Lift 4, fewer trails on NFS land, a viewing deck rather than an observatory at the top of Lift 3, and sledding on the beginner ski hill before the surface lift is built.



CUCHARA MOUNTAIN PARK
Final Community Vision Plan: Overview
June 2018

LEGEND

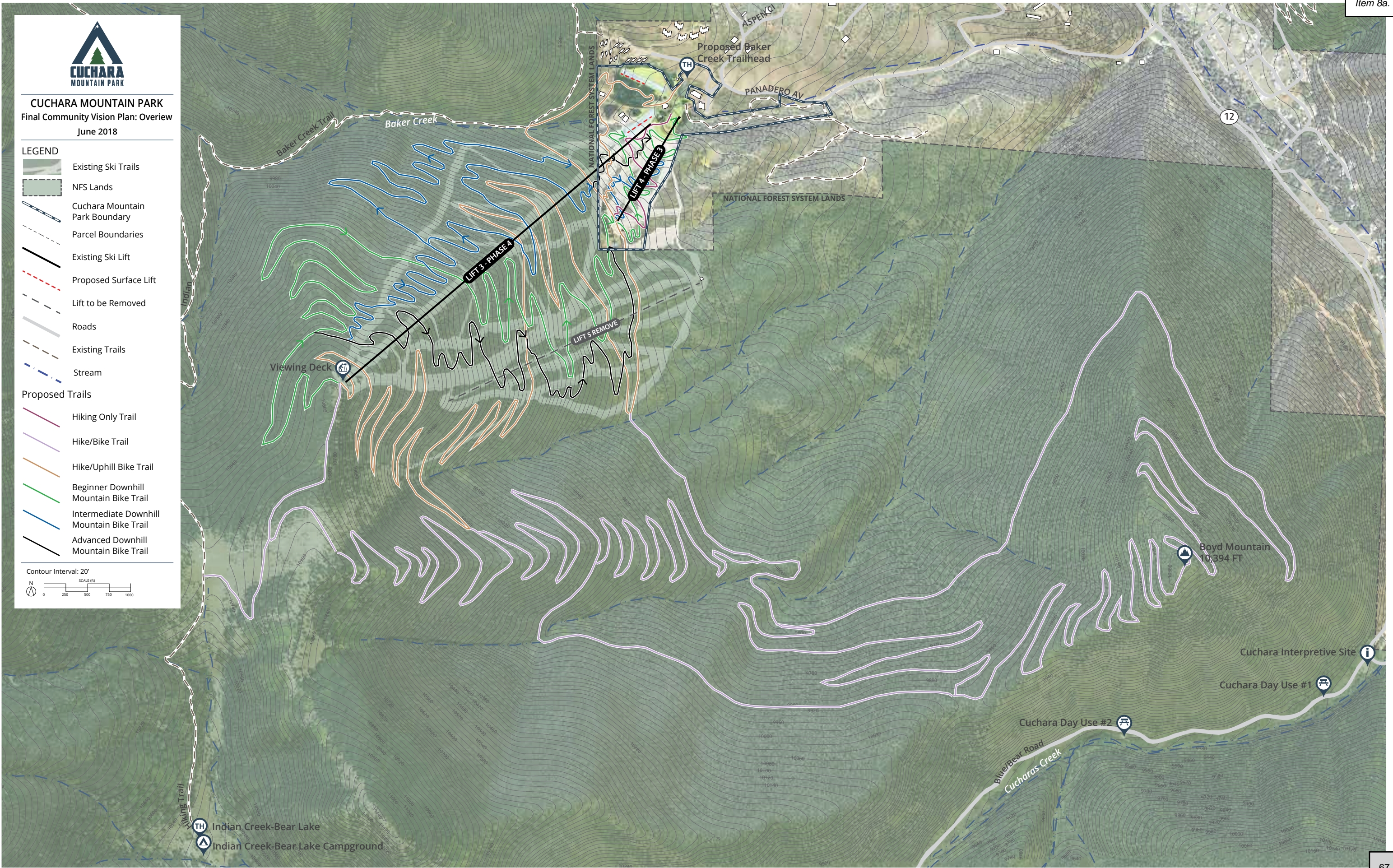
- Existing Ski Trails
- NFS Lands
- Cuchara Mountain Park Boundary
- Parcel Boundaries
- Existing Ski Lift
- Proposed Surface Lift
- Lift to be Removed
- Roads
- Existing Trails
- Stream

Proposed Trails

- Hiking Only Trail
- Hike/Bike Trail
- Hike/Uphill Bike Trail
- Beginner Downhill Mountain Bike Trail
- Intermediate Downhill Mountain Bike Trail
- Advanced Downhill Mountain Bike Trail

Contour Interval: 20'

SCALE (ft)
0 250 500 750 1000



Programs



- Arts and Crafts
- Cultural/Historical
- Outdoor Classroom
- Mountain Bike Skills Camp
- Ski School
- Kids Camp
- Guided Snowshoe Tours
- Orienteering
- Birding

Events



- Music Festivals
- Weddings
- Food and Beverage Festivals
- Mountain Bike Festival
- Adventure Races (i.e., Tough Mudder, Ragnar, 24-hour Mountain Bike)
- Trail Running Races
- Mountain Bike Races

Activities

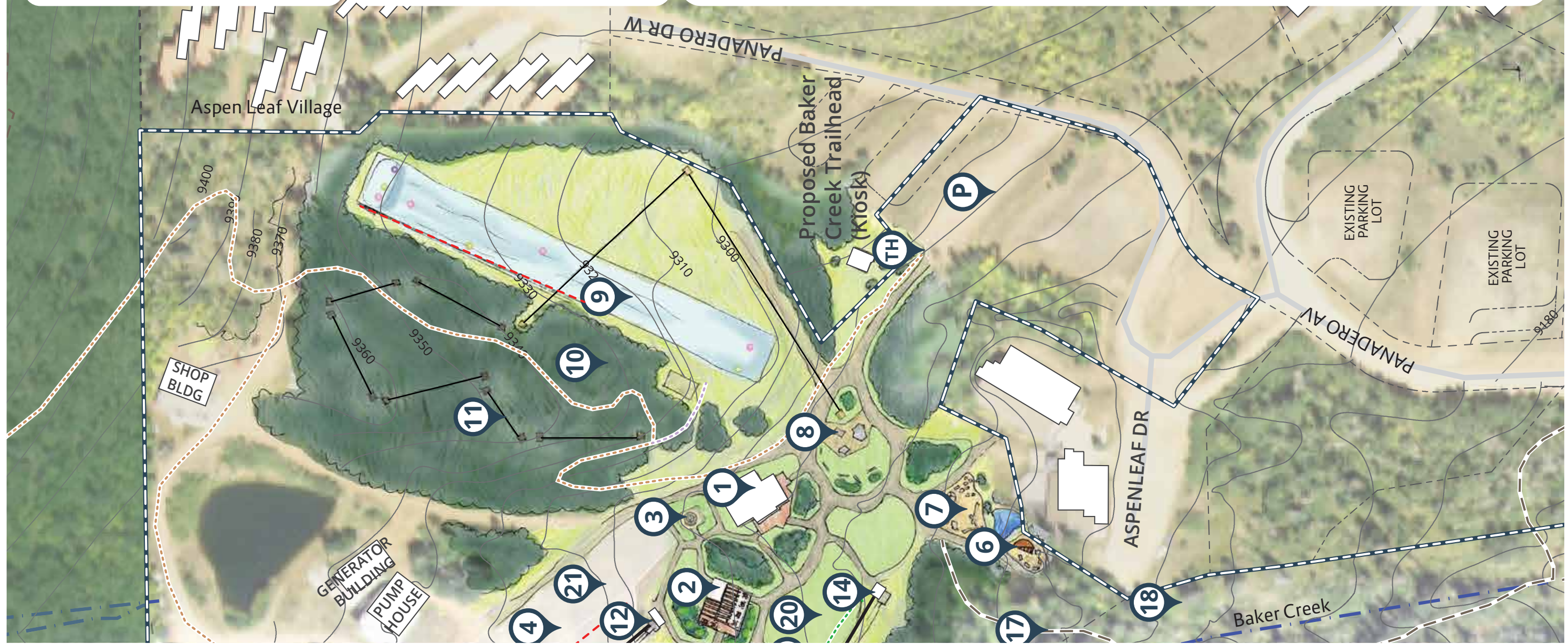


Summer

- Hiking/Nature Trail (Existing XC ski trail)
- Mountain Biking (XC, Climbing Trail, Lift-served Downhill)
- Climbing Structures
- Aerial Adventure Course/Canopy Tour
- Multigenerational Play Area
- Birdwatching
- Picnicking
- Fire Ring/Storytelling/S'mores
- Night Stargazing Hikes
- Viewing Deck Stargazing
- Scenic Lift Rides
- Camping (Yurts)
- Mini Golf
- Disc Golf
- Summer Tubing

