

RESOLUTION OF THE
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF THE COUNTY OF DELTA, STATE OF COLORADO

RESOLUTION NO. 2018-R-013

Acknowledging receipt of the certified copy of the Delta County 2018 Master Plan and officially thanking the Planning Commission, Area Planning Committees, Planning Staff, and the Public for committing the necessary time to create the updated 2018 Delta County Master Plan.

Whereas, § 30-28-106, Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.) requires Delta County to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the unincorporated territory of Delta County, and Delta County adopted such master plan in 1997, and a major update to that plan has not occurred since;

Whereas, on May 16, 2018, in accordance with § 30-28-106, C.R.S following a public hearing on May 9th, 2018, the Planning Commission adopted the 2018 Delta County Master Plan and Delta County 2018 Recreation Trails Master Plan, incorporated the 2018 Recreation Trails Master Plan into the 2018 Delta County Master Plan.

Whereas, on June 6, 2018, the Planning Commission certified the attached 2018 Delta County Master Plan as the County's official master plan in accordance with § 30-28-106, C.R.S.,

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Delta County Board of County Commissioners acknowledge receipt of the certified 2018 Delta County Master Plan, and requests the County Clerk and Recorder record the certified 2018 Delta County Master Plan, an advisory document pursuant to § 30-28-106(3)(a), C.R.S. The Board of County Commissioners recognizes the significant time and effort that was dedicated to development and adoption of the updated master plan by the Planning Commission, members of the Area Planning Committees, planning staff, and the public.

ADOPTED this 25th day of June, 2018.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF DELTA COUNTY, COLORADO

By: C. Doug Atchley
C. Doug Atchley, Chair

J. Mark Roeber
J. Mark Roeber, Vice-Chair

Don Suppes
Don Suppes, Commissioner



Teri Stephenson
Teri Stephenson
Delta County Clerk and Recorder

Resolution 2018-02
of the Delta County, Colorado Planning Commission
Certifying the Delta County 2018 Master Plan
and the
Delta County 2018 Recreation Trails Master plan

Whereas, § 30-28-106, Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.) requires Delta County to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the unincorporated territory of Delta County, and Delta County adopted such master plan in 1997, and a major update to that plan has not occurred since;

Whereas, on May 16, 2018, in accordance with § 30-28-106, C.R.S following a public hearing on May 9th, 2018, the Planning Commission adopted the 2018 Delta County Master Plan and Delta County 2018 Recreation Trails Master Plan, incorporated the 2018 Recreation Trails Master Plan into the 2018 Delta County Master Plan, and directed staff to make final changes to the master plan as approved during the May 16th, 2018 meeting.

Now, therefore be it resolved, that the Delta County Planning Commission does hereby certify the attached 2018 Delta County Master Plan as the County's official master plan in accordance with § 30-28-106, C.R.S., and forwards said Master Plan to the Delta County Board of County Commissioners and the Delta County Planning Department to replace the 1997 Master Plan as the official Master Plan of Delta County. Copies of the 2018 Delta County Master Plan will be available on the Delta County website at www.deltacounty.com and at the Planning Department located at 501 Palmer Street, Room 110, Delta, CO 81416.

Adopted and Approved by the Delta County Planning Commission on June 6, 2018.

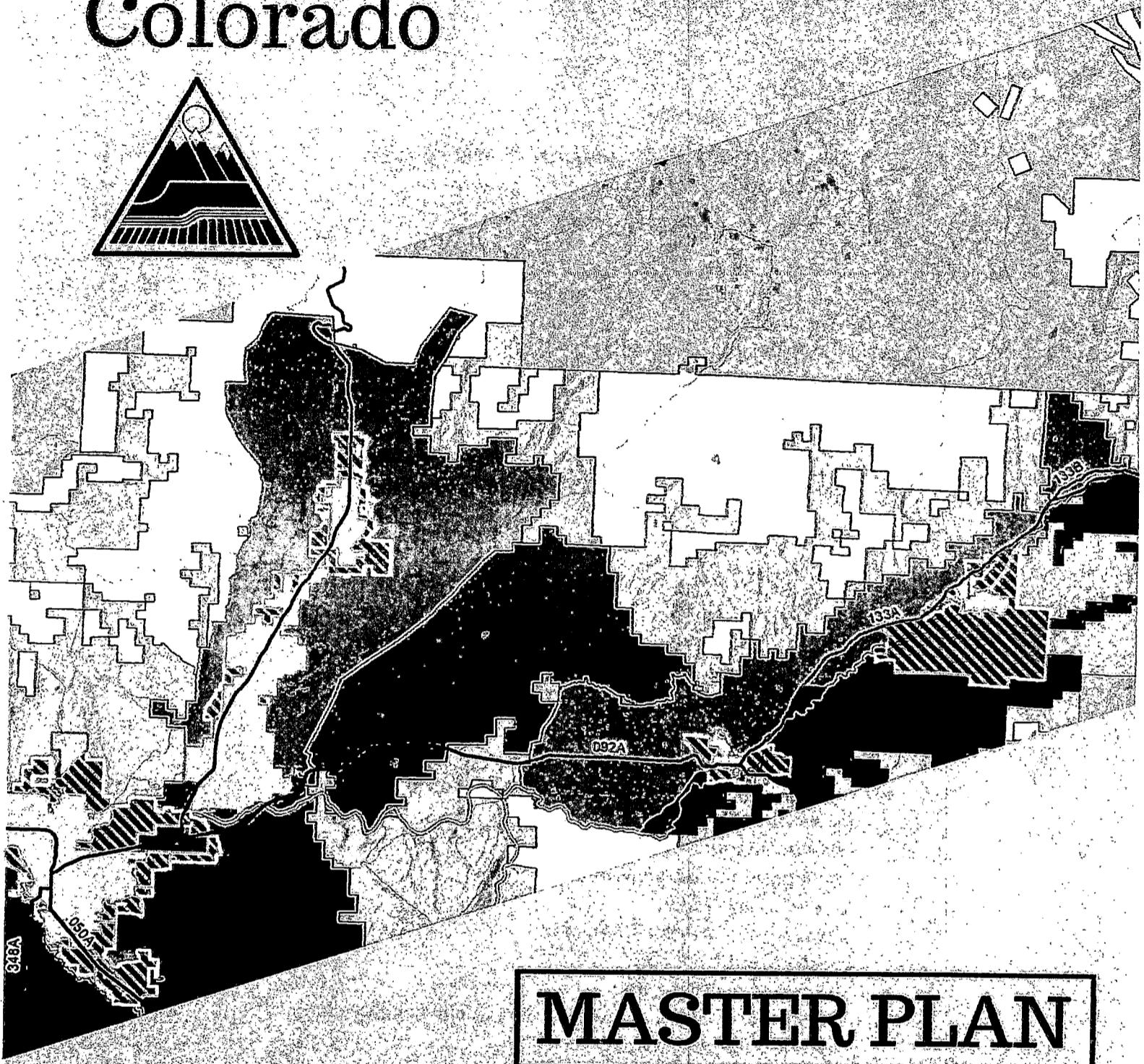
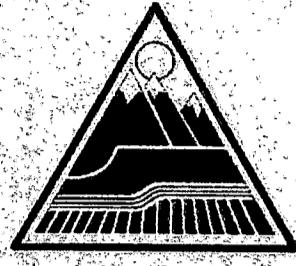
Attest:

Planning Commission-Chair



Robert Stechert

Delta County, Colorado



MASTER PLAN

MAY, 2018

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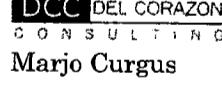
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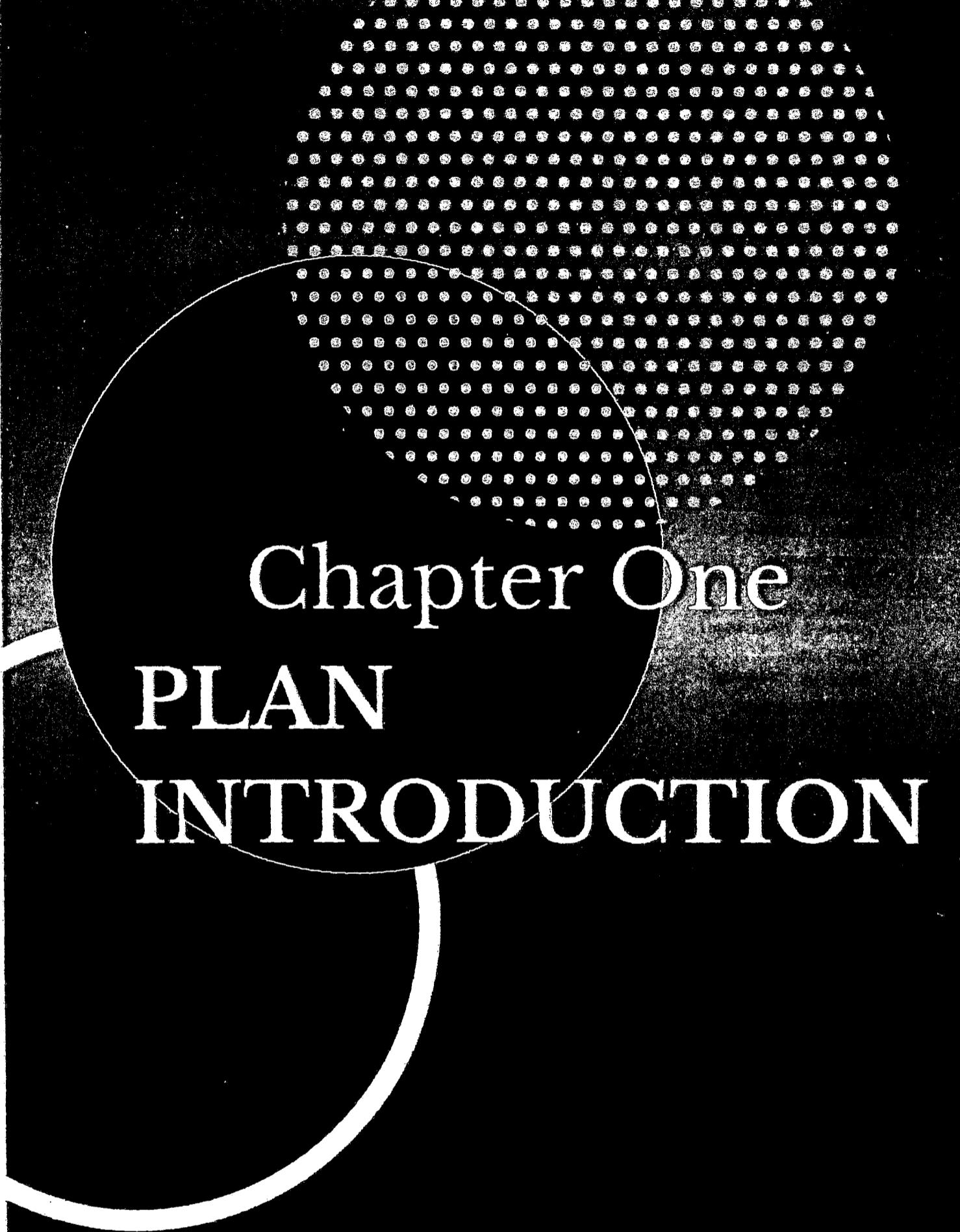
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Chapter One

PLAN

INTRODUCTION

DELTA COUNTY MASTER PLAN

Delta County Master Plan

1.1 INTRODUCTION, PLAN PURPOSE, AND PLANNING PROCESS

The Delta County Master Plan is a policy document that offers visions for the county's future and sets specific goals, strategies and land use planning objectives designed to achieve those visions. The Master Plan provides direction for decisions about economic development, land use and development, infrastructure and facilities planning, and methods and means for coordination with partner agencies and governmental organizations designed to implement the goals and objectives identified in the planning process.

Colorado State Statutes, C.R.S. 30-28-106, direct County Planning Commissions to develop a master plan for the physical development of unincorporated areas of each county, allowing for public written and oral comments throughout the process of plan development and adoption of the master plan after a public hearing.

The Delta County Master Plan is only an advisory document. It does not create rights or obligations, does not change existing regulations and does not create new regulations. It is a strategic planning tool that offers general policy direction for the unincorporated areas of the county and must be considered in association with master plans adopted by municipalities within the county. Nonetheless, this Master Plan serves to identify possible subsequent changes to regulations designed to achieve the visions and goals established thereby.

This Delta County Master Plan was developed over a period of more than a year to replace a master plan adopted in 1997, more than 21 years ago. Nine Planning Commission members, appointed from each of the three County Commissioner Districts, and who reside in diverse and representative areas of the county with wide ranging professional and business backgrounds, developed this Master Plan in conjunction with representatives from the Crawford, Leroux Creek, Surface Creek and the Upper North Fork Valley Area Planning Committees. The planning process involved participation by the public, both through opportunities to offer written comments via the internet, in a series of area meetings held in Delta, Hotchkiss, Crawford, Paonia and Cedaredge, and in various outreach efforts across the county. This public process, described in detail starting on page 10, identified and shaped the visions, goals and strategies set forth in this Master Plan. In addition, the Planning Commission held some 20 plus hours of public work session meetings with: private sector business owners and experts; leaders representing

What is the Delta County Master Plan?

The Delta County Master Plan is a long-range plan for land use that can be used to guide growth and development of the unincorporated Delta County.

The plan provides a policy foundation for the County's land use regulations such as subdivision and specific development, and future regulations that may be adopted.

The Master Plan is advisory and does not affect legally protected interests of property owners and does not create individual regulatory requirements that land use applicants must affirmatively prove.

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agricultural interests; individuals with knowledge about water law and water use; natural resources experts; and county officials representing a wide variety of offices including: roads and bridges, taxation, health and human services, law enforcement and hazard mitigation/emergency services.

These meetings are described on page 10 and were integral to the planning process. The details of the Master Plan were finalized during four hours of publicly noticed Planning Commission meetings, which included the consulting team RPI and members of the Area Planning Committees, and at which, input and comments from members of the public were encouraged.

This Master Plan is, therefore, a plan by and for our community that offers a construct to protect the unique qualities valued by Delta County residents and provides strategies that will make Delta County an even better place to live and work. Because the Master Plan describes general parameters for land use and development patterns, it serves as an information source for property owners and developers to make informed land use decisions that are consistent with identified visions and goals. The Planning Commission recognizes that Delta County's varied regions, assets and economies are interconnected and interdependent. Nonetheless, some unique differences continue to be apparent in various areas of the county from a land use perspective. It is recommended that the Planning Areas of Delta, Surface Creek, Leroux Creek, Upper North Fork and Crawford, developed in the 1997 master plan, be retained and that Planning Commission representation from these areas be maintained.

PRINCIPAL DETERMINATIONS DERIVED FROM THE MASTER PLANNING PROCESS

The 1997 master plan identified five important county-wide issues:

1. Preservation of agricultural lands and open space
2. Protection of private property rights
3. Maintaining the rural lifestyle
4. Scarcity of availability of domestic water
5. Lack of land use planning

These concerns and issues continue to hold importance for Delta County residents today and are reflected in the visions and goals described in this Master Plan.

Protection and promotion of agricultural lands and businesses was high on the priorities of the public, landowners, experts and members of the Planning Commission. There is a clear preference that Delta County should continue to be an agriculturally based community and that agricultural interests should be preserved and protected. However, it is clear that agriculture has and continues to evolve from the conditions existing in 1997. There have been some changes in the economic indicators around the importance of traditional

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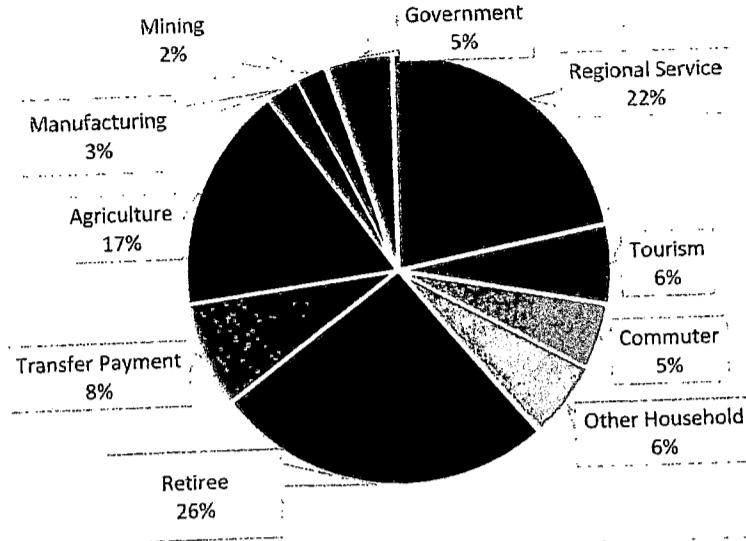
agriculture in our county, but at the same time, new opportunities are presented and growing in realms such as organic produce and other organic products, value added agricultural products and wine and hops production. Moreover, substantial new investment continues in Delta County agricultural lands in the form of improved irrigation systems, conservation efforts and new crop alternatives. It must also be recognized that in certain areas of Delta County, rural residential development has replaced former agricultural lands. This trend has been slow to develop, but is continuing and may be expected to increase with population growth. As described in greater detail in this Master Plan a number of population growth scenarios apply for Delta County's future. However, moderate population increases have occurred since 1997 and there is every reason to believe such growth will continue or even accelerate. Accordingly, although this Master Plan places agriculture foremost with respect to future land use policy revisions, the rights and interests of existing rural residents must also be considered and protected.