Winter

- Snowshoeing
- Tubing
- Downhill Skiing (Lift 3 & 4)
- XC Skiing
- Backcountry Skiing
- Sledding
- Fire Ring/Storytelling/S'mores
- Night Stargazing Hikes
- Camping (Yurts)



- Programs**
- Arts and Crafts
 - Cultural/Historical
 - Outdoor Classroom
 - Mountain Bike Skills Camp
 - Ski School
 - Kids Camp
 - Guided Snowshoe Tours
 - Orienteering
 - Birding

- Events**
- Music Festivals
 - Weddings
 - Food and Beverage Festivals
 - Mountain Bike Festival
 - Adventure Races (i.e., Tough Mudder, Ragnar, 24-hour Mountain Bike)
 - Trail Running Races
 - Mountain Bike Races

- Activities**
- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>Summer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiking/Nature Trail (Existing XC ski trail) • Mountain Biking (XC, Climbing Trail, Lift-served Downhill) • Climbing Structures • Aerial Adventure Course/ Canopy Tour • Multigenerational Play Area • Birdwatching • Picnicking | <p>Winter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snowshoeing • Tubing • Downhill Skiing (Lifts 3 & 4) • XC Skiing • Backcountry Skiing • Sledding • Fire Ring/Storytelling/ S'mores • Night Stargazing Hikes • Camping (Yurts) |
|--|--|



CUCHARA MOUNTAIN PARK
 Final Community Vision Plan: Base Area
 June 2018

LEGEND

- Existing Ski Trails
- NFS Lands
- Cuchara Mountain Park Boundary
- Parcel Boundaries
- Ski Lift
- Proposed Surface Lift
- Roads
- Existing Trails
- Stream

Proposed Trails

- Hiking Only Trail
- Hike/Bike Trail
- Hike/Uphill Bike Trail
- Beginner Downhill Mountain Bike Trail
- Intermediate Downhill Mountain Bike Trail
- Advanced Downhill Mountain Bike Trail

Contour Interval: 10'
 SCALE (ft) 0 30 60 90 120

- KEY**
- | | | |
|--|--|------------------------------------|
| 1 Day Lodge - Meeting, Seminar, Gathering Space with Rentals | 8 Climbing Structures | 17 Interpretive Trail/XC Ski Trail |
| 2 Small Cafe - First Aid, Patio, Small Stage, Dance Floor | 9 Tubing Hill (Summer, Winter) | 18 Revive Mini Golf Course |
| 3 Fire Ring | 10 Phase 2: Low Ropes Course | 19 Disc Golf |
| 4 Beginner Ski Terrain - New Surface Lift | 11 Phase 4: Canopy Tour/Aerial Adventure Course | 20 Event Lawn |
| 5 Amphitheater | 12 Lift 3: Phase 4 - Skiing, Downhill Mountain Biking, Scenic Lift Rides | 21 Sledding |
| 6 Outdoor Classroom | 13 Downhill Skiing | |
| 7 Multigenerational Play Area | 14 Lift 4: Phase 3 - Skiing, Downhill Mountain Biking, Scenic Lift Rides | |

Page Intentionally Left Blank

FACILITIES

DAY LODGE

Continuing improvements would make the day lodge a flexible and inviting hub for park activities such as education, social functions, relaxing by the fire, entertainment, and meetings. In addition, the ticket office would sell lift tickets and tubing passes and distribute the equipment for disc golf and mini golf. Eventually, a space for ski and mountain bike rentals would be added as those activities are established at the park.



CAFÉ BUILDING

The old ski patrol building would be transformed into a flexible, multi-purpose space with a café and meeting/performing areas inside. It would have bathrooms and first aid and a café with an adaptable deck upstairs. The deck would host outdoor dining, entertainment, and dancing. The café would operate weekends in the winter and summer, events, and school field trips. The county should look into a concessionaire to operate the café. As the café does not have regular hours, it would sell pre-packaged snacks and beverages.



AMPHITHEATER

A natural amphitheater built into the hillside would host events and concerts in the summer. There would be rows of tiered seating and a small stage at the bottom. The first phase of construction should be the stage, with folks sitting on picnic blankets and lawn chairs on the grass. Eventually, tiered seating would be added. In the winter, the amphitheater must be covered in snow to minimize the hazard to skiers.



FACILITIES

OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

An outdoor classroom, by the pond, would have wooden benches for students and a teaching area with a blackboard built into the natural features. Local school groups could use the space to gather and learn about forest or pond ecology and local history. Camps and other programs could use the space to regroup after a team building exercise or playground activity.



FIRE RING

A fire ring would be located near the day lodge as a winter gathering place. Parents could sit by the fire and watch their children in the beginner ski area/sledding hill. The fire pit could be used year-round as well, for storytelling and s'mores for summer camps and school programs.



VIEWING DECK

A viewing deck at the top of Lift 4 would have a beautiful view of the valley and out to West Spanish Peak. The deck would have picnic tables for people to enjoy after a hike, bike, or lift ride up to the spot. The deck would also host astronomy programming with telescopes stored near the deck or weddings and other events. Once Lift 3 opens, a viewing deck would also be constructed there.



ACTIVITIES

HIKING

Cuchara Mountain Park would be a hub for hiking on NFS land. The park could be a trailhead for the Baker Creek trail with a trail connection to the existing trail. A hiking trail on the property to the top of Lift 4 is an immediate priority. Later, the park must work with the Forest Service on trails on NFS land to the top of Lift 3, around Boyd Mountain, and connecting to the existing Indian Creek trail. Many of these trails would also be open to mountain bikers.



MOUNTAIN BIKING

Cuchara Mountain Park would be a regional destination for mountain bikers. The initial priority is mountain bike trails on the property, with lift-serviced biking available once Lift 4 is open. Later, trails would be built on NFS land, with downhill trails available from the top of Lift 3. Trails would exist for riders of all ability levels (beginner, intermediate, advanced) and instructional programming and rentals would be available. Once the network is relatively built out, the park could host mountain bike races and festivals.



SLEDDING

The slope on the north side of Lift 3, marked number 4, would be the designated sledding hill before the surface lift is installed or during the week, when the ski area is not operating. It will be a free activity and sleds would be available in the day lodge for rental. The obstacles currently on the hill, such as the base of an old lift tower, must be removed.



ACTIVITIES

BEGINNER SKIING

A beginner ski area is essential to reintroduce skiing to the county and create a family-friendly atmosphere. The area to the right of Lift 3, with its gentle slopes, would be a designated beginner ski area. A 300 foot magic carpet surface lift would transport the skiers up about 50 vertical feet. Snowmaking would be necessary in this area. This area would be heavily used by learn to ski programs and ski school for area kids and visitors.



MULTI-GENERATIONAL PLAYGROUND

Multi-generational playgrounds create opportunities for all ages to play together and exercise. The playground, in addition to typical playground elements such as slides and swings, would be accessible to the mobility-impaired and have shade structures and seating areas. Other possible amenities include outdoor fitness stations, chess boards, or balance beams. If possible, natural materials should be used.



ROCK CLIMBING

Climbing structures would be located near the park entrance. They are imagined to be short structures designed for bouldering and not requiring a harness or belay. Manufacturers make structures that are climbable by kids of all ages without special footwear. The structures would feel like real rock with lots of handholds and footholds. If interest and capital exists for a more commercial venture, taller structures could be built that would require a harness and belay and would charge a fee.