There is a general consensus that policies should be adopted to encourage future residential development in those areas where residences are currently located to avoid problems of residential sprawl, prevent loss of agricultural lands and open space, ensure availability of necessary services and preserve the rural character of Delta County. There is a concern about extension of residential development beyond the formal subdivision process. Regulations should be considered to address this issue. Intergovernmental agreements with the incorporated municipalities should be designed to direct growth to these towns consistent with the terms of such intergovernmental agreements.

Land use policies for economic development have been the subject of substantial discussion in the planning process of this Master Plan. The Planning Commission has identified concerns around the erosion of tax revenues generated within the county that are essential to support public services and infrastructure. Improved economic development is essential to reviving sources of tax revenue. Such development is needed because Delta County has been identified as lagging its Colorado counterparts in economic progress (Denver Post, October 1, 2017; 2017 Distressed Communities Index from Economic Innovation Group, Washington D.C; data from 2011-2015, See Appendix F). Further, new economic development is needed to offer opportunities to citizens and their children. New businesses will enrich Delta County's diversity and make our community a better and more interesting place to live. However, economic development policies must be designed to protect and not compromise existing, valued agrarian and rural lifestyles now enjoyed by Delta County residents. Further, new development must "pay its own way" and mechanisms, beyond increased tax revenue streams, should be identified to ensure that result. Figure 1 shows the current sectors that contribute to Delta County's total economy.

Delta County Master Plan

Figure 1 – Delta County Economic Base Analysis



Source: Department of Local Affairs State Demography Office

An obstacle to economic development exists in the form of current specific development regulations concerning changes in land use. These regulations require each economic development project to undergo a cumbersome, time consuming regulatory process that is uncertain as to outcome and holds the potential for legal challenge regardless of the decision. Moreover, any change in land use arguably requires a new specific development application, even where the new use is consistent with an existing use. There is anecdotal evidence that, because of uncertainty created by the current specific development regulations, the county has missed out on the establishment of new businesses. It is the consensus of the Planning Commission that efforts should be undertaken in the future for revision of the specific development regulations in order to provide for a more predictable, certain and defensible arrangement for land use determination. Such a change will inform and offer protection to existing landowners, who will no longer be uncertain about the uses that may be made of neighboring properties, as well as those wishing to undertake a development, who will know from the outset whether that development will be permissible. Such regulatory revisions will be an important step toward encouraging and welcoming new business and industrial growth in the county. The Planning Commission recommends that any process undertaken for revision of development regulations involve existing landowners and county residents to ensure broad-based input and acceptance. Moreover, any revised regulations should be designed in so far as possible to protect current land use opportunities and to avoid over-regulation.

The master planning process identified the continuing need for regulatory policies that will protect domestic and agricultural water supplies, quality and distribution systems. The Planning Commission also recognizes that Delta County has limited jurisdiction in the arena of water provision and use, and must partner with appropriate governmental

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agencies and stakeholders in these efforts. In addition, domestic water supply and scarcity must be a central determining factor in the siting of new development, both residential and commercial, and policies should be adopted consistent therewith.

Finally, the planning process confirmed the need for Delta County to continue efforts, within its jurisdiction, to ensure a diverse energy economy. However, the county must also continue to be a leader in protecting clean air and water, while providing a safe and healthy environment for its residents and visitors.

VISION, GOALS AND STRATEGIES

The vision, goals and strategies section of the master plan is inherently strategic. Goals provide statements of **WHAT** the community aims to accomplish over the life of the plan. Strategies are specific actionable measures for **HOW** to implement the goals. The Vision, Goals and Strategies topics arose by sorting input from the community vision process by theme. The topics and the vision statement for each topic are listed below (see chapter 3 for complete Vision, Goals and Strategies):

- **Agricultural Land and Business** – Delta County will remain an agricultural county by protecting agricultural lands and operations and supporting agricultural innovation.
- **Water Resources** – Delta County, within its legal parameters, strives to protect water supplies, delivery systems and water quality by partnering with the appropriate agencies and stakeholders to minimize the potential loss of quantity or quality of its water resources.
- **Economic Development** – Delta County encourages and welcomes new business and industrial growth and strives to clearly identify areas in the county where business and industry may locate with processes that are fair and predictable. Growing and diversifying the economy will create needed jobs and increase the tax base that funds critical assets and services.
- **Land Use and Development** – Delta County's land use processes will be fair, predictable, defensible and easily understood. Growth and development in the county supports the community's desired future while enhancing health, safety, welfare, quality of life, while fostering innovation.
- **Public Infrastructure, Services and Assets** – Delta County provides thoughtfully planned and coordinated infrastructure and services that support the health, safety, and welfare of county residents. Projects, improvements and maintenance are prioritized to meet the needs of the community, to maintain the physical assets already invested in by the community and to protect those investments well into the future.

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Energy Development – Delta County has a vibrantly diverse energy development economy. The county is a leader in protecting clean air and water and continues to protect community health, safety, and welfare for present and future generations.

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

Chapter 3 - Future Land Use Plan (Designations and Map starting on page 79) articulates a physical planning strategy to implement the goals and strategies of this Master Plan. The Future Land Use Plan contains five designations that together cover the entirety of the private property in unincorporated Delta County. Each designation addresses the following components of future land use:

Existing Conditions – The current status of the land in each designation, the major assets and challenges that exist today.

Vision – The vision for the future of the land in each designation, the desirable possibilities and opportunities.

Infrastructure – The list of basic infrastructure investments that will be necessary or that would increase the potential and attractiveness of the property in each designation.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

Public involvement in the Delta County Master Plan was essential to the development of a community driven plan. Delta County is a very diverse community in both geography and perspectives. The outreach and engagement effort aimed to ensure that this diversity was deliberately targeted during outreach to stakeholders as well as the diversity of voices heard in considering development of the plan.

The goals for the public outreach and engagement were to:

- Inform community members about the project—it's purpose, background and direction.
- Gather input about what residents value in our community.
- Identify and discuss important issues that need to be addressed.
- Provide information about potential solutions and strategies for action.
- Gather input from the community about community priorities for action.

The community was given an opportunity to provide input during four distinct phases from the beginning to end of the project.

- **Phase 1: Where Are We Now?** This phase assessed current community conditions and land use policies and focused on gathering input from the public about values, issues and concerns, and hopes for the future.

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- **Phase 2: Where Do We Want To Go?** During this phase, the project had a developed vision and goals that expressed desired community conditions for the future. The community provided feedback on the draft vision and goals.
- **Phase 3: How Will We Get There?** During this phase, the project team created a draft Master Plan and Future Land Use Plan. The community provided feedback on the strategies to achieve the vision and goals as well as the future land use plan.
- **Phase 4: Taking Action:** During this phase, the County adopted the Master Plan and identified next steps needed for implementation. Community input was heard at the final public hearing prior to plan adoption.

How We Reached Out To the Community

To reach out and inform the community about the project, a number of tactics were used during each phase. The project's website, www.deltacountyplan.com, was the depository for information as well as a mechanism for collecting online community input. In total, approximately 1,892 people participated. The project maintained an email distribution list of about 350 residents in addition to the 125 residents who are signed up for emails directly from Delta County. Organizations around the county including chambers, nonprofits, and social organizations, were asked to forward project updates via email to their members. Finally, the County's social media (Twitter and Facebook) were used to promote updates and events. Together, the County has about 350 followers. To enhance distribution of social media posts, county staff posted information to numerous community Facebook pages including the message boards for Delta, Orchard City, Cedaredge, Paonia, Hotchkiss, and Crawford. Several interested formal and informal organizations were very helpful in reposting Facebook posts directly to their own pages.

The Delta County Independent and KVNf were sent press releases during each major public involvement phase. Each of these media outlets ran stories, sometimes both before and after events. Additionally, KVNf provided a forum for the County to provide updates directly through interviews.

Delta County staff and members of the Planning Commission conducted outreach at several community events. The County attended Downtown Delta Fest, Celebrate Cedaredge, County Fair, Deltarado Days, and Farm to Fiddle. A total of 167 people stopped and talked with staff and the Planning Commission members during these events.

Finally, county staff attended meetings with numerous organizations around the county to inform stakeholder groups about the planning process and seek their participation. These groups included:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delta Rotary• Paonia Rotary• Cedaredge Chamber of Commerce• Delta Chamber of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All-Chamber meeting• Delta Kiwanis• Western Slope Conservation Center
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- Delta Board of Realtors
- Citizens for a Healthy Community
- Delta Livestock Association
- Town of Cedaredge
- City of Delta
- Town of Orchard City
- Town of Crawford
- Town of Hotchkiss
- Town of Paonia
- Delta Tourism
- Delta School District Principals
- Cedaredge High School
- Paonia High School
- Delta High School
- Hotchkiss High School
- Delta LULAC
- Delta County Economic Development
- VOA Senior Meals
- Conservation District
- Valley Organic Growers Association
- Farmers Union

The Role of the Planning Commission

The Planning Commission took a very hands-on approach in drafting the Delta County Master Plan. To create the vision, goals, and strategies, they met every other week from September 2017 to early November 2017. These meetings included a series of information sharing discussions between the Planning Commission and numerous organizations and topic experts to help strengthen the collective understanding of the breadth and depth of issues and opportunities related to the emerging focus areas of the master plan including agriculture, land use, economic development, water, public infrastructure, and energy. Specifically, the Planning Commission met with the following:

- Delta County Assessor
- Delta County Sheriff
- Delta County Engineering
- Delta County Road & Bridge
- Delta County Local Government Designee
- Delta County Public Health
- Citizens for a Health Community
- Western Slope Conservation Center
- Solar Energy International
- Arch Coal
- Department of Local Affairs
- State Demographer
- Delta County Economic Development
- Uncompahgre Development
- Board of Realtors
- North Fork Creative Coalition
- Aaron Clay
- Colorado Water District
- Farm Bureau
- Farmer's Union
- Valley Organic Growers Association
- Livestock Association

To create the Future Land Use Plan section of the Master Plan, the Planning Commission met regularly from January 2018 to mid-March 2018 adding extra work sessions into their schedule as needed. These meetings were open to the public with opportunity for public comment at each meeting.

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The Public Involvement Process

Over the course of the entire planning process, the community had the opportunity to participate in fourteen public meetings, two community surveys, and one public hearing.

Phase 1: Where Are We Now?

To initiate the project, RPI conducted nearly 20 one-on-one interviews to help them become more informed about the community as the firm initiated the master planning process. Interviewees were selected based on diversity of geographic location around the county and interests. This process was purely informative, and the data collected during this was not included in community comments.

From May 15th to May 25th, 2017, ten public events were held in five locations (Paonia, Cedaredge, Crawford, Hotchkiss, and Delta) around the community engaging nearly 300 people. The goal of these meetings was to introduce the planning process and collect community input on the following questions:

- What do you love about living in Delta County and why?
- What are your concerns and hopes for the future?
- Looking forward 20 years, what story would Delta County have to tell about its success?

Five *Visioning Workshops* were held in these locations and were dialogue oriented and focused on creating a shared vision for the future. The five *Property Owner Drop-in Events* were more informal and provided property owners an opportunity to meet with the planning consultant, RPI, and county staff to discuss specific questions about the master plan process.

For community members unable to participate in the visioning meetings, online participation was available for four weeks through July 8, 2018. The online forum and *Community Vision Questionnaire* collected an additional 340 comments.

Finally, Delta County conducted an online survey that asked a series of questions. A total of 568 people participated in the survey. The survey helped to identify areas to focus on for further discussion and also highlighted the range of opinions that are held across the county.

The results of this community input became the basis for the draft community vision and goals.

Phase 2: Where Do We Want To Go?

In mid-November 2017, the community was invited to provide feedback on the draft vision and goals. Three community meetings were held in Cedaredge, Hotchkiss, and Delta. Approximately 145 community members reviewed the vision and all the goals in an open house format followed by small group discussion that dove deeper into specific thematic

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areas and goals. An online feedback forum was provided for two and a half weeks that collected feedback from 39 community members. All the feedback collected answered the following questions:

- Do the vision and goals move the county in the right direction?
- If we were successful in accomplishing our goals, what would that success look like on the ground?
- As we explore strategies to accomplish these goals, what do we need to keep in mind?

The community input was used by the Planning Commission and staff to finalize the vision, goals, and strategies in January 2018.

Phase 3: How Will We Get There?

The Delta County Master Plan, which includes a future land use plan, was developed by the staff, consultant and Planning Commission between January and the end of April 2018. A draft Master Plan was made available for public review at the end of March 2018 followed by open houses in Hotchkiss, Orchard City, and Delta in early April. The goal of the open house was to review the process, understand the future land use plan, and learn about what happens next with implementation. A total of about 100 community member attended. The community was asked to respond to the following questions:

1. Do the priorities identified in the plan reflect the discussions held during the planning process?
2. Do the strategies and next steps move these priorities forward appropriately based on the level of community consensus achieved during the planning process?
3. Does the Master Plan move Delta County in the right direction with regards to the community's Vision and Goals?

The community was also provided with an opportunity to submit formal comments to the Planning Commission through email and the online community forum before and after the open house. A total of approximately 121 written comments were received.

The Planning Commission met at the end of April and made changes and additions to the draft plan based on input from the public. A public hearing was held on May 9, 2018. A total of 47 people attended and several spoke and provided comments. The Planning Commission voted on final changes to the master plan and approved the master plan on May 16, 2018.

Youth and Targeted Engagement

County staff worked directly with the Delta County School District to connect with county youth to engage them in community visioning. Staff joined the School Board members and went to each of the four high schools in the county. The Student Councils at each of the

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schools facilitated a discussion with students. A total of about 140 students participated across the four high schools. The student facilitators asked the students to answer the following questions, and then worked together to identify the common issues and themes:

- What do you love about your community and what are its strengths?
- What concerns do you have about your community and what is challenging to live here?
- What would make your community a better place to live?
- How does your community support you and what tools does your community provide you to be successful after high school?
- When you are an adult, do you want to live in Delta County? What would make you want to come back to Delta County if you plan on leaving?

Finally, the staff tried to reach out to the Hispanic population in the county. This proved to be very challenging. The county translated the original survey into Spanish and worked with several partners including the Delta County Libraries to distribute the survey. Unfortunately, this engagement method was unsuccessful. However, staff was able to connect Delta High School LULAC. LULAC is a Hispanic leadership group comprised of high school students. This group of about 25 students also participated in a facilitated discussion answering the above questions.

1.2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This information provides the current and historic context through indicators obtained from various sources including but not limited to the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Delta County. In order to provide some background and context for the policy sections of this plan in Chapters 2 and 3, this section is organized according to the same topics as the Vision, Goals and Strategies; Agricultural Land and Business; Water Resources; Economic Development; Land Use and Development; Public Infrastructure, Services and Assets; and Energy Development. The information provided in this section creates a benchmark for measuring progress in implementing the goals in this plan.

Why does this matter?

The end of each plan topic section includes a subsection entitled "Why does this matter?" that briefly summarizes the policy guidance for each topic contained in Chapter 2 Vision, Goals and Strategies. Refer to Chapter 2 for the complete and formal policy statements.

KEY FINDINGS

These are the key findings from the trends and indicators for each of the topics contained in Chapter 2 Vision, Goals and Strategies. Below these summaries, each topic is detailed.

Agricultural Land and Business – Although the indicators show that this industry has faced some adverse economic conditions, agriculture is incredibly resilient and remains a significant component of the economy. Agriculture is one of the largest contributors to the county's economic base representing 17% of the total. Farm earnings have declined steeply since 2000 while employment has fluctuated moderately up and down, not declining steadily like earnings. There was a slight decrease in the acreage farmed and the average farm size between 1997 and 2012, but the number of farms and market value of products sold has increased according to the most recent Census of Agriculture data. Organic farms sold \$2.4 million in products in 2012 according to the Census of Agriculture and there were 28 organic certified operations in Delta County as of 2018 according to the USDA.

Water Resources – Delta County GIS data shows that there are 47 domestic water providers in Delta County ranging in scale from the regional distribution company, Tri-County Water, to water companies serving just a handful of homes. There are many smaller domestic water providers throughout the county and several major domestic water providers. While domestic water supply is a pivotal factor, Delta County government has very limited authority over domestic water supply. The availability of domestic water will likely shape the future throughout the county.

Economic Development – The county's economy has been in transition with growth in services-related industries and nearly commensurate declines in employment and earnings in non-services related industries such as agriculture, manufacturing, construction and

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mining. This ongoing transition combined with the financial crisis and recession have meant fluctuating/flat economic trends since 2010. Delta County showed significantly lower growth than the state as a whole between 2000 and 2016 across all major indicators (population, employment, income, earnings per job). There were 698 jobs classified as 'creative jobs' as of 2016 and there are numerous art galleries and organizations, wineries, breweries, cideries, all positive signs for economic diversity and adaptation.

Land Use and Development – Fifty-six percent (56%) of the population resides in one of the six municipalities and the other 44% of the population resides in the unincorporated county. Nearly half of the properties in the unincorporated county have some portion that is irrigated agriculture and three-quarters of agricultural parcels contain at least one residence. As of 2016, the municipalities contain roughly 55% of housing units while the unincorporated county contains the other 45%. Since 2000, the total number of housing units in the county increased by roughly 1,126, fewer than predicted. There are 170 parcels with commercials uses on them and 629 vacant lots or parcels, most of which are less than 5 acres in size. Approximately 37,000 acres of land is currently under a conservation easement in the county.

Public Infrastructure, Services and Assets – The vision and many of the goals and strategies outlined in this Master Plan will require sufficient revenue. The county has maintained a fiscally conservative budget in the past and strives to maintain this in the future. However, declining revenues make this a challenge. In recent years the county has seen a decrease in the total county assessed value of property from \$325 million in 2009 to \$272 million in 2016 and property tax collections have remained relatively stagnant between 2014 and 2016. Residential property made up 47% of county assessed value. Commercial was the second largest source of property taxes (19%) followed by state assessed (13%), natural resource (7%), agricultural and vacant land which each accounted for 6%, and industrial, which contributed 2%. Retail sales in Delta County peaked in 2010 with over \$605 million in sales. Since then, retail sales in Delta County have seen minor fluctuations but have remained relatively flat overall. The county collected \$5.4 million in sales taxes in 2014 and saw a slight increase in collections to \$5.9 million in 2017.

Energy Development – Most of the BLM lands include federal mineral rights as do large areas of private land, especially inholdings surrounded or partially surrounded by public lands. Large areas of BLM and Forest lands in the eastern portion of the county are classified as "no surface occupancy" and "withdrawal" under BLM stipulations, limiting or excluding development. Although there have been efforts to produce oil and gas, there is not much actual production occurring today. With 145 wells total, 2 are producing, 1 has an approved permit, 1 is waiting on completion, 43 are abandoned, 60 are dry and abandoned 14 are shut-in, and 24 are plugged and abandoned. Coal production has been and remains an important part of the county's economy, and although it has declined in recent years, markets change and it could rebound. The solar energy potential in Delta County is considerably high overall compared with the national average with the highest solar

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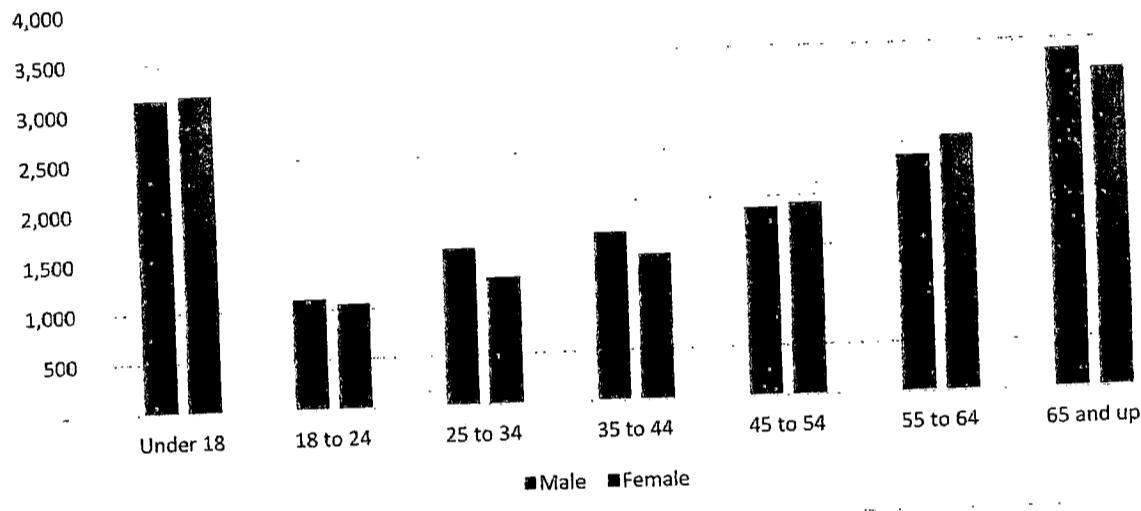
potential near the City of Delta. There is also potential for small scale hydro-electric systems in the county, largely related to irrigation structures.

DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

The demographic context provides a snapshot of the current demographic conditions in Delta County at time of writing. At the time of writing, the 2012-2016 America Community Survey 5-Year Estimates were the most recent data available from the U.S. Census and the American Community Survey.

There are more males in Delta County than there are females with 51% of the population male and 49% female. The county population is fairly split between age groups with just over 21% of the county population under 18 years old, 27% between 18 and 44 years old, 29% of the population between 45 and 64 years, and 22% of the population 65 years of age and older.

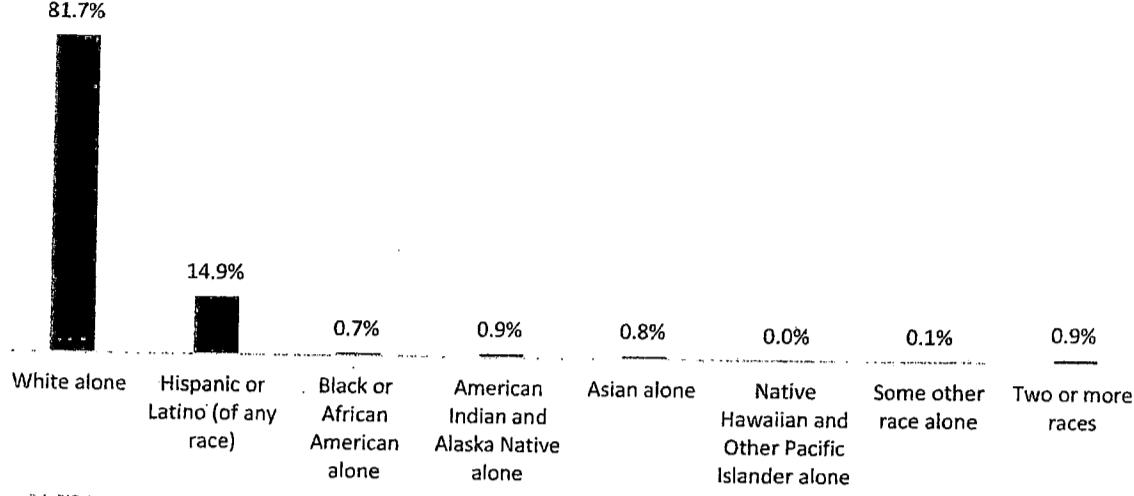
Figure 2 – Population by Age and Sex 2016



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
The racial composition of the county population is as follows: 81.7% of the population is white, 14.9% is Hispanic or Latino, and other or a combination of races make up the remaining 3.4% of the population in Delta County as seen in figure 3.

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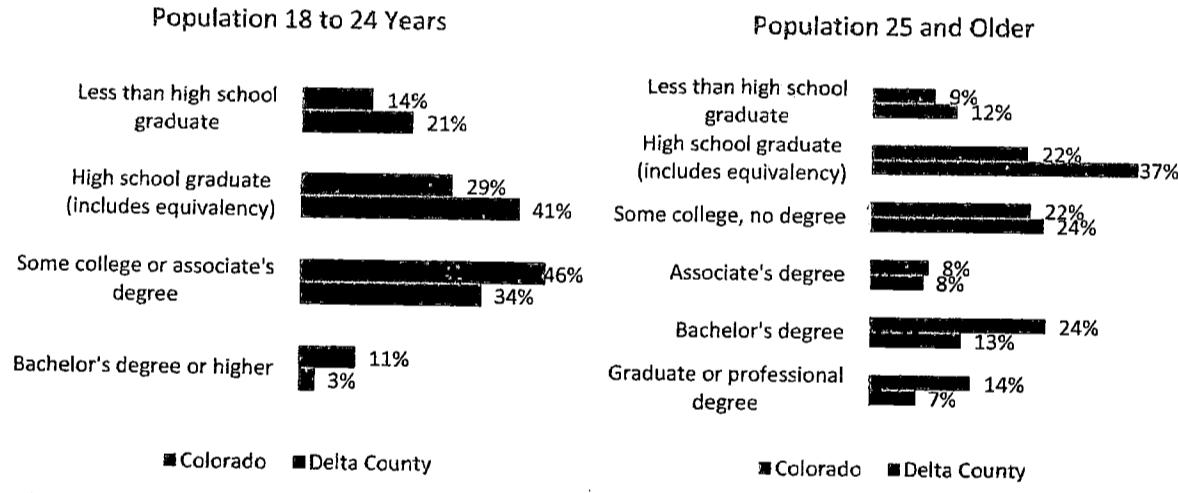
Figure 3 – Delta County Racial Demographics 2016



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Delta County's population has lower educational attainment than the state average. Twenty-eight percent (28%) of Delta County residents age 25 or older have an associate's degree or higher, while 46% of Coloradans age 25 or older have an associate's degree or higher. Twelve percent (12%) of Delta County residents over the age of 25 do not have a high school diploma or its equivalency (GED), compared to 9% of all Coloradans.

Figures 4 & 5 – Level of Education Attained by Age Group (2016)

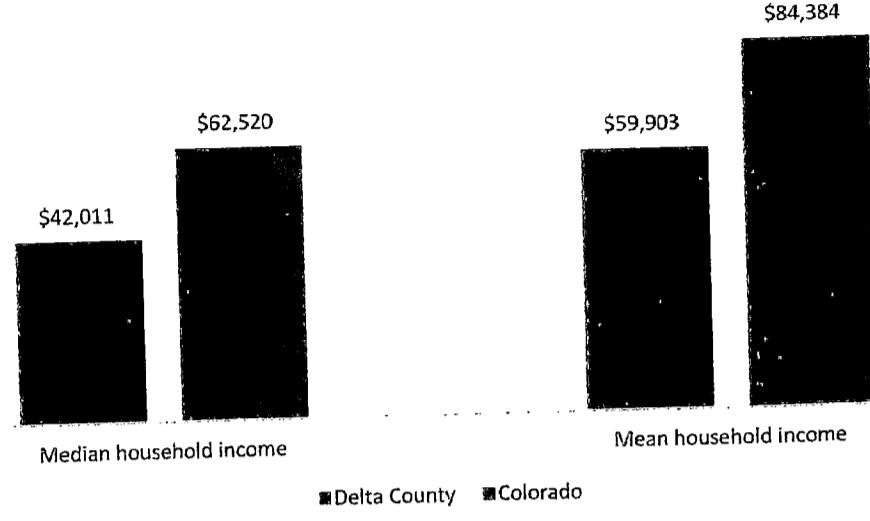


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Fifty-seven percent (57%) of households in Delta County make less than \$50,000 a year, 28% of households make between \$50,000 and \$99,999 per year and 15% of households make over \$100,000. Both the median (\$42,011) and mean (\$59,903) household incomes for Delta County, are below the statewide averages of \$62,520 (median) and \$84,384 (mean).

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Figure 6 – Mean and Median Annual Household Income 2016



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates,
Headwaters Economics EPS

In 2016, Delta County also had a higher percentage of families and people whose income was below the poverty level than the state. Families with children had the highest poverty rate, 21.2% of all families with related children under the age of 18 years had incomes below the poverty level in Delta County, compared to 12.8% statewide.

Figure 7 – Percentage of Families and People Whose Income in the Past 12 Months Is Below the Poverty Level (2016)

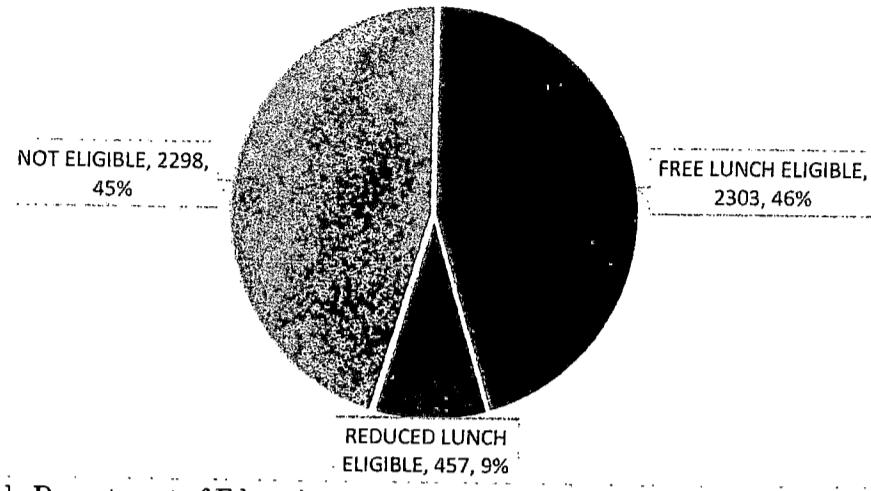
	Delta County	Colorado
All people	16.8%	12.2%
All families	11.6%	8.1%
Families with related children of the householder under 18 years	21.2%	12.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The 50J School District in Delta County had a total student body of just over 5,000 students in 2017. According to the Colorado Department of Education, just over half of the students in the 50J School District are eligible for free or reduced lunch with 46% eligible for free lunch and 9% eligible for reduced lunch costs as seen in figure 8. Household size and income in addition to other qualifying factors (foster children, homeless children, children in Migrant Education Program etc.) determine eligibility. Households with an income below 130% of the federal poverty line qualify for free lunch and households with incomes below 185% of the federal poverty line qualify for reduced lunch.

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Figure 8 – PK – 12th Grade Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility School District 50J 2017-2018



Source: Colorado Department of Education

AGRICULTURAL LAND AND BUSINESS

Agriculture is integrated throughout the county physically, it is a key component of the economy representing 17% of the economic base. Equally important, the diversity and durability of agriculture is central to well-being and quality of life in Delta County. Parcels assessed as agriculture range in size from less than an acre to hundreds of acres and the majority of agricultural parcels have a portion that is irrigated. While agriculture is a type of business operating throughout the county, homes and rural neighborhoods are also part of the agricultural landscape throughout Delta County. Most who farm or ranch live onsite and many properties interspersed throughout agricultural areas are assessed residential, often in subdivisions or clusters of parcels.

The USDA conducts the Census of Agriculture every five years to gather information about size, production, value, and type of agriculture. The most recent census was conducted in 2012 and is the most recent data available for size, acreage and value of products in Delta County. The Census of Agriculture provides insight into the amount and value of agriculture in Delta County. According to the census, the county had a total of 1,250 farms, with 42% of these farms ranging between 10 to 49 acres. Farms between 50 and 179 acres accounted for 26% of all farms in Delta County. Small farms, nine acres or less, accounted for 17% of all farms and while they are smaller, they add diversity to the agricultural products offered in the county and are an important part of the agricultural economy and culture in Delta County.

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Figure 9 – Farms in Delta County by Size, 2012

Farms by size	Number
1 to 9 acres	215
10 to 49 acres	521
50 to 179 acres	330
180 to 499 acres	110
500 to 999	31
1,000 acres or more	43

Source: 2012 Census of Agriculture

Figure 10 shows there was a slight decrease in the acreage farmed and the average farm size between 1997 and 2012, but the number of farms and market value of products sold has increased.

Figure 10 – Change in Agriculture 1997-2012

	1997	2002	2007	2012	% change '97 to '12
Number of Farms	1,100	1,063	1,294	1,250	14%
Land in Farms (acres)	265,593	262,443	252,530	250,761	-6%
Average Size of Farm (acres)	241	247	195	201	-17%
Market Value of Products Sold	\$38,312,000	\$39,077,000	\$46,800,000	\$55,639,000	45%
Crop Sales	\$14,941,680	\$14,413,000	\$20,158,000	\$23,582,000	58%
Livestock Sales	\$23,370,320	\$24,664,000	\$26,642,000	\$32,056,000	37%
Average Per Farm	\$34,829	\$36,761	\$36,167	\$44,511	28%
Government Payments	\$392,000	\$847,000	\$725,000	\$728,000	86%
Average Per Farm Receiving Payments	\$4,606	\$5,803	\$6,141	\$6,120	33%

Source: 1997, 2002, 2007, 2012 Census of Agriculture

According to the USDA Census of Agriculture, there were 29 certified USDA National Organic Program farms and 4 exempt farms in 2012. While this is a small number of farms compared to the total, organic farming is growing throughout the county. Moving forward, there will likely be more farms seeking organic certification.