ACTIVITIES

WINTER TUBING

Winter tubing, where riders slide down the hill in an inner tube, would draw visitors to the park. A magic carpet surface lift would transport the riders and the tubes up the hill, enabling riders to go up and down again. Snowmaking would be required for the tubing and snow would form lane barriers. Riders would purchase timed passes at the day lodge ticket office and receive a tube as they approached the hill. The operation would require a few employees to sell tickets and monitor the lift and tubing.



SUMMER TUBING

Summer tubing would take place on the same slope as winter tubing. Summer tubing requires the installation of lanes, made of a synthetic material. The synthetic material mimics the slippery snow surface. A magic carpet surface lift would transport riders and the tubes to the top of the slope. The magic carpet infrastructure and the tubes themselves are identical to winter tubing. Passes would be sold in the day lodge ticket office and the operation would require a few employees to sell tickets and monitor the lift and tubing.



LOW ROPES COURSE

The low ropes course would be a simple, natural challenge course through the woods. The course would be designed for team building activities for school groups, camps, and retreats. The course would not require technical gear and the course would be easy to construct with logs, boards, and ropes.



ACTIVITIES

CANOPY TOUR/ AERIAL ADVENTURE COURSE

A canopy tour or aerial adventure course, an expensive undertaking, would be a later installation. A tour or course is envisioned for the low ropes course site once funds have been raised. The tour or adventure course both occur in the tree canopy and require a harness and a helmet. A canopy tour is walkways in the trees, with small platforms at destination trees (top image). The canopy tour may also have a few ziplines but is generally designed to be accessible to all ages. Aerial adventure courses have more challenge features that require climbing, swinging, traversing, maneuvering obstacles, and ziplines.



DOWNHILL SKIING

Downhill skiing would be available once Lift 4 and the snowmaking system are up and running. Lift 3 and skiing on NFS land could be added if smaller ski operations are successful and the Forest Service reissues the Special Use Permit. Skiing would be operated by a private concessionaire and open on weekends through the winter. From the top of Lift 4, there would be five trails and over 200 feet of vertical. Lessons, rentals, and ski school would be available. Ski operations would require instructors, ski patrol, lift operators, lift maintenance, groomers, ticket sellers, and snowmaking operators.



ACTIVITIES

PICNICKING

There would be many spots around the park to enjoy a picnic. There would be picnic tables and wooden benches near the climbing structure, tables on the deck of the café building, and additional tables on a patio at the top of Lift 4 for those who hiked, biked, or took the lift there. People could also spread blankets out on the event lawn or the amphitheater hill. Food would also be available for purchase at the café.



YURT CAMPING

Yurts at the top of Lift 4 would be used for camping year-round. They would be equipped for winter with a wood stove and open to backcountry skiers or snowshoers looking to access NFS lands. In the summer, people could hike, bike, or take the lift up to yurts. The yurts would be relatively comfortable camping facilities with bunk beds and tables and chairs. School programs and camps could also use the yurts for overnights.



SCENIC LIFT RIDES

Lift 4 would operate in the summer for residents and visitors to experience the scenery. Tickets could be purchased at the day lodge and then riders would have fantastic views of West Spanish Peak and the valley. Once at the top, people could enjoy a picnic and then hike, bike, or take the chairlift down.



ACTIVITIES

DISC GOLF

Disc golf is a frisbee based game where players throw specialized flying discs at targets, elevated metal baskets. Like golf, the fewer number of throws the better. The course would spread across the property, traversing the ski trails and going up and down the mountain, with the holes primarily in the woods. The course should be designed around the proposed trails. Disc golf tournaments are also growing in popularity and the park could host. Disc golf courses are generally free to use but discs can be rented or purchased.



MINI GOLF

Mini golf is an offshoot of golf that uses short courses (usually 10 yards from cup to tee) on an artificial putting surfaces. The courses can have artificial obstacles such as tunnels, ramps, windmills, and other designed features to match the course theme. Miniature golf would require a small concession for the clubs and balls. A course exists along the creek but would need to be rehabilitated and improved.



BACKCOUNTRY SKIING

The ski runs would be open to backcountry skiing at all times. With Cuchara Mountain Park a county facility, the park would be a public entry for those looking to access the NFS land for backcountry skiing. Backcountry skiers could park at the base and ski up, first on park property and then crossing onto NFS land. After returning to the base, they could enjoy the amenities of the base area, such as the fire ring or the café.



ACTIVITIES

CROSS COUNTRY SKIING

Already, the park is the trailhead for the local cross country skiing trails. Spanish Peaks Alpine Alliance (SPAA) grooms the new Baker Creek trail that begins on the park and extends via easements onto adjacent land. The Cuchara Mountain Park should protect these easements going forward and look into easements for additional trail opportunities on appropriate terrain.



SNOWSHOEING

The Cuchara Mountain Park trails and those on adjacent NFS land will be open for snowshoeing in the winter. Snowshoers could park at the base area and follow the hiking/biking trails up the mountain for winter outdoor recreation. Like backcountry skiers, snowshoers would use the park amenities, such as the fire ring or café. Additional programming could be available for snowshoeing such as rentals or guided tours.



NATURE INTERPRETATION TRAIL

Interpretive nature signage would be placed along the existing cross country ski trail. The signage would give information about local wildlife, ecology, and geology and identify plants and trees.



PROGRAMS

ARTS AND CRAFTS

Given the nearby arts community, Cuchara Mountain Park would host a variety of arts-related programming. Possibilities include nature painting groups and classes, programs to build fairy houses with children, craft fairs, and natural material sculpture workshops. The park should partner with the Spanish Peaks Art Council to bring programming to the park.



CULTURAL/ HISTORIC

Park programming would celebrate and embrace local Native American cultures, Hispanic heritage, or the history of trade in the valley. Possible programming includes dances, history talks, and theater shows. The amphitheater, dance floor, and event lawn would be ideal spaces for these programs. The park should partner with the Francisco Fort Museum, the Historical Society, and the Latino Club.



OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

The outdoor classroom would be utilized for a wide range of nature-related educational programming. School groups could meet in the classroom for instruction about the ecology or local history. Talks for children or adults about area wildlife, astronomy, and geology could also take place in the outdoor classroom. The park should partner with the La Veta School District and Huerfano School District to encourage them to use the space.



PROGRAMS

MOUNTAIN BIKING SKILLS CAMPS

With a network of mountain bike trails, Cuchara Mountain Park would be a great place to learn to ride. Experienced riders would offer skills camps geared towards beginner riders. These programs would be available to Walsenburg and La Veta schoolchildren, possibly as part of after school or Friday programming. Camps would be offered throughout the summer to visitors as well.



KIDS' CAMPS

The activities and facilities at the park are well-suited to kids' camps. Kids could take nature hikes, play on the climbing structures and multi-generational playground, gather at the fire ring for storytelling and s'mores, learn about the environment at the outdoor classroom, and attempt the low ropes course. Initially, existing camps may want to utilize the park for a day of activities. As the park grows and more activities are available, full-week camps with kids from the county and summer visitors would occur.



ORIENTEERING

Orienteering at the park would be an exciting program for both kids and adults. Checkpoints could be set up throughout the woods with maps and compasses available for school programs or visitors to the park. School children would learn to use a map and compass and enjoy the scavenger hunt like activity. The checkpoints would be moved and remapped occasionally. With a checkpoint course, the park could host orienteering races. The park should partner with the Rocky Mountain Orienteering Club.



PROGRAMS

GUIDED SNOWSHOEING

In the winter, locals would offer guided snowshoe tours on the property and adjacent NFS land. The tours would highlight the natural history and scenery of Cuchara. They could be conducted for a small fee or encouraged donation. Having snowshoes for rent would open these programs to a wider audience. Tours should be conducted at regular times, alongside other programs and events at the park, and for school groups.



BIRDING AND ECOLOGY

Community members would offer regular birding and ecology tours and programs at the park. The programming would be accessible to area residents and visitors of all ages. Certain tours could have a hiking component while others would be lecture-oriented, taking place at the base and the outdoor classroom. Possible programs include bird walks, wildflower and plant identification walks, and wildlife talks.



ASTRONOMY

The area's dark skies make it a prime location for stargazing. Astronomy programs would be led by local experts or the area could host groups from metropolitan areas. These programs could include night stargazing hikes to the telescopes at the Lift 4 viewing deck, school astronomy courses, or public presentations. The park should partner with the Southern Colorado Astronomical Society for programming.



EVENTS

MUSIC CONCERTS

Concerts would be staged at the park throughout the summer, and the amphitheater is an ideal venue for these events. The park could draw a variety of new acts to the area and also host shows for existing area music festivals such as the Celtic Music Festival, the Spanish Peaks Festival, or Sonic Bloom. For larger events, buses or other transit options from La Veta and Walsenburg should be considered.



WEDDINGS

With the beautiful setting and proper facilities, there would be a strong demand for weddings at the park. There are many potential venues on the property, such as the viewing deck at the top of Lift 4, the event lawn, the amphitheater, and the dance floor of the café building. For larger events, buses or other transit options from the accommodations should be encouraged.



FOOD & BEVERAGE FESTIVALS

The event lawn would be used for food and beverage festivals such as beer, chili, or barbecue festivals. Booths would be set up on the event lawn and additional programming could take place at the amphitheater or café patio. The park should find outside entities looking for a venue to host their events. For larger events, buses or other transit options from La Veta and Walsenburg should be considered.



EVENTS

MOUNTAIN BIKE FESTIVALS

Mountain bike festivals, would celebrate the trails and bring enthusiasts to the area. Possible programs include a short race, bike demos, maintenance sessions, live music, group rides, skills clinics, and a stunt show. The park should partner with Colorado Mountain Bike Association or Colorado Springs and Pueblo mountain biking groups. Staging a festival would not require as extensive of a network as a race, as most of the activity would occur in the base area.



RACES

With the base as an ideal start and finish area, the property and adjacent NFS land could host many types of races. Mountain bike and trail running races would start on the property before following the new trails on NFS land. Races with man-made obstacles, such as Tough Mudder or Warrior Dash, would probably take place on the park itself. Adventure races and other orienteering races would probably extend onto NFS land as well. Local trail running, mountain biking, and orienteering groups should be contacted to see if they would be interested in holding races at the park.





CHAPTER FOUR Implementation Plan

Implementation Plan

This chapter provides the necessary information to guide the phasing, operations, and funding of the park. It contains a priority phasing plan that organizes the activities, events, programs, and facilities listed in Chapter Three into four phases suited to the community’s vision and the existing conditions of the park. This plan is informed by a costs and revenue analysis of all proposed activities, events, facilities, and programs. Further details, including preliminary cost estimates, are available for activities such as downhill skiing, tubing, and lift-served mountain biking. Additional information is also available for skiing operations with financial information from small ski resorts and case studies of their operational models. Finally, a next steps section offers suggestions for funding and partnerships to begin development of the park.

PRIORITY PHASING PLAN

As expressed through various community engagements, the preferred path for development at the park proceeds carefully, focusing on community amenities first, while adding larger revenue-generating activities that may require partnerships and significant capital expenditures later on. The phasing plan described in this chapter is a general outline for how to proceed with park development based on the level of community priority, and considers the balance between capital and operating costs and potential for revenue generation. For that information, listed for each facility and associated activity, program, and event, see the matrix on page 41. The plan is flexible and subject to change based on grants, volunteer enthusiasm, donations, and park visitation. Ideally, Phase 1 has a timeline of 0 to 3 years, Phase 2 has a timeline of 3 to 5 years, Phase 3 has a timeline of 5 to 10 years, and Phase 4 has a timeline of 10+ years. However, these are only approximations - if fundraising is successful, high capital cost facilities could be added sooner. Alternatively, if visitation is low, delaying implementation of particular facilities is advisable.

Each phase description includes a guiding principle for development during that phase, a list of facilities to construct, the institutional capacity and necessary outreach, a status and list of action items related to downhill skiing, and a set of compatible activities, programs, and events.

PHASE 1

Short-term

Community-based amenities that draw visitation to the park.

FACILITIES

Disc golf course	Nature interpretation signage
Mini golf course	Multi-generational playground
Fire ring	Climbing structures
Multi-use trail to the top of Lift 4	Trail connection to existing Baker Creek Trail and trailhead kiosk
Picnic tables at the top of Lift 4 and in the base area	Continue enhancing the Day Lodge

Institutional Capacity: At this phase, the park is volunteer driven. This phase is critical for building relationships with local and state partners. The CMPAC and Huerfano County are writing grants and hold events at the park to build community support and fundraise. Mini golf and disc golf can generate revenue to fund future improvements.

Skiing: Explore the status of snowmaking and lift infrastructure and the potential for private concessionaires. Conduct further feasibility analysis on the ski operations.

Compatible activities, programs, and events: The facilities listed above provide for activities, programs, and events to bring people to the park along with the necessary amenities (i.e. day lodge, picnic tables) for a full experience. The park should prioritize adding facilities that support multiple activities, programs, and events. For example, by constructing a multi-use trail, there can be hiking, volunteer-led nature hikes, and a trail running race. At this phase, events such as races and concerts will be small-scale and not intended to generate significant revenue. Programs to bring school children from La Veta and Walsenburg begin, with nature hikes, the playground, and rock climbing.

ACTIVITIES

- Disc golf
- Mini golf
- Hiking
- Mountain biking
- Picnicking
- Sledding
- Backcountry skiing
- Snowshoeing
- Rock climbing
- Cross country skiing
- Multi-generational playground

PROGRAMS

- Day Lodge Talks
- School Field Trips
- Outings for hiking, backcountry skiing, and snowshoeing
- Volunteer-led nature hikes
- Orienteering
- Kids' camps

EVENTS

- Trail races
- Group picnics
- Disc golf tournaments
- Concerts on the hillside

PHASE 2

Medium-term

Vibrant community park preparing for future larger operations

FACILITIES

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amphitheater Café and patio Outdoor classroom Viewing deck with telescopes Boyd Mountain hiking trail Camping Yurts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low ropes course Lift and Snowmaking Infrastructure* Enhance Event Lawn Continue enhancing the Day Lodge
--	---

Institutional Capacity: At this phase, the park is still volunteer driven. Like Phase 1, CMPAC and Huerfano County are writing grants and holding events at the park to build community support and fundraise. As the number of events and programs held at the park increases, part-time staff capacity may be necessary. CMPAC and Huerfano County must work closely with the Forest Service on trails on NFS land. They should also reach out to local groups and individuals who might be interested in hosting concerts, performances, weddings, or family reunions at the park.

Skiing: If the findings in Phase 1 were supportive, assess and prepare Lift 4 and snowmaking equipment for operation in Phase 3. Secure a private concessionaire and/or business sponsorships.

Compatible activities, programs, and events: The new facilities in Phase 2 enable the park to host more programs and events, including revenue-generating ones such as weddings and festivals. The park could also continue to host many of the programs and events compatible with Phase 1, but at a larger scale. For example, school field trips, with the addition of the outdoor classroom, low ropes course, telescopes, and trails, could happen more frequently and with bigger groups.

If funding and community enthusiasm is there, consider adding a facility from the Phase 3 list. A revenue generating activity, such as tubing, would provide funds for the capital costs of Phase 3 facilities.

ACTIVITIES

- Yurt camping
- Stargazing
- Hiking and mountain biking on NFS land
- Low ropes course

PROGRAMS

- Outdoor classroom programs
- Cultural/historical programs
- Arts and crafts
- Astronomy

EVENTS

- Music concerts and shows in the amphitheater
- Weddings and other private events
- Food and beverage Festivals
- Teambuilding and retreats

PHASE 3

Long-term

Investing in facilities that generate revenue

FACILITIES

Lift 4	Winter Tubing venue
Tubing surface lift	On-property mountain bike trails
Skiing surface lift	Rental facility for mountain bikes and skiing
Additional Boyd Mountain trail	Continue enhancing the Day Lodge
Summer Tubing venue	

Institutional Capacity: At this phase, the park will need paid employees to manage operations and run the lifts and activities. A strong volunteer force would help reduce costs and can assist with skiing, events, and programs at the park. At this phase, advertising and outreach to summer visitors and population centers such as Pueblo and Colorado Springs is necessary to generate the desired visitation. The park must continue working closely with the Forest Service as activity at the park increases and for additional trails and possibly skiing on NFS land.