Figure 11 – Organic Agriculture Farms and Value

Type of Production	Farms	Value
USDA National Organic Program certified organic production...farms	29	
USDA National Organic Program organic production exempt from certification	4	
Acres transitioning into USDA National Organic Program organic production	7	
Value of Sales of Certified or Exempt Organically Produced Commodities	26	\$2,395,000
Total organic product sales		

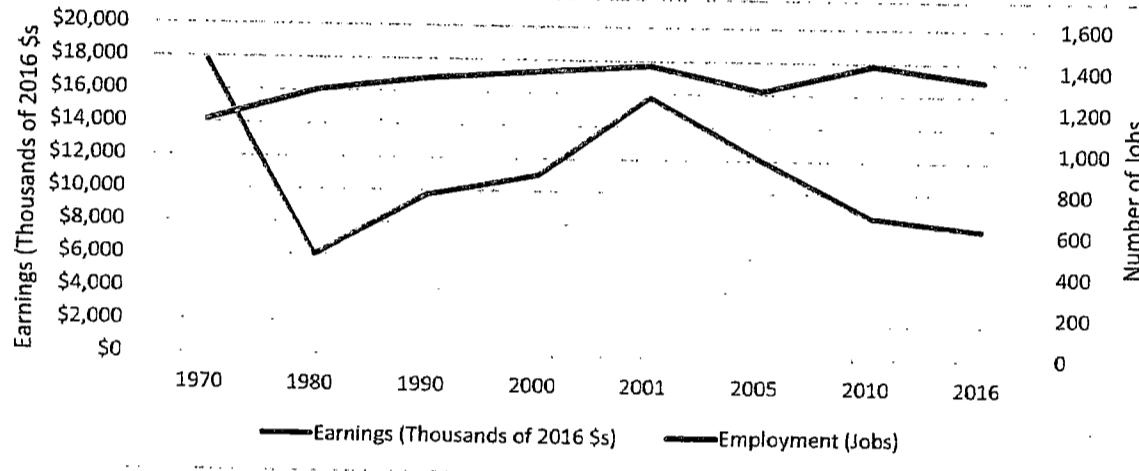
Source: 2012 Census of Agriculture

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According to the USDA Organic Integrity Database there were 530 certified organic operations in Colorado in 2018 and 28 certified operations in Delta County. The USDA Organic Integrity Database lists certified organic operations but does not list operations that are exempt from organic certification (retail-only operations, certain handling operations, and operations with below \$5,000 in gross annual organic sales) nor does it provide total organic product sales.

Farm earnings in Delta County declined steeply between 2001 and 2010 and have declined moderately since 2010 (see Figure 12). The Bureau of Economic Analysis defines earnings as “the sum of wage and salary disbursements, supplements to wages and salaries, and proprietors' income” (Bureau of Economic Analysis). In 2001, farm labor earnings totaled nearly \$15.8 million. In 2016, they totaled \$7.9 million. The number of jobs decreased by 63 during that same time.

Figure 12 – Delta County Farm Jobs and Earnings 1970-2016



Source: Headwaters Economics, 2017

Why Does This Matter?

Delta County residents strongly desire to protect agriculture as a cornerstone industry that contributes to residents' well-being in countless ways. Although the indicators show that this industry has faced some adverse economic conditions, agriculture is incredibly resilient and remains a significant component of the economy. Working agriculture is highly valued by residents and there is growing optimism about the future possibilities for agricultural enterprises. From a policy perspective, it is critical to maintain the agricultural land base by clearly articulating in land use regulations that agricultural uses and operations are a primary use in agricultural areas. Occupants of neighboring areas and future development near agricultural operations can expect that agriculture is allowed and encouraged. Site design standards are needed in future development proposed near agricultural lands to reduce impacts on agricultural operations. Creating incentives for agricultural land conservation that are viable and attractive options for owners could yield permanent agricultural land conservation.

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WATER RESOURCES

Water resources including irrigation water and domestic water have been fundamental in shaping development patterns in Delta County and are likely to continue to be the most important factor. Availability of irrigation water influenced settlement patterns and today irrigation water is widely distributed throughout the county by many irrigation water providers. Although irrigation water is broadly beneficial and the maintenance and improvements to the infrastructure are strongly supported, the Master Plan focuses on domestic water. While irrigation water originally influenced settlement patterns and allows for agriculture, domestic water has become the pivotal factor for development patterns and is therefore central in the Master Plan.

As part of the master plan update process, Delta County conducted a survey of domestic water providers to try to identify status of domestic water resources around the county. This survey effort helped identify where water is available, but did not provide the clarity hoped for as many water providers did not participate or did not provide enough detail. In addition to the survey, the consultant team interviewed each of the municipalities including discussion on water supply.

Although water has been available through domestic water companies throughout the county in the past, only a handful of water distribution companies stated that they have water taps available. Delta County GIS data shows that there are 47 domestic water providers in Delta County ranging in scale from the regional distribution company, Tri-County Water, to water companies serving just a handful of homes. Many residents in unincorporated areas of the county get domestic water from private wells.

While there are many smaller domestic water providers throughout the county, there are several major domestic water providers. Project 7 Water Authority is a cooperative effort between seven water entities that provides drinking water to municipalities and rural areas of the Uncompahgre River Valley. The City of Delta receives its water from Project 7. Project 7 and Tri-County water distribute Project 7 water in the areas east and west of Delta. Upper Surface Creek Domestic Water Users Association serves a large area and many customers and may serve future development. Municipalities provide water in their boundaries and in limited areas outside of the municipal boundaries through service agreements. Currently, there is a need to better understand the availability of domestic water throughout the county. Water availability will shape where future development occurs.

While domestic water supply is a pivotal factor, Delta County has limited authority over water resources. The authority granted to the county includes permitting/regulation of individual sewage disposal systems, floodplain regulations administration, erosion and sedimentation control requirements in new developments, and requiring adequate water supply in new developments.

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Delta County also has an opportunity to address conveyance of irrigation water to ensure new development does not conflict with or hinder irrigation water delivery. Likewise, the county has an opportunity to ensure, through subdivision, that historical or prescriptive access to irrigation infrastructure like diversion structures and head gates be addressed.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Colorado Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) regulate and control water resources. The EPA's Office of Water (OW) establishes and enforces federal clean water and safe drinking water laws, provides support for municipal wastewater treatment plants, and is involved with prevention efforts aimed at protecting watersheds and drinking water sources. The EPA delegates much authority and some resources to state-level oversight via DNR and CDPHE.

The CDPHE's Colorado Water Quality Control Division manages water quality. Their role in water management includes, but is not limited to, the following: oversee permits and authorizations, including facility operator certifications; enforce clean water standards; manage compliance assurance for drinking water; respond to emergency drinking water issues; regulate domestic water facility designs; monitor and measure contaminants in fish; administer water-quality related grants and loans.

The DNR oversees mostly water quantity issues while the CDPHE mostly oversees quality issues. The DNR distributes water rights and promulgates rules that support water rights distribution in accordance with the Colorado Revised Statutes. The State of Colorado provisioned the Colorado State Engineer to administer water resources. The State Engineer and Division Engineers assign Water Commissioners to seven divisions to carry out front-line aspects of water right administration and research, including on-site inspections.

Why Does This Matter?

County representatives must actively engage with the appropriate regulatory agencies to influence policies and other outcomes in a manner consistent with achieving the county's values. The best opportunity to influence the processes is to work in cooperation with those agencies and representatives who directly regulate water resources. A first step in better integrating water availability into land use policies is to conduct an inventory of domestic water providers, including their service areas, capacity and readiness to serve additional customers.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The county's economy has been in transition with growth in services related industries and nearly commensurate declines in employment and earnings in non-services related industries such as agriculture, manufacturing, construction and mining. This ongoing transition combined with the financial crisis and recession have meant fluctuating/flat economic trends since 2010. The Master Plan is focused on county land use policy and the

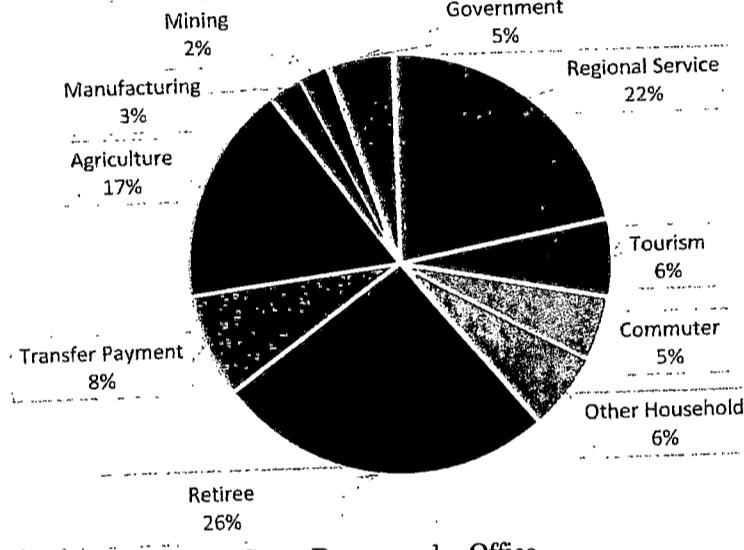
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related public infrastructure and services, both of which have a role in economic growth that is in keeping with community values.

The municipalities similarly guide land use and infrastructure and services within their boundaries, so the county's direct influence is in the unincorporated areas in the county. Unincorporated areas tie together the municipalities and are where the agricultural industry operates and also where nearly half the county population lives. Within this essential role, the county strives to grow existing businesses, to maintain the economic diversity that exists and continue to evolve and diversify from this point.

The State Demographer prepares an economic base analysis for all counties in Colorado which examines what drives the local county economy. According to the State Demography Office "Industries that sell goods or services outside the local area are considered the base of the economy; these 'Basic Industries' are responsible for existence of the local economy as they bring in outside dollars to the community. Base industries also generate additional secondary jobs in the economy that are classified as either 'Indirect Basic' or 'Local Resident Services'." (State Demography Office, 2017).

Figure 13 – Delta County Economic Base Analysis



Source: Department of Local Affairs State Demography Office

Based on analysis by the State Demographer, Delta County's economy is driven by ten key industries as identified in figure 13. Retirees contribute 26% of the economic base through earnings and employment associated with expenditures made by retirees on local resident services. Agriculture is the third largest industry representing 17% of the economic base, but may actually play a stronger role in the overall economy. The category of regional services collectively represents a 22% share of the base economy, but this category is comprised of construction, communications, trade and transportation, professional and business, finance and insurance, and education and health, and the individual compositions of each sub-industry are not specifically delineated. Transfer payments (also known as

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public assistance) contribute 8% of the economic base while tourism and other household (household income from dividends, interest and rents) each contribute 6%. Government and commuters (residents who live in Delta County but commute outside the county for work) each account for 5% of the economic base while mining and manufacturing contribute a combined 5% of the economic base.

There were 12,476 jobs in Delta County in 2016 according to the State Demographer. The top four industries with the highest number of jobs in Delta County were government (19.9%), health care and social assistance (12.5%), retail trade (12.0%) and agriculture (10.9%). The top four industries with the highest average weekly wage are utilities (\$1,167), management of companies and enterprises (\$1,036), mining (\$1,022) and government (\$948). The two industries with the lowest average weekly wage are arts, entertainment and recreation with an average weekly wage of \$320 and accommodation and food services with an average weekly wage of \$290. Agriculture has an average weekly wage of \$546.

Figure 14 – Share of jobs in Delta County by Industry 2016

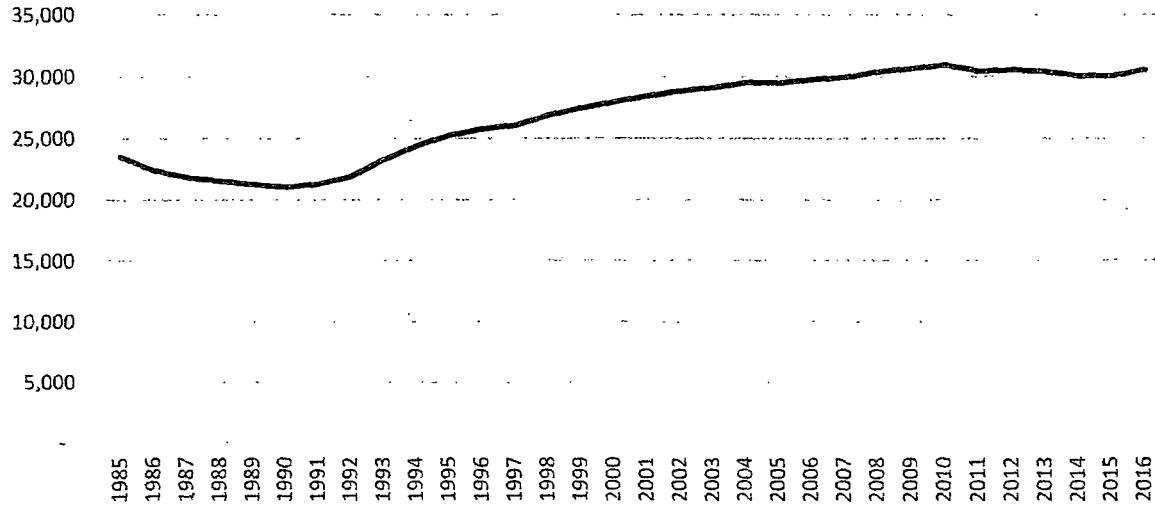
	Number of Jobs	Percent	Average Weekly Wage
Total Jobs	12,476	100.0%	\$675
Agriculture	1,362	10.9%	\$546
Finance Activities	343	2.7%	\$888
Real Estate	429	3.4%	\$633
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	492	3.9%	\$768
Management of Companies and Enterprises	27	0.2%	\$1,036
Administrative and Waste Services	362	2.9%	\$532
Education	84	0.7%	Unavailable
Health Services	1,561	12.5%	\$758
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	129	1.0%	\$320
Accommodation and Food Services	813	6.5%	\$290
Other Services, Except Public Administration	885	7.1%	\$552
Government	2,482	19.9%	\$948
Mining	192	1.5%	\$1,022
Utilities	42	0.3%	\$1,167
Construction	815	6.5%	\$858
Manufacturing	545	4.4%	\$701
Wholesale Trade	119	1.0%	\$743
Retail Trade	1,494	12.0%	\$793
Transportation and Warehousing	133	1.1%	\$693
Information	168	1.3%	\$574

Source: Department of Local Affairs State Demography Office

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The county population decreased in the late 1980's but recovered in the 1990's and continued with steady growth through the 2000's. The total population in the county grew from 25,718 to 30,471 between 1996 and 2016. Most of this growth occurred in the years between 1996 and 2010. Small fluctuations in the county population have occurred since 2010, but a population growth trend appears to be emerging.

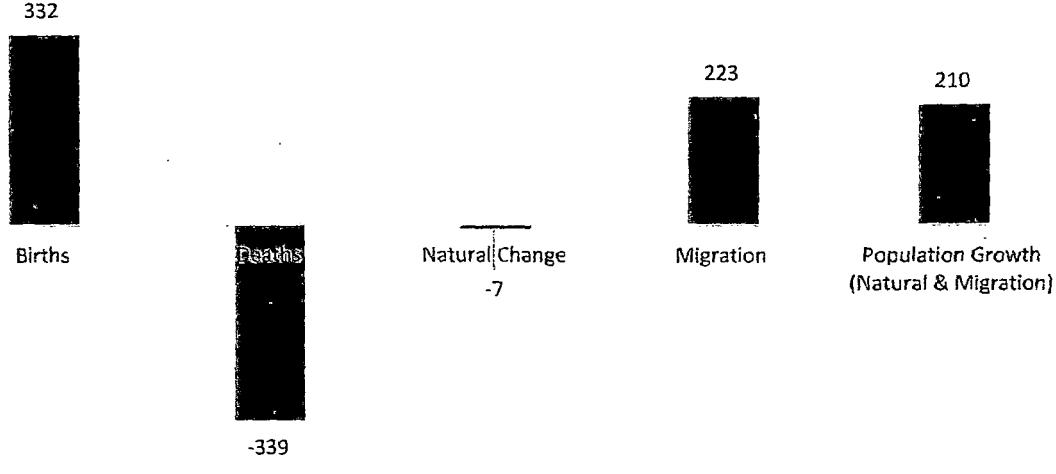
Figure 15 – Delta County Historic Population 1985-2016



Source: Department of Local Affairs State Demography Office

From 2000 to 2016, the population grew by 2,526 people, a 9% increase over 16 years. Births and deaths were nearly even, meaning that migration to Delta County is driving population growth (see figure 16).