Skiing: If Phase 1 and Phase 2 led to downhill skiing being feasible and financially sustainable, then Lift 4 would operate for skiing on weekends. A surface lift would be installed on the hill adjacent to Lift 3 for beginner skiing, ski school, and lessons. If skiing at Cuchara is successful and popular, work towards opening up Lift 3. This process will require working with the Forest Service for a new Special Use Permit, a Master Development Plan, NEPA analyses, and assessing and repairing the lift and expanding the snowmaking system.

Compatible activities, programs, and events: Again, the enhanced facilities will increase the scale of the existing activities, programs, and events at the park. The park should look into expanding existing facilities, such as the café or amphitheater, to accommodate increased visitation. A network of mountain biking trails will enable the park to host races, festivals, and skills camps along with revenue generating downhill mountain biking activities during the summer.

ACTIVITIES

Downhill skiing
Downhill mountain biking
Scenic lift rides
Winter tubing
Summer tubing
Beginner skiing

PROGRAMS

Ski school
Mountain bike skills camps

EVENTS

Mountain bike races
Mountain bike festivals

PHASE 4

Very Long-term

Outdoor recreation hub continuing to expand facilities

FACILITIES

Lift 3	Additional NFS land multi-use trails and mountain biking trails
Lift 3 Viewing Deck	
Canopy Tour/Aerial Adventure Course	Continue enhancing the Day Lodge

Institutional Capacity: By phase 4, the park relies on many paid employees to organize events and programs, operate the lifts and other activities, and staff the café and rentals shop. Volunteers are still essential for maintaining trails and staffing larger events and leading programs. With skiing and many trails on NFS land, the park must work closely with the Forest Service. The park advertises across Colorado, Texas, and the southwest and reaches out to groups who might be interested in hosting larger, revenue generating events at the park.

Skiing: In Phase 4, the ski area operations include Lift 3 and skiing to the top of the mountain. The ski area has a Special Use Permit to operate on NFS land.

Compatible activities, programs, and events: Phase 4 is not intended to increase the types of activities, programs, and events offered at the park. Rather, the many existing revenue generating activities bring people to the area, support the local economy, and allow the park to maintain and further expand its operations to continue to attract visitors.

The sources of revenue include skiing, races, tubing, a canopy tour/aerial adventure course, private events, festivals, scenic lift rides, and downhill mountain biking. At this phase, the park reinvests the revenue to enhance the existing facilities to generate additional revenue and maintain visitation. For example, possible improvements in Phase 4 include converting the low ropes course into a canopy tour/aerial adventure course or the climbing structures into a climbing wall, and expanding and improving the ski terrain, trail network, and Day Lodge.

ACTIVITIES
Canopy tour/aerial adventure course

PROGRAMS

EVENTS

Phasing Matrix

The matrix below provides a sense of community support, costs, infrastructure requirements, potential revenue, and potential for public-private partnerships. This information was used to develop the phasing plan to guide the CMPAC and Huerfano County as they develop the park. The matrix allows CMPAC and the county to pick and choose facilities, activities, programs, and events based on a variety of factors, including park visitation and finances. The matrix guides both the development of the phases themselves and decisions and priorities within phases.

The community priority level was determined by the survey (see Chapter 2) while the other categories were determined by analysis of operations at other resorts and recreational facilities. Facilities, listed first, were given a rating for community priority, capital costs, and infrastructure requirements. These facilities, when operated for activities, programs, or events have a rating for operational costs, revenue potential, infrastructure requirements for operation, community priority, and potential for public-private partnership. Some facilities, such as Lift 4, are connected to multiple activities, events, or programs.

Facilities	Community Priority	Capital cost	Infrastructure Requirements (power, water, sewer)	Phase
Base Lodge	medium	medium	high	All
Hiking Trails, Multi-use Trails	high	medium	low	All
Cross Country Skiing/Snowshoe Trails	high	medium	low	1
Interpretive Nature Trail	high	low	low	1
Sledding Hill	high	low	low	1
Natural Playground	medium	low	low	1
Climbing Structures	medium	low	low	1
Low Ropes Course	medium	low	low	1
Picnic Tables	high	low	low	1
Disc Golf Course	high	low	low	1
Mini Golf Course	medium	low	low	1
Fire Ring	medium	low	low	1
Yurts for yurt camping	medium	medium	medium	2
Café Building	medium	high	high	2
Amphitheater	high	high	medium	2
Outdoor Classroom	medium	medium	low	2
Viewing Deck	medium	medium	low	2
Lift 4*	high	high	high	2/3
Snowmaking System*	medium	very high	high	2/3
Downhill Mountain Biking Trails**	medium	high	low	3
Surface Lift for Beginner Skiing*	medium	high	medium	3
Winter Tubing Venue**	high	high	high	3
Summer Tubing Venue**	medium	medium	medium	3
Lift 3*	medium	very high	high	3/4
Canopy Tour**	low	very high	low	4
Aerial Adventure Course**	low	high	low	4

* See Ski Area Economic Data page 46

** See Analysis of Revenue Generators page 43

Capital costs, operational costs, and potential revenue were categorized as:

Very Low: \$0 - \$10,000

High: \$100,000 - \$500,000

Low: \$10,000 - \$50,000

Very High: \$500,000 and up

Medium: \$50,000 - \$100,000

Activities	Community Priority	Annual Operational Costs (labor, maintenance, permits/insurance)	Infrastructure Requirements (power, water, sewer)	Revenue Potential	Potential for P3/ Concessionaire	Phase
Hiking	high	low	low	low	low	1
Mountain Biking	high	low	low	low	low	1
Sledding	high	very low	low	low	low	1
Using Playground (free)	medium	low	low	very low	low	1
Using Climbing Structures	medium	low	low	low	low	1
Using the Low Ropes Course	medium	low	low	medium	low	1
Picnicking	high	low	low	very low	low	1
Using the Disc Golf Course	medium	low	low	medium	medium	1
Using the Mini Golf Course	medium	low	low	medium	medium	1
Backcountry skiing	medium	very low	low	low	low	1
Snowshoeing	high	very low	low	low	low	1
Cross Country Skiing	high	medium	low	low	low	1
Yurt Camping	medium	low	medium	medium	medium	2
Lift-served mountain biking**	medium	high	medium	high	high	3
Downhill Skiing*	medium	very high	high	medium	high	3
Winter Tubing**	high	high	high	high	high	3
Summer Tubing**	medium	high	medium	high	high	3
Beginner Skiing	medium	high	high	medium	medium	3
Going for a scenic lift ride	medium	high	medium	medium	high	3
Using the Canopy Tour	low	medium	low	high	high	4
Using the Aerial Adventure Course	low	medium	low	high	high	4

Programs	Community Priority	Annual Operational Costs (labor, maintenance, permits/insurance)	Infrastructure Requirements (power, water, sewer)	Revenue Potential	Potential for P3/ Concessionaire	Phase
Kids' Camps	medium	medium	low	medium	medium	1
Orienteering	medium	low	low	medium	medium	1
Country Skiing	medium	low	low	medium	low	1
Guided birding/ecology tours	high	low	low	medium	low	1
Arts and Crafts	medium	low	low	medium	low	2
Cultural/Historic Programs	medium	low	low	medium	low	2
Outdoor Classroom Programming	high	low	low	low	low	2
Astronomy programs	medium	medium	medium	medium	low	2
Mountain Biking Skills Camps	medium	medium	low	medium	low	3
Ski School	medium	medium	medium	medium	medium	3

Events	Community Priority	Annual Operational Costs (labor, maintenance, permits/insurance)	Infrastructure Requirements (power, water, sewer)	Revenue Potential	Potential for P3/ Concessionaire	Phase
Music Concerts	high	medium	high	high	high	1
Races	medium	low	medium	high	medium	1
Team-building retreats	medium	low	medium	medium	low	1
Weddings	high	low	high	high	low	2
Food & Beverage Festivals	high	medium	high	high	high	2
Mountain Bike Festivals	medium	low	medium	high	medium	3

* See Ski Area Economic Data page 46

** See Analysis of Revenue Generators page 43

Capital costs, operational costs, and potential revenue were categorized as:

Very Low: \$0 - \$10,000	High: \$100,000 - \$500,000
Low: \$10,000 - \$50,000	Very High: \$500,000 and up
Medium: \$50,000 - \$100,000	

Analysis of Revenue Generators

An important aspect guiding the selection of a recommended or “preferred” program for multi-season recreation at Cuchara Mountain Park is an understanding of the possible economic performance of the proposed facilities. The following table summarizes a range of the typical capital costs, visitation, price points, revenue and operating margins associated with the revenue-generating facilities discussed in this plan. Ski operations were not included in this table due to the uncertainty around the capital costs for the lift and snowmaking system. To analyze potential ski operations, industry economic figures are on page 46 and case studies of small ski area operations are on page 48.

It is important to note that these ranges represent data from “typical” operations of the activities listed, and are based on similar circumstances, operations and experiences observed at other multi-season areas nationwide.

	Capital Cost		Visits		Ticket/Ride Price		Potential Revenue		Operating Margin	
	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High
Aerial Adventure Course	\$300,000	\$500,000	6,300	15,000	\$30	\$45	\$189,000	\$675,000	50%	50%
Canopy Tour	\$500,000	\$900,000	8,000	12,000	\$90	\$110	\$720,000	\$1,320,000	80%	80%
Disc Golf	\$5,000	\$10,000	2,500	4,000	\$5	\$7	\$12,500	\$28,000	60%	60%
Mini Golf	\$50,000	\$500,000	10,000	30,000	\$10	\$20	\$100,000	\$600,000	60%	80%
Summer Tubing	\$50,000	\$100,000	6,500	7,500	\$10	\$15	\$65,000	\$112,500	60%	80%
Winter Tubing	\$250,000	\$500,000	10,000	40,000	\$12	\$25	\$120,000	\$1,000,000	30%	80%
Yurt Camping (per yurt)	\$5,000	\$20,000	50	100	\$100	\$200	\$5,000	\$20,000	10%	20%
Lift Served Mountain Biking			6,000	25,000	\$25	\$40	\$150,000	\$1,000,000	50%	60%

Capital Costs are the estimated costs to acquire and install the activity, and do not include on-going operational expenses.

Visits is the estimated amount of annual participation per occurrence (i.e., if one person took four rides on the mountain coaster it would count as four visits).

Ticket/Ride Price is the average amount charged to participate in a particular activity. Averages account for the estimated price of a single ticket and seasons passes.

Potential Revenue is the estimated visits times the estimated Ticket/Ride Price.

Operating Margin is potential revenue less the related estimated operating expenses. The Operating Margin percentages in the table are based on similar operations at other multi-season areas. Generally speaking higher percentages are preferred, indicating less operating expense relative to revenue which leads to higher profit.

Other Capital Costs

The following capital costs cannot be estimated until further planning is undertaken.

- » **Hiking trails:** Traditional USFS-style hiking/mountain biking trails (2-3 feet wide) cost ±\$14,000 per mile. ~19 miles in vision plan.
- » **Mountain biking trails:** Modern mountain biking trails (six feet wide, banked corners, rollers, etc.) cost ± \$40,000 per mile. ~11.5 miles in plan.
- » **Existing facility improvements:** There would be significant infrastructure costs associated with building upgrades, terrain upgrades, etc.

Revenue Opportunities

In addition to the tickets, there would be many other opportunities for revenue generation.

- » **Equipment rentals:** Renting skis, mountain bikes
- » **Retail:** Selling logo clothing and items that are necessary and/or forgotten items (sunscreen, water bottles, hats, etc.)
- » **Program and Event Participation:** Program registration or entry fees into special events.
- » **Food & Beverage:** Food and beverage sales at the cafe or events



TRAILS MEAN BUSINESS

A robust trail system is both a community amenity and a major driver of economic activity. Trails attract people to visit, live, or work in a place. These days, many tourists plan their vacations around the availability of trails. In visiting and using the trails, tourists spend nominal amounts on user fees, but generate significant secondary revenue for the local economy. Locals and other day users will spend money on food and beverage, gas, and possibly other activities. Overnight visitors generate a greater economic impact, spending money on lodging, entertainment, goods, and other activities in addition. For example, Estes Park has estimated that trails users will spend \$79.84 (overnight visitors), \$23.67 (day visitors), or \$11.31 (local day users) per day at town businesses. With a trail system that attracts thousands of trail users, the economic benefits will outweigh the cost of land acquisition, trail construction, and maintenance time and time again.

BEST PRACTICES FOR SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT AND DESIGN

Build sustainable trails (minimize erosion, limit clearing, etc.)

Have signage that encourages hikers to stay on the trails

Landscape with native plants and remove invasives

Perform regular maintenance on landscaped areas (watering, mulching, pruning, etc.)

Monitor soils subject to excessive foot traffic and excavate if necessary

Hold ecology related tours at the park to promote awareness and appreciation for the natural world

For building projects use recycled materials, incorporate existing structures, and improve energy efficiency when possible.

Encourage carpooling and shuttles from population centers

Limit development adjacent to stream corridors

Add boulders or fencing to restrict access to sensitive areas such as the stream bank

Post educational signage and include information on park maps about "Leave No Trace" Principles



Ski Area Economic Data

Benchmarking is often used in the analysis to determine relevant operating revenues and expense levels for similar ski areas. A benchmarking evaluation entails the use of industry data to compare a resort's operational and financial characteristics with similar sized and located ski areas. This comparison with peer ski areas helps understand the financial implications of operations and new facilities.

Ski Industry benchmarking typically utilizes the NSAA (National Ski Areas Association) Economic Analysis. This analysis is performed through an annual survey of member resorts' physical characteristics (e.g., size and capacities), and financial performance by operating department.

The information presented below is for ski areas with under 3,500 vertical transport feet per hour (VTFH), a size classification of ski areas based on lift rise and capacity. This is a relatively small sample size, with only 13 such ski areas providing data. Therefore, there is significant variability in this data and it should be used as a snapshot rather than a guideline.

	0 - 3,500 VTFH
	2016/17
Number of areas	13
Average Vertical Transport Feet per Hour (VTFH)	2,478
Average skier visits	62,649
Revenue	\$3,209,000

The following table summarizes the average percent of total revenue generated by the main-revenue generating departments of comparable ski areas.

Revenue Category by %	0 - 3,500 VTFH	
	2016/17	2015/16
Tickets	37.4%	37.9%
Snowplay & other winter ops	8.4%	7.6%
Lessons	7.2%	6.8%
Food and beverage	16.7%	16.3%
Retail stores	3.1%	3.3%
Rental shops	9.7%	10.2%
Accommodations/lodging	0.9%	0.7%
Miscellaneous	0.0%	0.0%
Other	15.4%	15.9%
Property operation	1.1%	1.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Table Information:

"Snowplay and other winter ops" includes activities such as tubing, cross country skiing, or snowshoeing

"Other and Miscellaneous" includes additional sources of revenue/ expenditures such facility rentals, paid parking, or other operations

The following is breakdown of expenses by percentage for comparable ski areas.

Expenditure Patterns by % of Revenue	0 - 3,500 VTFH	
	2016/17	2015/16
Cost of goods	8.5%	8.5%
Direct labor	30.8%	30.8%
Maintenance & repair	4.9%	4.8%
Other direct	7.7%	8.4%
Payroll taxes/workers comp	7.1%	6.9%
Electric power/fuel	6.1%	5.4%
Gen. and admin.	15.8%	17.1%
Marketing/adv.	3.4%	3.7%
Insurance	2.7%	2.9%
land use fees	2.5%	2.6%
Property/other taxes	2.3%	2.4%
Miscellaneous	-17.4%	0.0%
Depreciation	13.6%	14.3%
Amortization	0.0%	0.0%
Operating Leases	0.7%	0.4%
Interest	0.7%	0.5%
Profit BT	10.7%	-8.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The average small ski area has double the total visitors as Cuchara's busiest season and triple the total visitors as Cuchara's previous average from when it was in operation
- Tickets are the largest source of revenue for these ski areas, although they provide less than 40% of total revenue
- Food and beverage, rentals, lessons, snowplay (i.e. tubing), and other (assumed to be event rentals, parking, etc.) are other significant generators of revenue
- At the smallest ski areas, snowplay and other winter ops make up a higher portion of revenue than they do at larger resorts
- Labor, administration, and depreciation are the largest expenses for small ski areas. For smaller ski areas, maintenance/repairs, and electric power/fuel also make up a higher proportion of expenses
- During the 2015/2016 season, these small ski areas, on average, had losses of about 8.7% of their total revenue

Case Studies of Community Ski Areas

The following case studies of small, community ski areas across North America provide some examples for the CMPAC to consider as they evaluate the future of skiing of Cuchara. The discussed ski areas' management includes non-profits, governments, and private concessionaires. Financial information, when available, is presented to describe the success of each model.