Figure 16 – Annual Average Components of Population Change in Delta County, 2000-2016

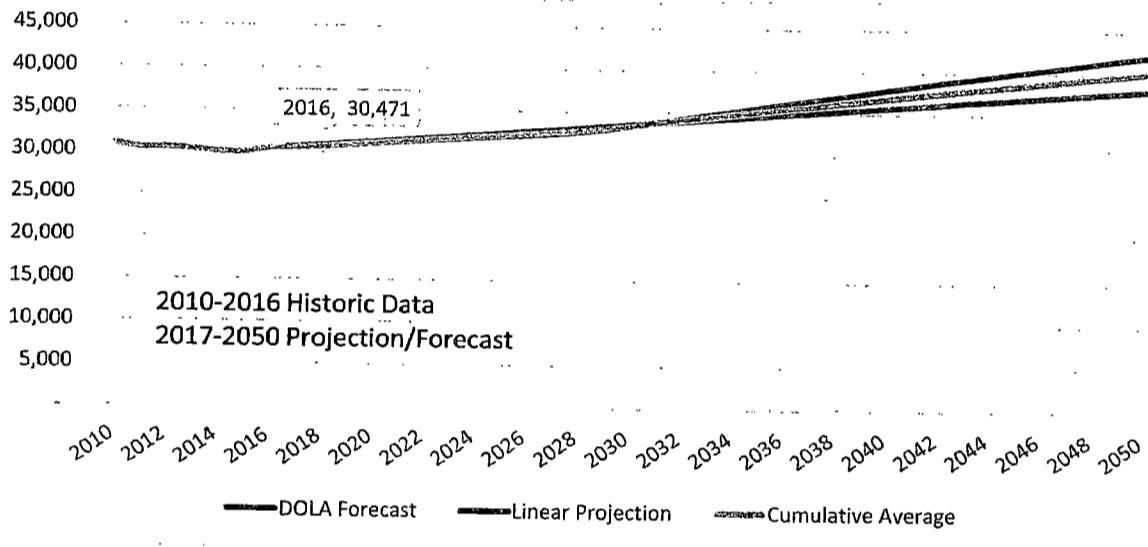


Source: Headwaters Economics EPS

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The Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) Demography Office forecasts the county population through 2050. DOLA forecasts the population will increase by 11,656 people over the next 32 years and that this growth will occur incrementally. Job growth trends are key inputs into the DOLA population forecasts, when jobs slow down or decline, so does population. A linear projection shows an increase by 7,683 people by 2050. The cumulative average of the DOLA forecast and the linear projection shows an additional 9,669 people in Delta County by 2050. These are scenarios, and the actual population may grow at a faster or slower rate based on a number of economic and demographic factors. Without job growth these population forecasts will not occur. Young and middle-aged people move to where they can live and work while retirees have more ability to move for pleasure rather than a job. Still, the population that lives in Delta County, or will live in Delta County, must have amenities and services. The county will need to consider the population when planning for the carrying capacity of infrastructure and services.

Figure 17 – Delta County Population Forecast (DOLA) and Linear Projection and Cumulative Average 2017-2050

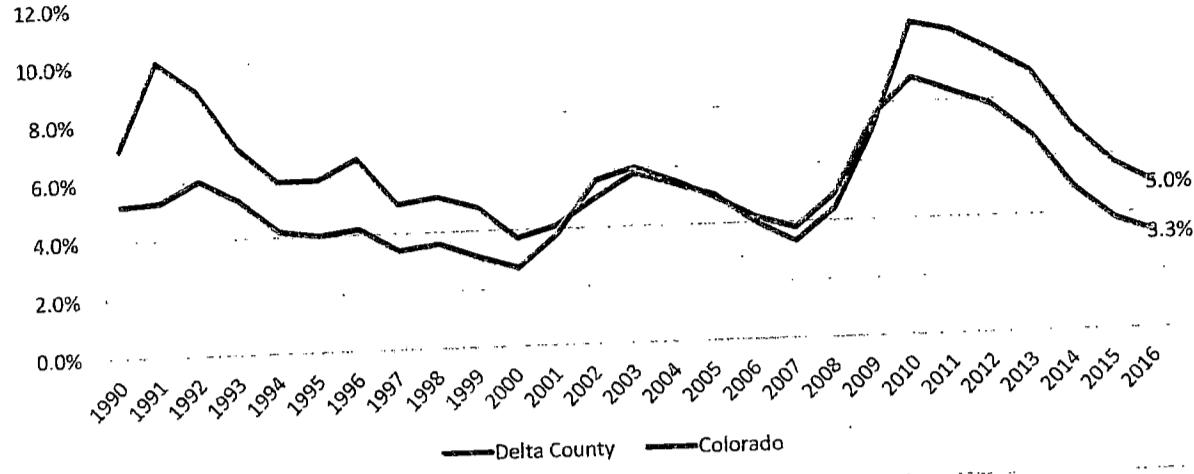


Source: Department of Local Affairs State Demography Office, RPI Linear Projection

The region's economic performance can be gauged by referencing changes over time in particular indicators. Key indicators include unemployment, household income, and job growth/loss. The unemployment rate in Delta County peaked at 10.7% in 2010, at the worst of the recession. The unemployment rate in Delta County in 2016 was 5%, this was 1.7% higher than the unemployment rate in Colorado.

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Figure 18 – Annual Unemployment Rate 1990-2016

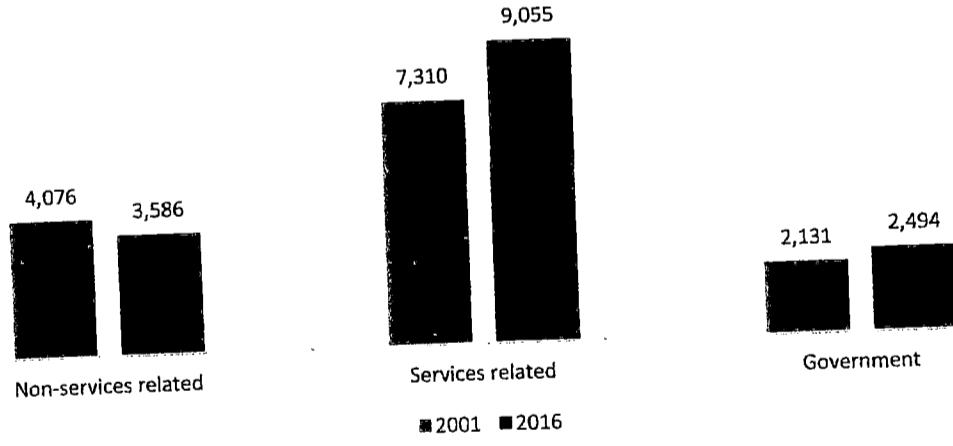


Source: Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, Colorado Information Marketplace

The four industry sectors with the highest number of jobs in 2016 were government, retail trade, healthcare and social assistance industry was the fastest growing industry from 2001 to 2016 adding the most jobs of all industries (582 new jobs) followed by real estate and rental leasing (531 new jobs) and government (363 new jobs).

From 2001 to 2016 the total number of non-services related jobs decreased from 4,076 to 3,586, or 12%. Non-service industries include farming; forestry, fishing & agricultural services; mining, construction and manufacturing. The number of jobs in services related industries increased by 24% and government jobs increased by 17% between 2001 and 2016 (see figure 19). Service industries include transportation, public utilities, wholesale trade, retail, finance, insurance, real estate, and services.

Figure 19 – Change in Delta County Employment 2001 to 2016



Source: Headwater Economics EPS

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Since 2000, the county has seen an increase in population, employment, and personal and per capita income, but it has seen a decrease in average earnings per job of 3%. This slip in effective job earnings could be a result of a combination of more part-time employment and stagnant and/or declining wages measured in real dollars. Delta County has seen less population, employment and income growth since 2000 compared to Colorado as a whole.

Figure 20 – Delta County and Colorado Economic Indicators % Change 2000-2016

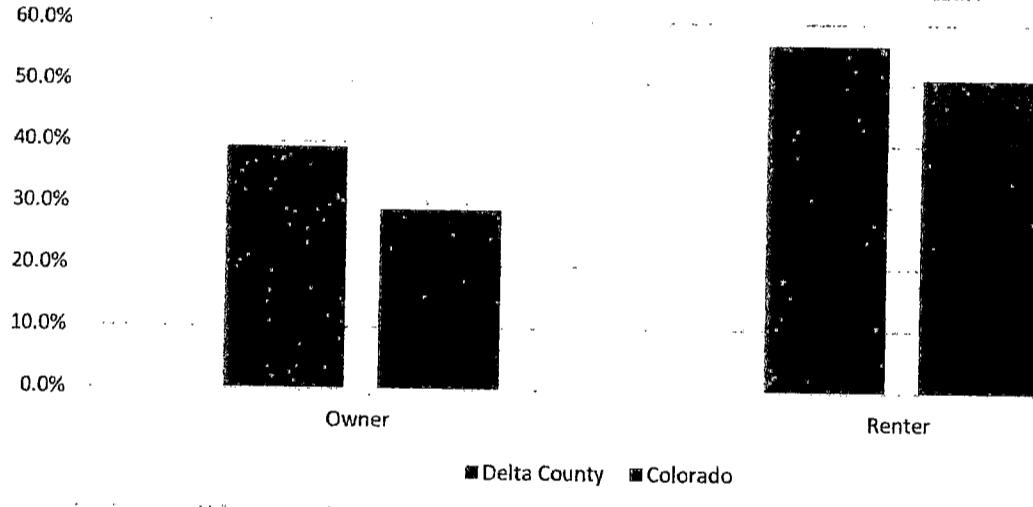
	Delta County	Colorado
Population (percent change, 2000-2016)	9.2%	28.0%
Employment (percent change, 2001-2016)	17.0%	25.1%
Personal Income (percent change, 2000-2016)	16.4%	40.4%
Average Earnings per Job (percent change, 2000-2016)	-3.0%	2.1%
Per Capita Income (percent change, 2000-2016)	6.6%	9.6%

Source: Headwaters Economics EPS

Housing

According to the US Census Bureau, a household is economically burdened if they are paying greater than 30% of their household income on housing costs. Delta County has a higher number of both renter and owner households who are paying more than 30% of their household income on housing than the state average.

Figure 21 – Percentage of Households Paying >30% of Household Income on Housing Costs



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The Delta area sold the most houses (263) in the county, and also had the lowest median sale price (\$177,500) of all three geographic areas in 2017. There were 197 houses sold in Surface Creek area with a median price of \$189,500 and the North Fork area sold the fewest houses and had the highest median sale price of \$215,000 in 2017.

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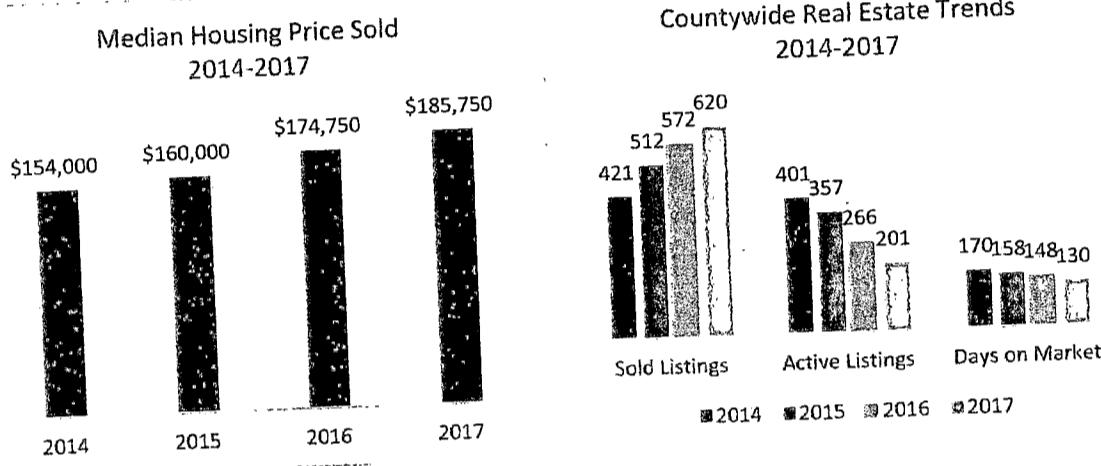
Figure 22 – Residential Listings and Sale Data 2017

	Delta	North Fork	Surface Creek
Sold Listings	263	167	197
Median Sale Price	\$177,500	\$215,000	\$189,500

Source: Colorado Real Estate Network

The county appears to be recovering from the financial crisis and the Great Recession. The median sale price of a house sold in Delta County increased 21% between 2014 and 2017. The number of real estate listings sold grew 47% during the same time, while the number of active listings and the number of days listed before a sale occurred shrank (see figures 23 and 24). These indicators show a recovery trend in the housing market for Delta County.

Figures 23 & 24 – Median Housing Sale Price and Real Estate Trends 2014-2017



Source: Colorado Real Estate Network

Arts and Culture

Delta County is home to a number of unique cultural, arts, and agricultural assets that set the county apart from surrounding communities and regions. According to the Snapshot of the Arts in Delta County CV, the county's creative vitality index was 0.56 out of a 0-to-1-point scale; considerably higher than surrounding counties. The creative industries refer to businesses that are founded with creativity as their basis. Examples include but are not limited to advertising & graphic design, computer designs/games, architecture, arts, film, music, publishing, and TV/radio. More specifically, the industry is built on leveraging intellectual property to generate jobs. There were 698 creative jobs as of 2016, with concentrations of the following: 90 photographers, 46 singers and musicians, 44 writers and authors, 40 graphic designers, and 31 interpreters and translators (Snapshot of the Arts in Delta County CV, 2016, See Appendix F).

There are a significant number of arts and cultural assets in Delta County including historic landmarks, museums, art galleries, organizations, wineries/breweries/cideries, and scenic byways. Registered Historic Landmarks in Delta County include historic churches,

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hotels, theatres, and stores. The National Register of Historic Places includes additional landmarks.

Residents place a high value on celebrating and preserving the region's history and frontier heritage as a trading post for early settlers and the Ute Indian Tribe. Residents directly linked the value of the region's historical landmarks, buildings, and sites to the quality of life experienced in Delta County. Properly stewarding these sites requires a collective ethic to advocate, educate, and fundraise.

Delta County has a considerable number of art studios, galleries, and organizations. These individuals and coalitions create an atmosphere of artistic value and cultural importance in the community and county at-large. Research by RPI Consulting showed twenty art galleries and other art organizations at time of writing (sources: Delta County, Uncover Colorado, Delta Fine Art Guild).

Delta County has numerous wineries, breweries and cideries. Wine and brew tasting is one of the top attractions for Delta County. The wineries, tasting rooms, breweries and cideries included in the Arts and Culture Map (page 58) were provided from the county's activities and attractions as well as Wine Colorado's top wineries in Delta County. Research by RPI Consulting showed that there are eighteen wineries, three breweries, and three cideries in the county at time of writing. For up-to-date information, contact the chambers of commerce and tourism board.

Delta County contains sections of two of Colorado's designated scenic byways; the Grand Mesa Scenic Byway and the West Elk Scenic Byway. The southern end of the Grand Mesa Scenic Byway starts in Cedaredge and continues north on Highway 65 around Island Lake and out of the Delta County boundary towards Mesa, Colorado. This byway is one of 26 Scenic and Historic Byways designated by State and Federal agencies.

The West Elk Scenic Byway is a lollipop-loop that goes from Hotchkiss to Crested Butte, then north to Glenwood Springs. Parts of this scenic byway run through Highway 133 and Highway 92. The West Elk Scenic Byway goes through the towns of Paonia, Hotchkiss and Crawford. Containing two of Colorado's designated scenic byways is another asset to Delta County and its historical and scenic characteristics.

Why Does This Matter?

The ongoing transition with declining inputs from traditional economic sectors and growth in service sectors combined with the financial crisis and Great Recession have meant fluctuating/flat economic trends since 2010. There is widespread support for economic growth and an increase in overall prosperity that is commensurate with community values. The Master Plan is focused on county land use policy and the related public infrastructure and services, both of which have a role in economic growth that is in keeping with community values. Economic growth also drives much-needed growth in tax revenues for providing public infrastructure and services. Ensuring that land use regulations are consistent with economic development goals and support innovation in a manner consistent

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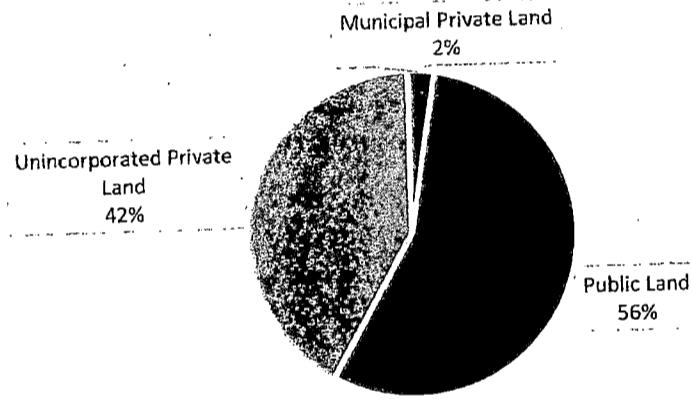
with the community's values is the most direct and important county role in economic development. Partnering with economic development entities whose primary focus is to strengthen the communities' economic advantages and providing leadership are also crucial roles the county can provide.

Housing is one of the pillars of economic development and the real estate market appears to be recovering from a challenging decade. The Master Plan calls for a diversity of housing types and to retain the flexibility for individualism and creativity in housing. Higher density housing is typically more affordable and it is generally more financially feasible when sited in municipalities where public sewer is available, so careful coordination with municipalities is an essential component of providing a diversity of housing types.