CAMDEN SNOW BOWL

The Camden Snow Bowl is a ski area owned and operated by the Town of Camden, Maine and its Park and Recreation Department. The Snow Bowl has 105 skiable acres, is open around 65 days a year, and averages 35,000 skier visits annually. Approximately 15% of these visitors are from the town, 25% from within a 30-minute drive, and 60% from further away. The town of Camden has a very strong summer tourism economy and a 2013 economic analysis showed that the ski area winter operations brings in \$3.7 million in economic impact annually. The town operates the ski area as an Enterprise Fund to provide a community resource and bring an economic benefit to the area. As an enterprise fund, the expenses and revenue for the Snow Bowl are separate from the town's general fund; the ski area keeps the revenue it makes in good years and uses that to support bad years. The ski area makes a small profit in good snow years but does lose money in other years. The ski area has asked the town to help when expenses drastically exceed revenue, but for the most part, the ski area operates on its own financially. The ski area has 8 year-round employees, 91 seasonal employees, and 30 volunteer stewards who contribute 12 hours per week. The ski area director manages the employees and reports to the Town Manager.

Beyond skiing, the Snow Bowl hosts the U.S. Toboggan National Championships, an event that brings in about \$50,000 in profit each year. In the summer, there are hiking and mountain biking trails, a lift operates, and the lodge hosts weddings and other events. The ski area typically makes about \$25,000 in profit over the summer and is looking to expand operations.

The Ragged Mountain Recreation Area Foundation, a nonprofit, has been key to the ski area's financial stability. The foundation and the town residents have raised money for capital improvements at the ski area. The foundation raised \$4.5 million for improvements in 2016 which matched a \$2 million-dollar bond measure approved by town voters. In addition, a major snowmaking infrastructure improvement was funded by a federal grant.



EAGLECREST SKI AREA

The Eaglecrest Ski Area is owned and operated by the City and Borough of Juneau (CBJ), Alaska. CBJ subsidizes operations at the ski area. The ski area's mission is to be a community-oriented winter recreation year-round summer outdoor recreation destination with affordable non-motorized activities. The Eaglecrest Foundation, a 501c3 funds capital improvement projects and the ski area has also received grants from foundations. A private operator, Alaska Zipline Adventures, offers a zipline tour in the summer at the ski area. The Eaglecrest Ski Area earns a flat fee and a percentage of gross revenue and the zipline tour has been profitable. The City and Bureau of Juneau contribute about \$700,000 to subsidize operations each year, about 25% of annual operating costs. Lift tickets, rentals, and sales provide 62% of the annual revenues. The remaining funds are contributions from the Eaglecrest Foundation (~\$75,000 per year) and \$150,000 - \$250,000 from the operator of the zipline. A board of directors, appointed by the city, oversees a general manager of the ski area.

LAUREL MOUNTAIN

Laurel Mountain Ski Resort is a small ski area in Pennsylvania that is operated by a private concessionaire but is within a state park. The concessionaire owns and operates two other local ski areas and the three are on a joint season pass. The resort is known for its extremely steep slopes and is located 72 miles from Pittsburgh. The ski area was founded as a private club and before being donated to the state in 1964. The resort operated until 1989, closed for 10 years, and then operated off and on from 1999 to 2005 before closing again. After it closed, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources spent \$6.5 million dollars on lift, trail, and snowmaking improvements, to make the ski area ready for an interested concessionaire. The concessionaire reopened the ski area for the 2016/2017 season and it operated in the 2017/2018 season as well. No information is available on the resort's visitation or finances since operation began.

MT. SIMA

Mt. Sima is a ski area in Yukon, Canada operated by a non-profit but subsidized by the Yukon government. The Friends of Mount Sima Society non-profit, manages the ski hill. The Yukon Territory government contributes significantly to operating expenses and capital improvements. The government has funded snowmaking improvements, groomers, and terrain improvements to draw elite athletes to train at the ski area. The society also raises hundreds of thousands of dollars through private donations, sponsorships from 40 local businesses, grants from ski clubs, and the Yukon Lotteries. For sponsoring, business logos are displayed on lift chairs, signs, lift towers, runs, and the website. The resort also offers summer mountain biking (with the lifts operating one day a week), paragliding through an outfitter, concerts, and event rentals. Previously, the resort had been run by the Great Northern Ski Society (GNSS) with a subsidy from the City of Whitehorse. When GNSS had financial troubles, the city refused to offer additional funding and the resort closed. Friends of Mount Sima managed to raise the necessary funds that year and the ski area reopened the next season.

BIGROCK MOUNTAIN

Bigrock Mountain is owned and operated by Friends of Bigrock, a community non-profit. From 2000 to 2013, the Libra Foundation, in partnership with Maine Winter Sports Center, owned and operated the area. The foundation invested in \$6 million in capital improvements and gave a subsidy, between \$100,000 and \$250,000 annually, for the difference between expenses and revenues. In 2013, the Maine Winter Sports Center decided to end their involvement. The ski area looked like it might close but community members and local businesses raised sufficient funds to maintain operations. Corporate donations contributed about 80% of the total fundraising. The local businesses have continued to support the ski area and the nonprofit also received a \$350,000 donation from a local philanthropist. The installation of a snow tubing has also been profitable for Friends of Bigrock.

SKI COOPER

Ski Cooper, in Leadville, Colorado is operated by the Cooper Hill Ski Area non-profit. Ski Cooper is on Forest Service Land and the lease is held by Lake County. In good snow years, the ski area does make a profit through ticket sales. However, in bad snow years such as 2011/2012, the ski area lost almost \$500,000. The ski area sees about 60,000 visitors annually and has the small community ski area niche in the vicinity of the larger resorts on the I-70 corridor. The ski area, with a base at 10,500' and an average annual snowfall of 260," does not have snowmaking, helping keep expenses low.

WHALEBACK MOUNTAIN

Whaleback Mountain in New Hampshire is owned and operated by a non-profit. The small ski area has about 13,000 skier visits per year. Starting in 2005, a private group operated the mountain but they were forced to close due to debt in 2013. Later that same year, the Upper Valley Snowsports Foundation (UVSSF) purchased the ski area at a bank auction. To do so, they raised significant funds from foundations, private individuals in the community, and local businesses. The mountain hosts a ski race series, after school programs, competitive teams, community events, and kids' camps. Volunteers also contribute many hours to mountain operations.

KENDALL MOUNTAIN RECREATION AREA

Kendall Mountain Recreation Area is a small, community ski hill in Silverton, Colorado. The ski area is on Bureau of Land Management Land and operated by the town of Silverton. The town, with a population of 630, has a strong summer tourism economy and an outdoor recreation minded community and therefore chooses to subsidize the ski area operations. The operations are small, with 16 skiable acres, a double chair, and no snowmaking. The ski area has about 2,700 annual visitors and hosts many school programs and community events. Annual expenses are about \$50,000 annually and ticket sales bring in about \$35,000, with the town makes up the difference. The town is interested in expanding the ski area to draw people to Silverton in the winter and support the local economy.

	Land Ownership	Operator	Capital Improvement Funding Source	Government Subsidized?
Camden Snow Bowl	Government	Government	Non-profit, Bond Measure	Capital Improvements, not operations
Eaglecrest	Government	Government	Non-profit, grants	Yes (\$700,000 per year)
Whaleback	Non-profit	Non-profit	Non-profit, businesses	No
Mt. Sima	Non-profit	Non-profit	Non-profit, businesses, government	Yes
Ski Cooper	Government	Non-profit	Non-profit	No
Bigrock	Non-profit	Non-profit	Foundation, non-profit, businesses, major donor	No
Howelsen Hill	Government	Government	Government and Steamboat Resort	Yes (\$700,000 - \$1,000,000 per year)
Laurel Mountain	Government	Private	Government	Capital Improvements, not operations
Pajarito	Government	Private	Private	No
Kendall Mountain	Government	Government	Government	Yes (\$20,000 per year)

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Few community ski areas are profitable or break even and many rely on government subsidies to operate
- Even fewer community ski areas can afford additional capital costs or establishing maintenance reserves within their annual budget. Ski areas turn to non-profits, foundations, grants, and governments to provide the funds
- Major events, such as the Toboggan Championships at Camden Snowbowl, provide significant revenue for the ski area
- Weather patterns and snowfall have an impact on visitation, which in turn impacts the ski areas' ability to break even or make a profit
- Business and corporate sponsorship are additional sources of revenue for many ski areas
- There are few community ski areas with strong summer visitation to provide additional revenue but many are interested in exploring those opportunities

Next Steps and Funding

With the analysis and priorities in hand, the following pages offer ideas and recommendations to assist implementation. This section includes strategies to continue building awareness and support for the park; organizations who provide volunteers to build trails and facilities and lead park operations; and sources of funding, from grants to creative solutions to tap into local resources. Links are provided for further information.

BUILDING SUPPORT AND PARTNERSHIPS

Partnering with the United States Forest Service

The park must work with the Forest Service to connect existing trails and build new trails near the park, with the park possibly promising to build and maintain the new trails. A trailhead kiosk and connection to the Baker Creek trail is an initial project that the organizations can work together on. The park must also engage in the Forest Service's environmental review process for trails and possibly skiing in the future.

Organize Park Events

Get people out to the park and get them excited about the vision of what it will become. Organizing events for National Trails Day, National Park Rx Day, and National Get Outdoors Day are all great opportunities to take advantage of existing national events.

Create a "Friends of the Park" Group

Friends groups have been the driving force behind countless successful outdoor recreation projects, particularly those projects that have encountered obstacles or opposition and need steadfast advocates. A Friends group can help raise money, build awareness, and host park events. The Friends group could also be a dedicated group for trail maintenance and other volunteering needs at the park. The group should complement the existing Cuchara Foundation as a park-specific group dedicated to the Cuchara Mountain Park.

Create a website

It's helpful to have all the information about your project in one place where the maximum number of people can access it and get updates on project progress (including contact info for board members). This includes posting project information to social media and sending invites to events.

BUILDING THE PARK WITH ORGANIZATIONS AND VOLUNTEERS

Another way to build support is to utilize trail and environmental stewardship groups for projects. These groups can give projects visibility and can engage the community in building the project and caring for the land.

Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado

Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado (VOC) is a nationally recognized statewide non-profit dedicated to motivating and enabling people to become active stewards of Colorado's resources. They have thousands of people volunteering annual on outdoor stewardship projects. These projects take place across Colorado – from city parks and open spaces, to grasslands and foothills, to alpine meadows and peaks (<http://www.voc.org/about-us>)

AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps is a network of national service programs that place volunteers in communities. The volunteers' salaries are paid by the federal government while they work in the community. The AmeriCorps NCCC program is a young adult program that places volunteer teams in communities to work on trail building projects, constructing low-income housing, educating citizens about sustainability, or mitigating natural disasters. Cuchara Mountain Park used these volunteers in summer 2017 to make improvements to the day lodge and build the Baker Creek Trail. The park should explore using those volunteers for projects in the future. The VISTA program places individuals in a community for a year to work with an organization or local government. At no cost to the park, a VISTA volunteer could organize park events, conduct social media outreach, and complete grant applications. (<https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameriCorps/>)

Colorado Mountain Biking Association

Colorado Mountain Biking Association (COMBA) is a non-profit whose mission is to develop and preserve great mountain biking experiences in Colorado. COMBA frequently partners with the Forest Service to build and maintain trails. The organization also hosts mountain biking and trails events throughout the year. (<http://www.comba.org>)



GRANTS AND OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

Great Outdoors Colorado

Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) Grant Program is a competitive grant program for park and open space land acquisition and development, outdoor recreation, environmental education, and conservation. The program is funded by the Colorado Lottery and has provided \$1.1 billion in lottery proceeds since 1992 in all 64 counties of the state. Grants are generally awarded in two funding cycles, with deadlines in the spring and fall. GOCO is currently prioritizing projects that aim to repair the disconnect between youth and nature, connecting people to the outdoors by increasing bike and pedestrian access, and protecting urban and rural land. (www.goco.org)

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Colorado Land and Water Conservation Fund provides grants for the state Recreational Trails Program. Eligible applicants are any local, county, or state government with control over public lands. These projects must enhance the outdoor recreation resources on public land. To receive the grant, the local government must provide a 100% match. (<https://cpw.state.co.us/Documents/Trails/LWCF/LWCFGrantsProcess.pdf>)

Non-Motorized Trails Grant

A grant funded by a partnership of Colorado Parks and Wildlife, GOCO, and the federal recreational trails program. A 30% match is required. Grants are available for large and small trail construction/maintenance, planning, and support. This includes constructing new trails and trailheads, maintenance or reconstruction of existing trails, enhancing existing trailheads, engineering and feasibility studies, and building and enhancing volunteer organizations. The grant can be awarded to governments, non-profits, or recreation districts. (<http://cpw.state.co.us/aboutus/Pages/TrailsGrantsNM.aspx>)

Trails Connecting People

Trails Connecting People with Nature is a Sierra Club initiative that works to ensure that access to the outdoors is increasingly equitable and available to all communities. The Sierra Club Foundation awards one year trail grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$20,000 towards trail creation or maintenance projects that engage new leaders and provide opportunities for communities to connect with nature. (<https://content.sierraclub.org/ourwildamerica/nearby-nature>)

Non-Grant Funding Sources

User fees for non-residents or visitors could be a potential funding source for future activities. These fees could help towards operating costs, but additional sources of revenue would be needed for capital costs.

Business sponsorships are a major source of funding for many small, community ski areas. Mt. Sima in Canada offers business sponsors signage and logos on lift chairs, towers, and ski runs; recognition on signs, the website, and social media; and ski passes. This sponsorship model could be used for activities beyond skiing as well (see Appendix IV for Mt. Sima's informational flyer to businesses).

The park must continue outreach to individuals for private donations. Outreach and events should be done during the summer when there are many visitors and part-time residents in the area.

Parking fees could generate revenue and encourage carpooling, given the limited facilities at the park and the neighborhood.

Coordinate with the owner of Buildings A & B for amenities at the park. The owner of the buildings could provide certain facilities, reducing what the park needs to provide.

Karl Sporleder, Chairman
Mitchell Wardell, Commissioner
Jim Chamberlain, Commissioner



HUERFANO COUNTY GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT

Date: February 21, 2024
To: Huerfano County Board of County Commissioners
From: Carl Young, County Administrator
Re: Report for the February 25th BOCC Meeting

Please accept the following report of accomplishments, updates, and upcoming activities.

Open Positions

- Auto Mechanic – Closes 2/28/2025
- DHS Call Center Technician – Closes 3/7/2025
- Deputy Officer – Open Until Filled
- Detention Officer – Open Until Filled

All County Job Openings, including duties, qualifications, and wages are posted on the County Website at <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/huerfano>

Open Solicitations

- RFQ 2025-03 County Attorney – Closes 2/27/2025

All open solicitations are posted at <https://www.bidnetdirect.com/colorado/huerfano-county-government>

Closed Solicitations

- RFP 2025-01 Marketing and Public Relations Services – Closed 2/10/2025
Interviews scheduled for March 3rd.
- RFP 2025-02 Accounting Services – Closed 2/21/2025

Open Board Positions

The County is seeking letters of interest from Huerfano County Residents for the following Boards:

- **Board of Review** – hears appeals of decisions made by the building official or Huerfano County Building Authority and advise the on the adoption of new building codes
- **Board of Adjustment** – hears and decides on issues of special exceptions to the provisions of the County Land Use Code
- **Huerfano County Building Authority** – oversees contractor licensing and reviews a number of issues related to building permitting