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

Just over half (56%) of Delta County is public land which includes federal, state and local public lands. The municipalities account for roughly 2% of the land in the county and private land in the unincorporated county makes up 42% of the entire county. This 42% is what this Master Plan covers. While there are goals and strategies related to public lands and coordination with the municipalities, the vast majority of the Master Plan is about 42% of the county.

Figure 25 – County Land by Type

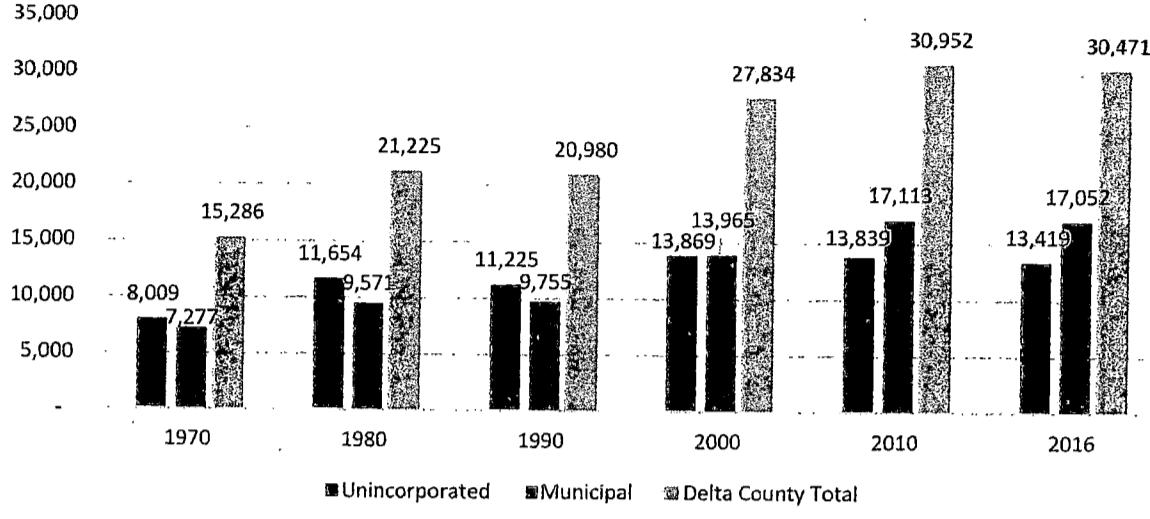


Source: Delta County GIS

Historically, more of the population in Delta County was located in the unincorporated county, but as the county grew, more of the population concentrated in the municipalities. Starting in the 2000's, the municipalities gained a higher portion of the population than the unincorporated county (see figure 26). The proportion of population living in the municipalities vs. unincorporated Delta County has remained relatively steady since 2010. An average of 56% of the population resides in one of the six municipalities and the other 44% of the population resides in the unincorporated county.

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Figure 26 – Incorporated vs Unincorporated Population 1970-2016



Source: Department of Local Affairs State Demography Office

Nearly 2,300 of the properties in the unincorporated county have some portion that is irrigated agriculture. About three-quarters of agricultural parcels contain at least one residence and over 3,200 non-agricultural parcels in the unincorporated county contain at least one residence. There are 170 parcels with commercials uses on them and 629 vacant lots or parcels, most of which are less than 5 acres in size.

Figure 27 – Unincorporated Private Parcels and Acreage by Assessor Category

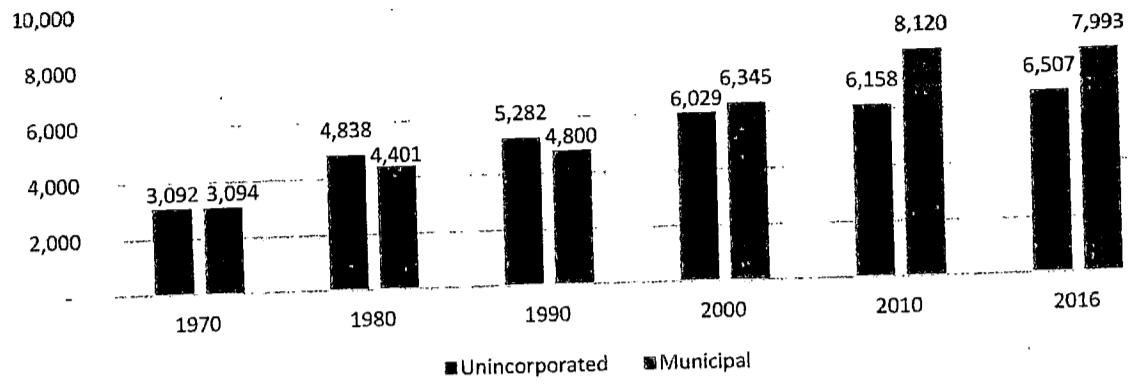
	Total Parcels	Total Acres
Residential Use	3,215	21,407
Irrigated Ag	2,278	90,064
Grazing Ag	675	34,473
Commercial Use	170	2,335
Vacant Land	629	8,890

Source: Delta County Assessor

Starting in the 2000s, there were more housing units located within the municipalities than in the unincorporated county. As of 2016, the municipalities contain roughly 55% of housing units while the other 45% are dispersed throughout the unincorporated county. During development of the previous Master Plan in the 1990s everyone thought rapid population and housing growth would occur. Since 2000, the total number of housing units in the county increased by roughly 1,126, fewer than predicted.

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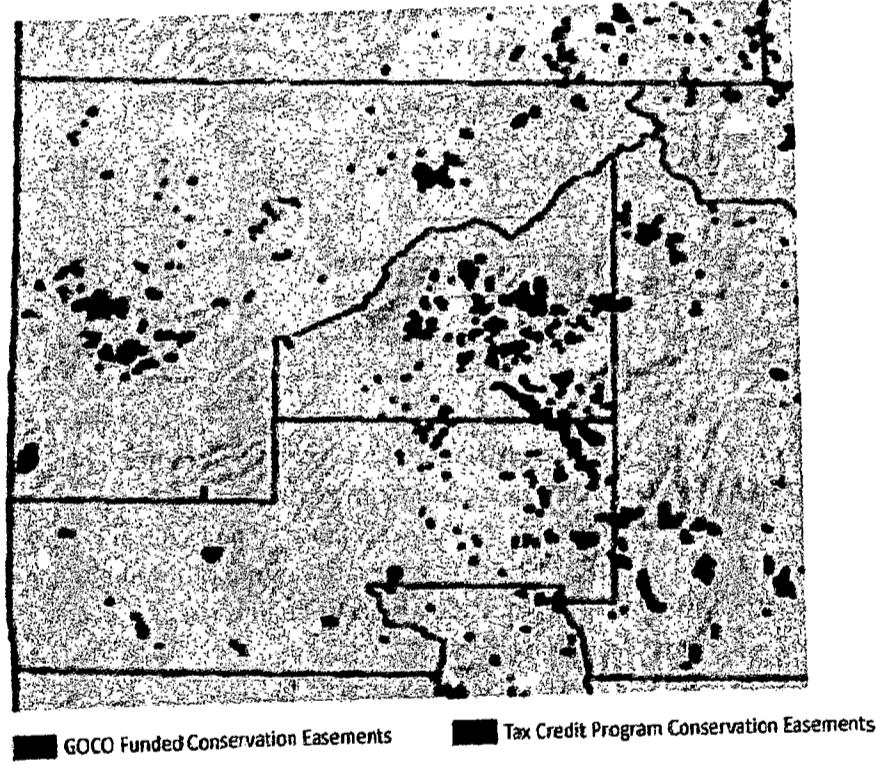
Figure 28 – Unincorporated and Incorporated Housing Units 1970-2016
Housing Units in Delta County 1970-2016



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Research by RPI Consulting found approximately 37,000 acres of land is currently under a conservation easement in the county. Conservation easements are in place on approximately 12% of private land within the county.

Figure 29 – Location of Conservation Easements in Delta County, 2017



Source: Colorado's return on investments in conservation easements: Conservation Easement Tax Credit program and Great Outdoors Colorado. Colorado State University, 2017 (See Appendix F)

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Conservation easements offer property owners the opportunity to conserve larger tracts of land from certain types of development, as determined in the legally binding agreement between the landowner and a nonprofit land trust or government conservation agency. In return for placing land into an easement, property owners are eligible for considerable tax incentives. Several conservation entities are actively working with Delta County land owners to assist them in the easement process. Research by RPI Consulting found 17 land trusts known to be actively working in Delta County at time of writing. In addition to land trusts there are a number of non-profit organizations working in land conservation in the county. Figure 29 page shows the location of conservation easements in Delta County and surrounding counties.

Why Does This Matter?

Successful implementation of this Master Plan hinges on developing comprehensive, consistent, fair and predictable land use regulations. Development patterns and trends, such as mixed residential development and agriculture lands present unique challenges in various areas of the county. Increasing the predictability and consistency of land use policies and regulations regarding the location of future business is a critical component of implementing economic development goals. Land use policies and regulations need to account for the existing capacity of infrastructure. Likewise, future investments in public infrastructure capacity need to support community growth strategies.

The intent of this Master Plan is to lay groundwork for future regulations that will protect property rights while rationally planning for growth, addressing impacts on neighboring properties and protecting the most important land and economic resources. Future land use regulations need to maintain a balance between community goals and individual property rights and must be consistent, fair, predictable and easily understood. Today, on legally created parcels with adequate water, sewer and access, the land use regulations currently in place (May 2018) only allow single family homes and duplexes, home businesses and cottage industries, and agricultural uses except for confined animal feeding operations and except for commercial slaughtering and rendering facilities with little review or approval by the county. An access permit, a septic permit, and an address permit are the only approvals needed. All other uses require an application submittal and review process that includes public meetings with the designated Area Planning Committee, the County Planning Commission, and the Board of County Commissioners. Because the current review process results in either approval or denial of the proposed use, there is a high degree of uncertainty about what one can do on their property beyond the limited allowed land uses listed above. The intent of rewriting the land use regulations is to increase the level of certainty. By doing so, new land use regulations will support and encourage viable uses of private property.

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PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE, SERVICES AND ASSETS

Delta County provides core infrastructure and services to the entire county with a budget of \$22 million per year. The county provides integral services for residents including public safety, general administration, courts and legal, public health and many more less commonly known, but key services that allow residents to access the local resources they need. The following offices and departments provide the services that make the county government function.

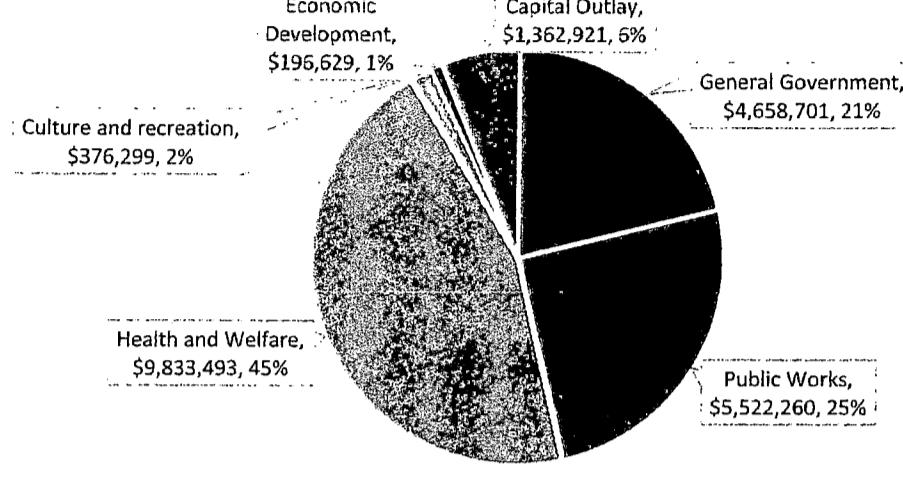
- Administration
- Alternative Sentencing
- Assessor
- Clerk and Recorder
- Community and Economic Development
- Coroner
- Courts
- CSU Extension
- Driver License Office
- Elections
- Emergency Management
- Engineering
- GIS
- Health Services
- Human Services
- Human Resources
- Integrated Solid Waste Management
- Road and Bridge
- Sheriff
- Treasurer

The vision and many of the goals and strategies for this topic that are outlined in Chapter 2 will require sufficient revenue. The county's revenue is tied to the economic activity that occurs within Delta County. Achieving revenue thresholds that allow for additional investment in public services and infrastructure is contingent on economic growth, even if it is incremental growth. Economic growth relies on certain conditions including a sufficiently funded county government. In turn, more revenues are achieved by business development and diversification, and creating new jobs which will provide opportunities for new households to make Delta County home. Sufficient revenues then allow for maintaining or improving levels of service and infrastructure.

Between 2014 and 2016, Delta County had average annual expenditures of just under \$22 million. Health and welfare accounted for an average of 45% of all expenditures between 2014 and 2016 making it the largest expenditure followed by public works (25%), general government (21%), capital outlay (6%), culture and recreation (2%) and economic development (1%). The county has maintained a fiscally conservative budget in the past and strives to maintain this in the future, however, declining revenues make this a challenge.

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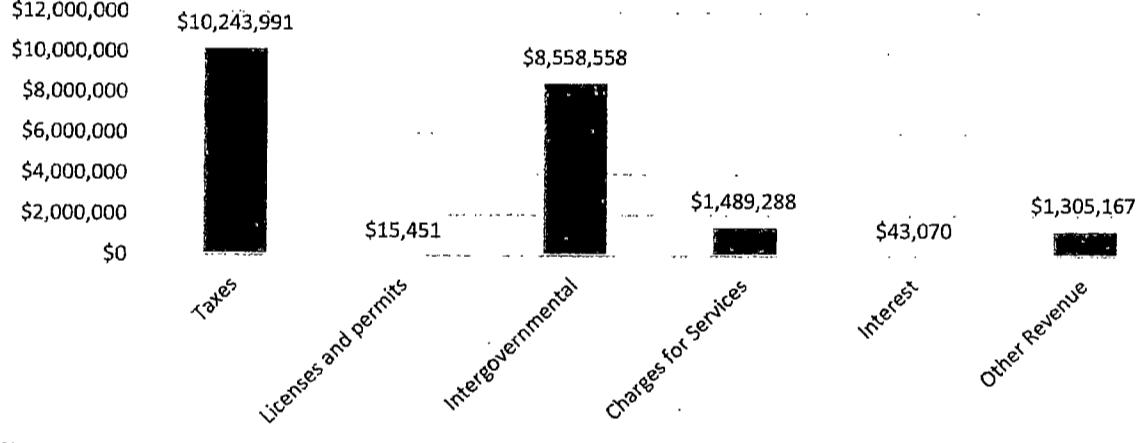
Figure 30 – Average Annual Expenditures – All Delta County Governmental Funds, 2014-2016



Source: Delta County Audits 2014-2016

Taxes (including property and sales) contributed the largest portion of the county's revenue, accounting for an annual average of 47% of all revenues between 2014 and 2016. The second largest source of county revenues is intergovernmental transfers which accounted for an annual average of 40% of county revenue. Licenses and permits, interest, charges for services and other revenue account for the remaining 13% of revenue as seen in figure 31.

Figure 31 – Average Annual Revenues for All County Funds 2014-2016



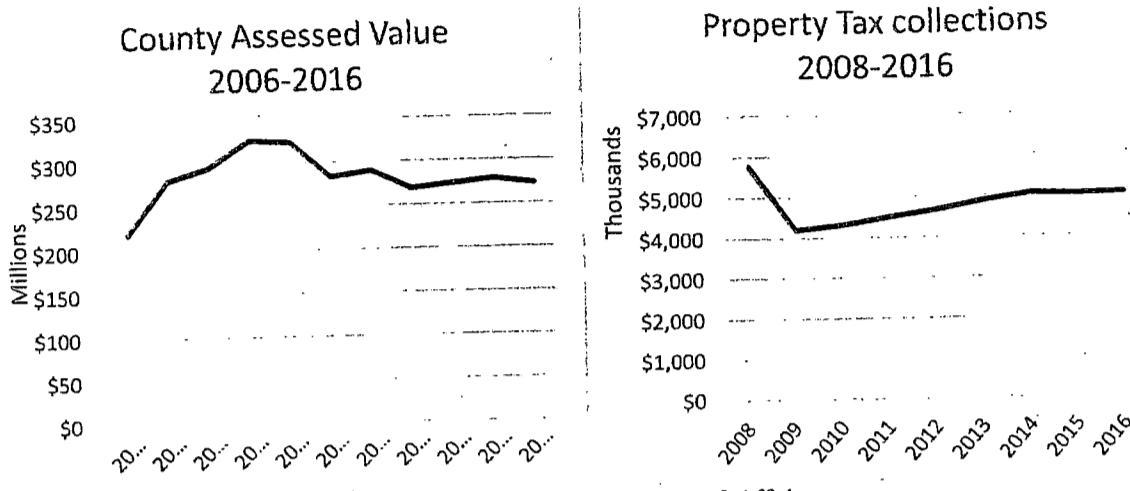
Source: Delta County Audits 2014-2016

External influences affect Delta County revenues including the Great Recession which the county is recovering from, TABOR which limits the ability to increase taxes and the Gallagher Amendment which sets various thresholds on property taxes. In recent years the county has seen a decrease in the total county assessed value of property from \$325 million

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in 2009 to \$272 million in 2016. Property tax collections have fluctuated over the years but have recently remained stagnant right around \$5 million annually from 2014 through 2016.

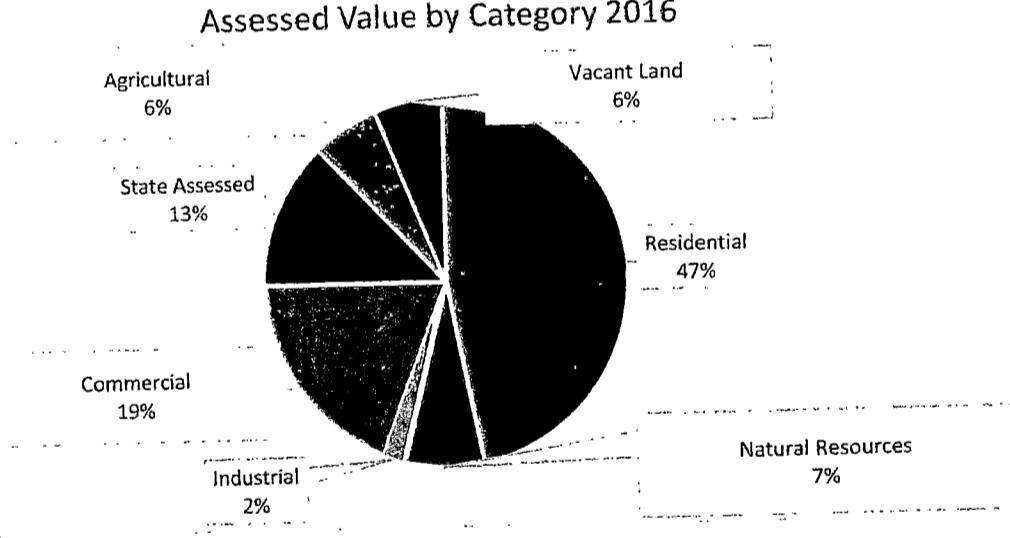
Figures 32 & 33 – County Assessed Value and Property Tax Collections



Source: Delta County Assessor, Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Residential property made up 47% of county assessed value making it the largest source of property taxes for the county in 2016. Commercial property was the second largest source of property taxes (19%) followed by state assessed (13%), natural resource (7%), agricultural and vacant land which each accounted for 6%, and industrial which contributed 2%. While agriculture is an integral part of the culture and economy of the county, it does not contribute a significant amount in property taxes.

Figure 34 – Total County Assessed Property 2006-2016

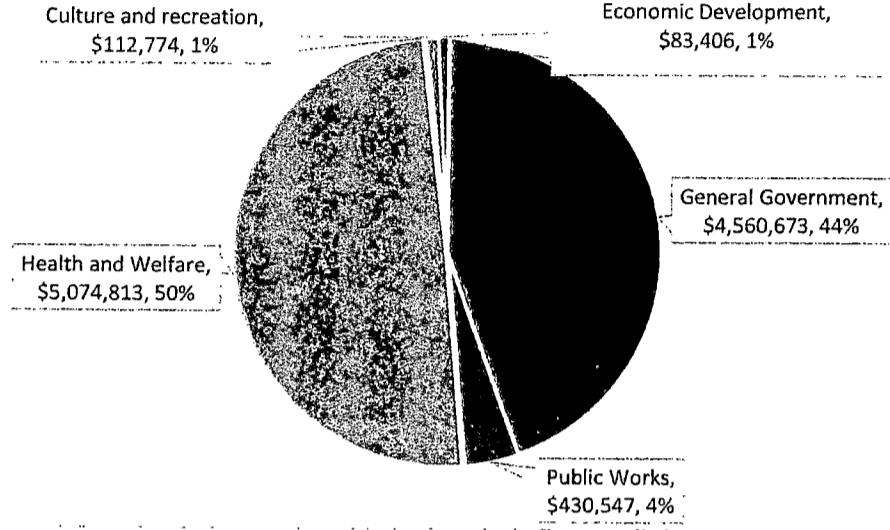


Source: Delta County Assessor

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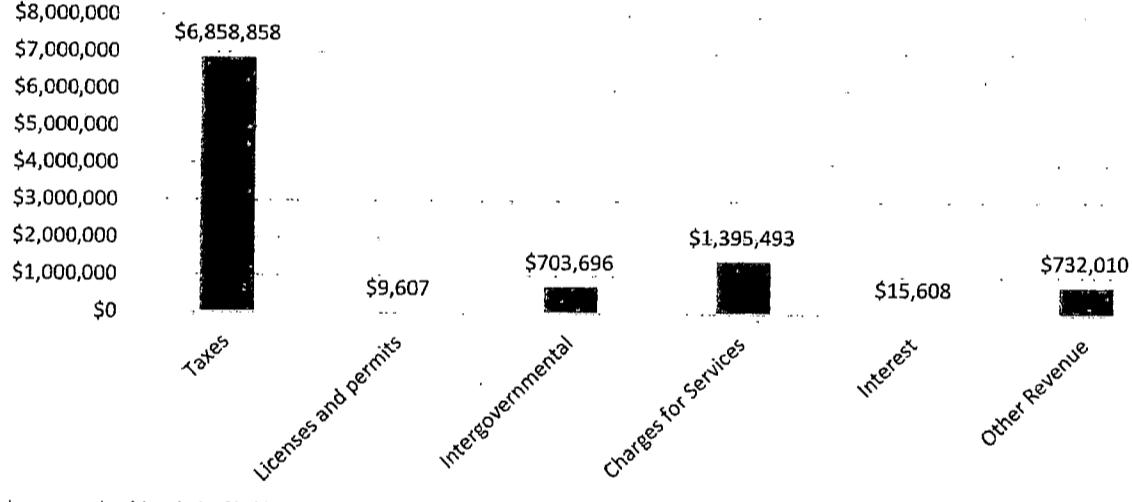
The county relies on stable revenues to be able to provide quality services and maintain a functional county government. The county faces a tight budget and without increased revenues it will face the possibility of declining levels of service.

Figure 35 – Average Annual General Fund Expenditures by Category 2014-2016



Source: Delta County Audits 2014-2016

Figure 36 – Average Annual General Fund Revenues by Type 2014-2016

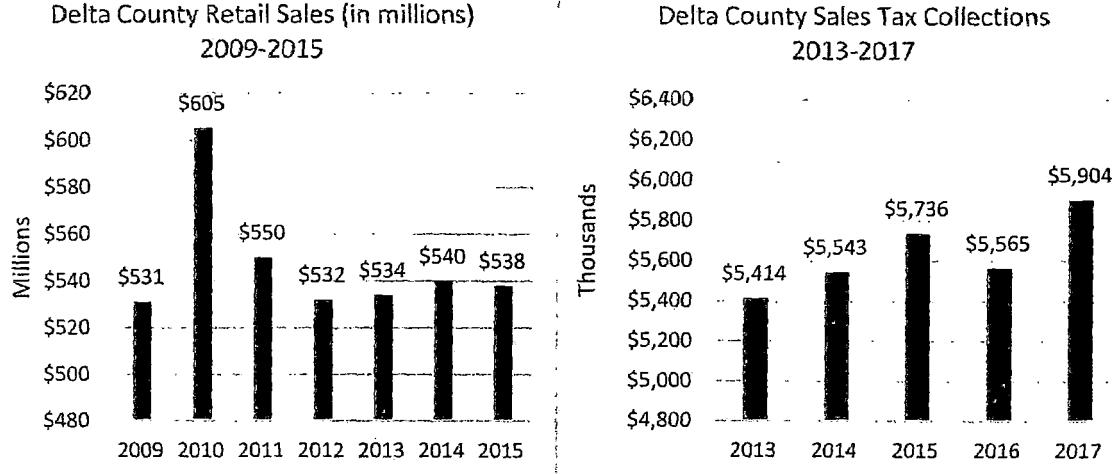


Source: Delta County Audits 2014-2016

As one of its revenue sources the county collects a 2% sales tax. Retail sales in Delta County peaked in 2010 with over \$605 million in sales. Since then retail sales in Delta County have seen minor fluctuations but have remained relatively flat overall (see figure 37). The sales tax collections in 2017 were the highest for Delta County in the last five years and totaled \$5.9 million, an increase of roughly half a million dollars over the total collected in 2014 (\$5.4 million).

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Figure 37 & 38 – County Annual Retail Sales and Sales Tax Revenues

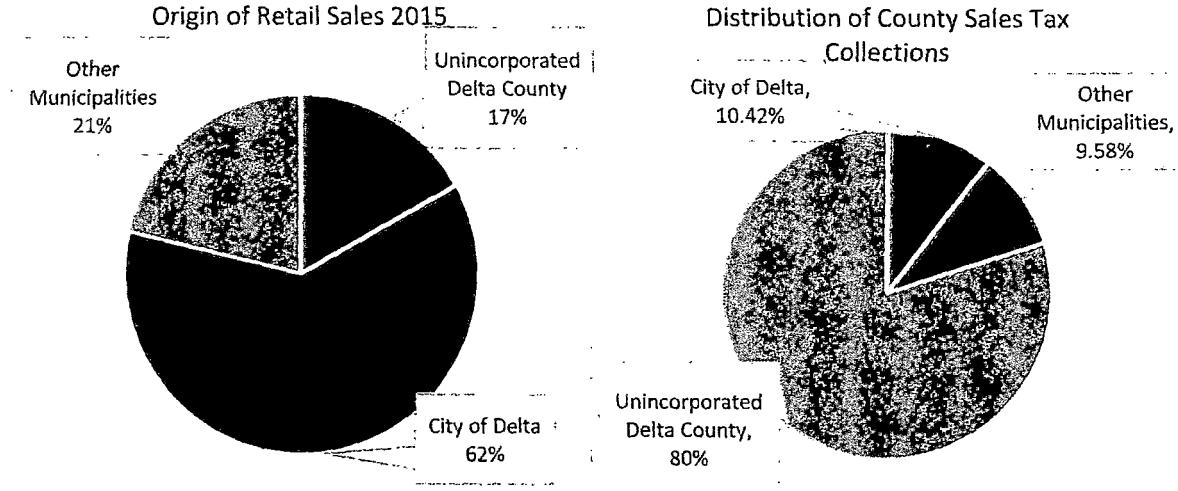


Source: Colorado Department of Revenue, Delta County

The City of Delta had 62% of all retail sales in the county while the other four municipalities had a combined 21% and the remaining 17% of retail sales occurred in the unincorporated county. The City of Delta is the largest municipality and has the largest concentration of retail establishments, still the other municipalities and the unincorporated county play an important role in retail (see figure 39 below).

The county has an arrangement in place where it distributes a portion of the county sales tax revenue to each of the municipalities. Currently, the unincorporated county retains 80% of the sales tax revenues and distributes 10.42% to the City of Delta, and divides the remaining 9.58% among the other municipalities based on a distribution schedule agreed upon in a county resolution.

Figures 39 & 40 – Delta County Retail Sales Origin and Sales Tax Distribution



Source: Colorado Department of Revenue, Delta County

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Broadband

Broadband networks support and enhance business development, increase productivity and facilitate job creation by opening new markets. The county continues to engage with partners to expand the broadband network. Local broadband efforts began in 2013 with a planning grant awarded to Region 10 from the Department of Local Affairs to design and construct a broadband “backbone” throughout the counties comprising Region 10. This effort has included substantial support from municipalities and counties and Delta-Montrose Electric Association. The El Pomar Foundation and the U.S. Economic Development Administration also awarded funding to complete the plan. The early implementation steps include siting fiber optic cable alignments in the towns of Paonia, Hotchkiss, Cedaredge, and Crawford.

Why Does This Matter?

Public infrastructure and services are foundational to supporting development and require sufficient tax revenues. Tax revenues fund improvements and maintenance to the county's infrastructure and they fund the public services the county offers. When the local economy fluctuates, tax revenues fluctuate correspondingly. The TABOR and Gallagher Amendments constrain tax revenue collections, creating further challenges for the county and its public service partners. Building revenues for public infrastructure and services is necessary for achieving the vision and goals articulated throughout this Master Plan. The approach needs to be integrated and addressed from several angles. Land use and development policies and standards must consider the revenues generated versus the costs of serving various land use types while future development proposals need to be evaluated with impacts and costs on public infrastructure and services at the forefront. Meeting the demands on local government to improve the health and well-being of residents through transportation infrastructure, recreational amenities, core public services and other emerging demands will require a comprehensive fiscal policy.

ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

Energy development is part of the history, the landscape and the economy in Delta County. Most of the BLM lands include mineral rights, most of which fall under the “all minerals” classification which includes oil and gas, coal and any other solid or fluid mineral. Large areas of private land, especially inholdings surrounded or partially surrounded by public lands also include federal mineral rights. According to the county assessor, there are 25 mineral deeds underlying private parcels in the county. These 25 deeds add up to 2,087 total acres; averaging 83.5 acres per mineral deed.

Bowie # 2 coal mine operated from 1998 to 2016 and Oxbow closed its Elk Creek Mine in Gunnison County in 2013, while the West Elk Mine, also in Gunnison County, continues to operate. These closures meant hundreds of jobs held by Delta County residents were lost. Although there have been efforts to produce oil and gas, there is not much actual

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production occurring today. No new wells have been permitted in Delta County in the last three years. According to the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (COGCC), a total of 145 wells have been drilled in the county with 97% of them now dry, dry and abandoned, or shut-in (completed wells that are not producing but are capable of producing).

Figure 41 – Delta County Well Status Summary

Well Status	Status Abbreviation	Count
Producing	PR	2
Approved Permit	XX	1
Waiting on Completion	WO	1
Abandoned	AL	43
Dry and Abandoned	DA	60
Shut-In	SI	14
Plugged and Abandoned	PA	24
Total Wells	-	145

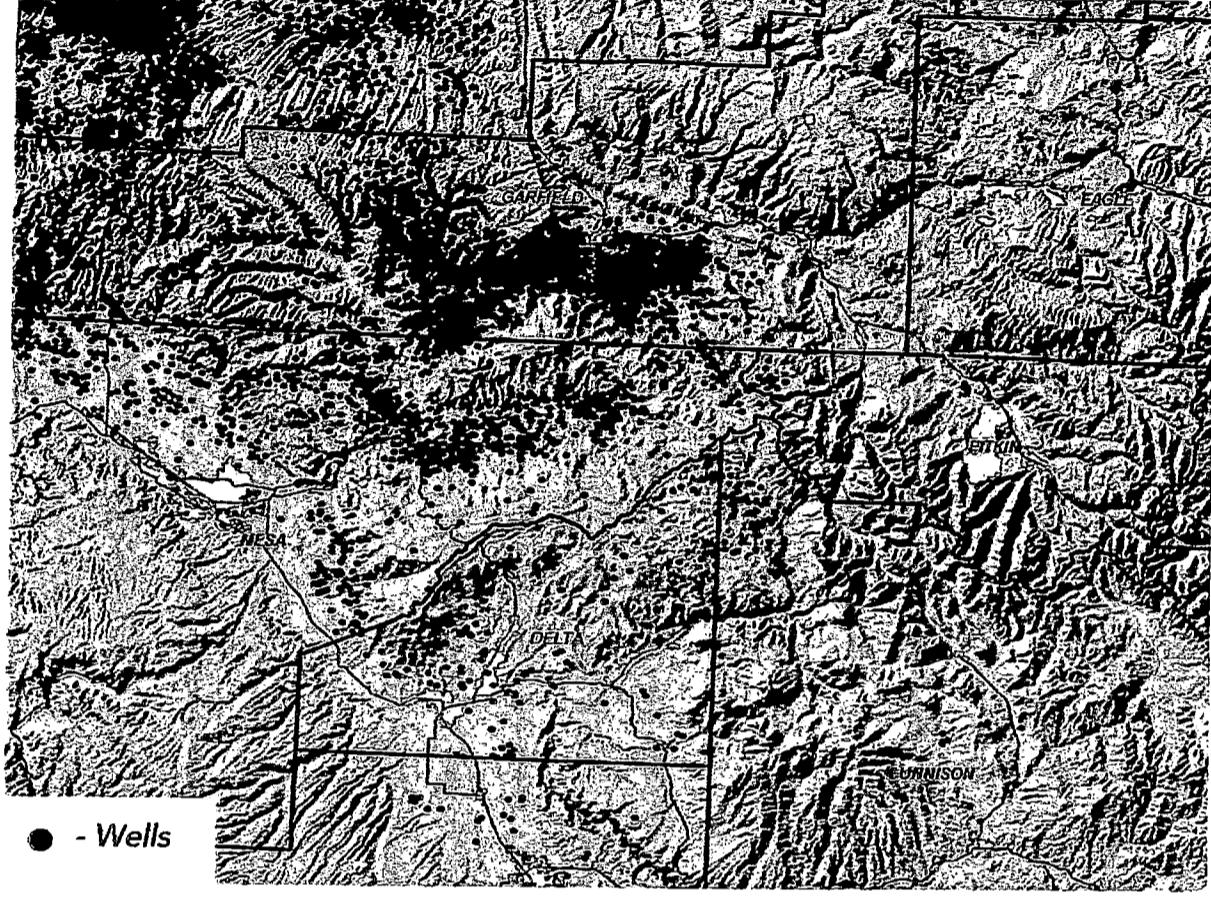
Source: Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, 2017

During the original vision workshops, survey, community input meetings, and discussions with residents at county events across the county, the Planning Commission heard support for responsible development of oil and gas resources based on the potential economic benefits to the county. During these same community engagement events residents, especially from the North Fork Valley, have consistently expressed concern about protecting the county's clean air, water, and soil from oil and gas activity. Written comments since release of the final draft of the plan and public hearing participation reflected significant concern about the potential impacts of future oil and gas development in Delta County, especially in view of such development in Gunnison and Mesa Counties. Further, it should be noted that such adjoining development is taking place in watersheds that flow into Delta County's irrigation and ground water sources.

The BLM Uncompahgre Field Office is revising the BLM Uncompahgre Resource Management Plan (RMP) which includes a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The DEIS includes five alternatives for fluid mineral leasing stipulations. According to the DEIS, "Stipulations for fluid mineral leasing (i.e., no surface disturbance (NSO), controlled surface use (CSU), and timing limitation [TL]) and activities associated with fluid mineral leasing (e.g., truck-mounted drilling, stationary drill rigs in unison, geophysical exploration equipment off designated routes, and construction of wells and/or pads) would be applied as specified to BLM-administered lands overlying fluid federal mineral estate. In addition, stipulations may be recommended for private lands overlying federal mineral estate (known as split-estate)." (Bureau of Land Management Uncompahgre Field Office Resource Management Plan Draft EIS, See Appendix F for weblink). For maps of leasing stipulations for each alternative contained in the current DEIS see Appendix G.

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Figure 42 – Delta County and Regional Oil/Gas Wells



Source: Colorado Oil & Gas Conservation Commission, Interactive Map (See Appendix F)

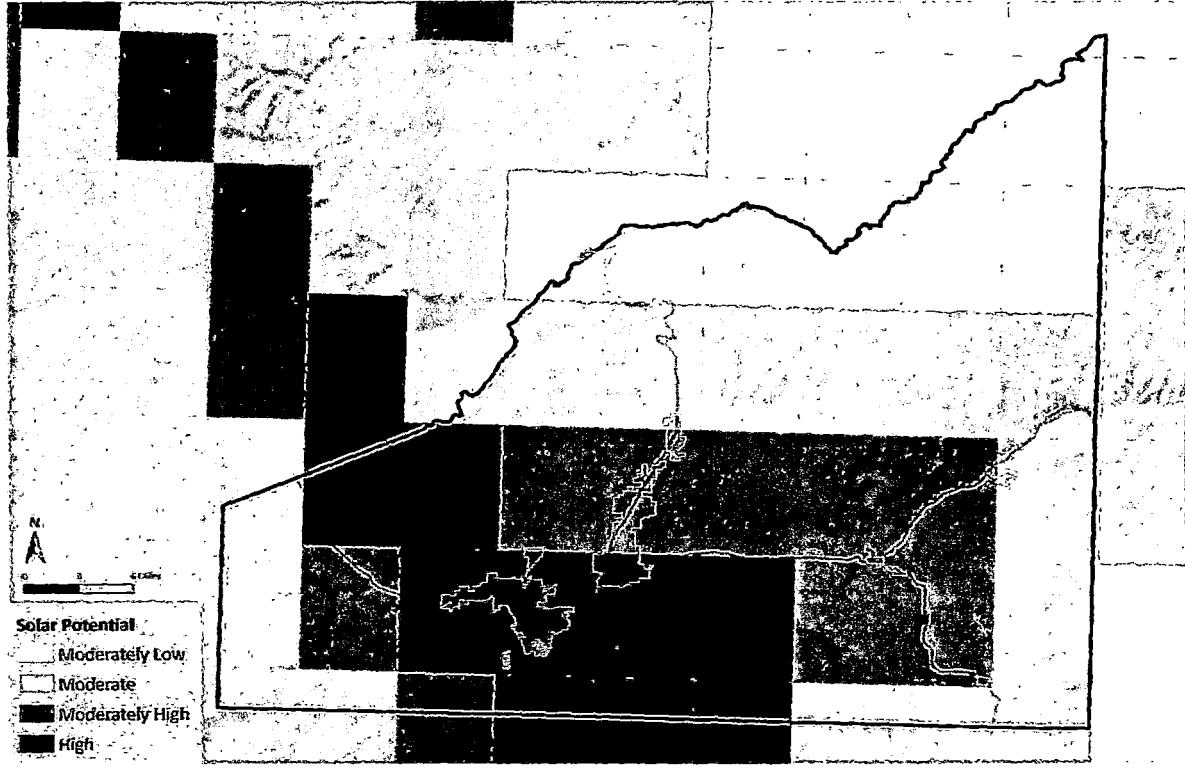
Delta County has potential for both ditch drop and pressurized irrigation hydroelectric systems. In 2016, a site just north of Hotchkiss hosted a small-hydro power generation facility. This was the first installation for the multi-agency Pressurized Irrigation Small Hydropower Partnership Project, part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service's Regional Conservation Partnership Program. In the following few years, Colorado expects to open 30 on-farm hydropower projects in Colorado (John Miller Delta Conservation District, September 2016). According to a study conducted in 2014, there were 77 ditch drops identified in Delta County, 9 were found to be economically feasible with a break-even point of 20 years or less. These 9 drops have a combined capacity of roughly 0.8 MW and would generate approximately 4 GWh per year and a combined estimated annual revenue of \$192,100 (Colorado Agricultural Hydro Resource Assessment, March 2014, See Appendix F). With ditches spread throughout the county, there is a high potential for future small-hydro power generation facilities.

The solar energy potential in Delta County is considerably high compared with the national average according to the US Department of Energy National Renewal Energy Laboratory

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with the highest solar potential near the City of Delta. Solar energy potential ranges from around 300 to 630-watt hours per square foot per day in the US, and in Delta County solar potential ranges from 490 to 543 watt hours per square foot per day.

Figure 43 – Delta County Solar Energy Potential



Source: US Department of Energy National Renewable Energy Laboratory

Why Does This Matter?

The potential for energy development and the economic benefits of its diversification in the county is high. Oil and gas production is low at this time, but the resource exists and has been actively developed in the past. Mineral resources, including oil and gas are regulated by multiple agencies, so engaging these agencies to advocate for community goals is paramount. Energy development goals are focused on gaining a better understand of the potential for energy development, to update county regulations and to inform communications with mineral and energy regulatory agencies. There is also great potential for solar and hydro energy development and residents are supportive of developing these largely un-tapped resources and of the emerging renewable energy industry.



Chapter Two

VISION, GOALS & STRATEGIES

DELTA COUNTY MASTER PLAN

Delta County Master Plan

2.1 OVERALL VISION

The vision of the Master Plan update is to promote prosperity in Delta County for present and future generations through stewardship of the county's resources, and thoughtful, predictable land use regulations. The County will foster a culture that upholds the values of community, quality of life, and respectful, neighborly communication.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal 1.0: Cultivate a countywide culture where problems, issues and needs are addressed neighbor to neighbor and where disagreement is handled respectfully, differing opinions are valued and every participant is heard.

Goal 1.1: Work to build trust and faith that local government can balance the needs and values of all segments of the county by developing new land use policies that provide greater stability and predictability while decreasing conflict.

Strategy 1.1.0: Partner with other local governments, civic and education organizations and non-profit organizations to engage in regular community dialogue.

Strategy 1.1.1: Partner with other local governments, civic and education organizations and non-profit organizations to develop a county-wide leadership development program.

Strategy 1.1.2: Update land use regulations to define where all land uses may be located and prosper with minimal conflict.

Strategy 1.1.3: Develop strategies for better communicating and engaging with the County's diverse and underrepresented populations including our Hispanic, youth, senior, and economically disadvantaged residents.

Goal 1.2: Develop land use regulations that are fair and predictable and protect residents' core values of limiting county regulations. Involve property owners and residents in the development of new land use regulations, and strive for efficient regulations that can achieve the vision of this master plan.

Strategy 1.2.1: Educate Delta County property owners and residents about land use regulations, property rights, master planning, community development, economic development, and tax base to help them be informed and effective participants in future discussions and processes.

Strategy 1.2.2: Engage in discussion with property owners on their existing property rights, misperceptions about property rights in Delta County.

2.2 AGRICULTURAL LAND AND BUSINESS

VISION

Delta County will remain an agricultural county by protecting agricultural lands and operations and supporting agricultural innovation.

CORE VALUES

Agriculture is strongly supported throughout the county. Residents feel that agriculture connects them to their community and contributes to the quality of life. Agricultural lands set the backdrop to the county's landscape, bringing green open areas to what would otherwise be dry desert, while supporting wildlife, strengthening the local economy and providing locally produced food.

Agricultural operations and businesses remain one of the top employing industries in the county, employing 15.3% of the county's working population. Agriculture attracts revenue from outside the county as it provides the largest number of direct basic jobs (jobs that bring outside money into the local economy). The total acreage of designated farm land in 2012 was 250,761. The average farm size totaled 202-acres; the median farm acreage was 38. The market value of agricultural products in 2012 was \$55,639,000—a 28% increase over the previous 21 years.

Delta County's agricultural industry is one of the most diverse in the state. The county has a mix of traditional agriculture and organic agriculture, with the highest concentration of organic farms in Colorado. Agritourism and value-added agricultural production bring a greater depth to the agricultural industry. Delta County's wine industry is growing, as are agricultural activities and events that bring visitors to the county. The county produces livestock including cattle, goats, elk, pigs and sheep; hay and alfalfa; row crops such as hemp, field corn, sweet corn, hops, soybeans, onions and potatoes; fruit & vegetables including grapes, peaches, apricots, cherries, apples, pears, and berries; eggs and poultry; and dairy just to name a few. Agricultural operations range in scale from high-acreage ranches and farms to small two- or three-acre farms. Both large and small producers are having success in agriculture with the increased value of locally grown food sold directly to market. Access to locally grown healthy foods supports not only the county's economy, but potentially helps to address health equity and reduce chronic illness among residents.

Protecting agricultural lands, especially those lands with quality soil, irrigation and that remain largely intact (acreage) is a high priority. Protection of agricultural lands means ensuring the economic viability of agricultural producers. Agricultural producers expressed concerns that future land use and development regulations not impair their ability to adapt and innovate so they can remain economically viable.

Delta County Master Plan

While the benefits of agriculture are highly valued throughout the county, less attractive localized impacts such as noise, dust, and odor also result from operations. Residents and producers identified a need to maintain and build good neighbor relations to communicate about issues and solutions that can be handled neighbor-to-neighbor. Defining the range of uses and activities allowed to occur in agricultural areas will help agricultural operators and their neighbors by clarifying what can be expected on and around existing agricultural lands. Future development that occurs in agricultural areas needs to be designed and located to minimize impacts between the development and the nearby agricultural uses and activities.

Residents and agricultural operators have expressed support for better defining where and to what standards concentrated animal feeding operations should be regulated. County officials, residents and agricultural operators would like to better understand the regulatory implications of concentrated animal feeding operations as well as the "Right-to-Farm" statutes.

With the unpredictable nature and declining trend of returns in agriculture, farms may rely on income from a range of other value added products, small businesses, services, and tourism in order to stay financially viable. Farmers expressed the importance for the County to support flexibility for farmers to innovate and supplement agricultural income in order to support viable farms and agriculture in the county.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal 2.0 – Continue to expand and diversify agriculture as an economic base.

Strategy 2.0.0 – Encourage value-added agricultural enterprises.

Strategy 2.0.1 – Encourage the use of agricultural lands to support agritourism, research, education and local foods industries.

Strategy 2.0.2 – Explore new options for transporting harvested crops to markets.

Strategy 2.0.3 – Generate innovative agricultural opportunities throughout the county by supporting existing agricultural educational organizations, such as the Colorado State University (CSU) extension office.

Goal 2.1 – Maintain the character, integrity of agricultural land including irrigated and potentially irrigatable agricultural land, and the functionality of agricultural areas for agricultural business operations.

Strategy 2.1.0 – Encourage communications between agricultural operators and rural residential neighbors about land uses and activities that may affect one another.

Strategy 2.1.1 – List the full range of land uses, activities, structures and infrastructure associated with agricultural enterprises and establish these as

Delta County Master Plan

allowed and expected uses in agricultural areas while allowing for future innovations.

Strategy 2.1.2 – Create land use tools to address impacts between agriculture and future development in agricultural areas.

Strategy 2.1.3 – Educate landowners, potential buyers and tenants about the uses that may occur on agricultural land.

Strategy 2.1.4 – Create and consistently update an inventory and map of agricultural lands and monitor trends.

Strategy 2.1.5 – Support and facilitate the voluntary conservation of agricultural lands and associated water.

Strategy 2.1.6 – Convene a working group of agricultural business owners, residents, and legal experts to evaluate Delta County’s “Right to Farm” resolution, evaluate the regulatory environment and best-practices of concentrated animal feeding operations, initiate an education and communication process that is designed to address the issues, tensions, and conflicts surrounding these topics as well as to provide a final set of recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners.

2.3 WATER RESOURCES

VISION

Delta County, within its legal parameters, strives to protect water supplies, delivery systems and water quality by partnering with the appropriate agencies and stakeholders to minimize the potential loss of quantity or quality of its water resources.

CORE VALUES

The importance of water spans most of the highly regarded community values including agriculture, wildlife habitat, recreation and the desire to maintain clean water. Delta County is fortunate to have a diversity of water supply for both irrigation and domestic uses and there is strong support to keep this resource intact.

Much of the regulatory authority over water lies outside of Delta County's purview. The following agencies oversee water resources and infrastructure:

Division of Water Resources — State Engineer: Oversees the administration of all surface water rights and interstate compacts, records flow and diversion data, and regulates dam safety. The State Engineer also issues well permits.

Colorado Water Court — The Colorado Water Court makes all legal decisions about water rights administered in turn by the State Engineer. Water rights are a private property right. The State of Colorado determines what someone can or cannot do with a water right.

Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment — Has statutory authority for protecting surface and ground water quality. The Water Quality Control Division implements the Federal Clean Water Act, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System and the Safe Drinking Water Act in Colorado.

Multiple Water Providers — Delta County has multiple water providers including municipal water providers, irrigation/ditch companies, conservancy districts and private water companies. These entities govern all decisions about the water they supply including rates, fees and ultimately, availability for new taps/new customers.

Delta County's authority over water resources is limited, but the county does have authority over land use which interfaces with water resource management agencies and water providers. C.R.S. 30-28-133(6)(a) requires that any subdivision has "a water supply that is sufficient in terms of quantity, dependability and quality to provide an appropriate supply of water". It is incumbent that Delta County work closely with water providers and the State Engineer to evaluate the adequacy of water supply plans for subdivisions.

The County also reviews land development plans so they do not interfere with the conveyance of water through existing ditches and water facilities. The planning and design

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stage for future subdivisions offers the opportunity for lot owners and irrigation water providers to define equitable arrangements for the utilization of irrigation water rights that are available to the development as well as to arrange adequate procedures for protecting and retaining secured water rights from unintentional abandonment. Drainage and erosion development standards address impacts of run-off on water quality. The County has the opportunity to protect historical and prescriptive access through the subdivision process. Effective planning around water issues requires Delta County to have clear and consistent communication with water regulatory agencies and providers.

The Environmental Health Department administers regulations regarding septic systems and floodplains and is continually expanding the knowledge of water systems in the county to inform discussions about water resources management. Additionally, access to irrigation infrastructure by all users of the irrigation system is a critical issue.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal 3.0 – Engage with federal, state and local water resource agencies and land conservation entities to advocate for conservation and the continued productive use of established water rights.

Strategy 3.0.1 – Research, promote, and encourage wise use of water.

Strategy 3.0.2 – Maximize the efficient use of water supplies and support long-term water supply planning.

Goal 3.1 – Coordinate with appropriate federal, state and local water resource agencies and water providers to address current and future water sources.

Strategy 3.1.0 – Develop and maintain an inventory of existing domestic water distribution systems that includes the estimated capacity available to serve new customers.

Strategy 3.1.1 – Evaluate the long-term viability and facility needs of existing domestic water distribution systems.

Strategy 3.1.2 – Coordinate with state and local agencies and water providers to ensure that proposed development projects are consistent with domestic water system requirements.

Strategy 3.1.3 – Establish land use and development standards to avoid disturbance of existing ditches and other water infrastructure.

Strategy 3.1.4 – Establish land use and development standards directing future developments to continue to irrigate and maintain existing irrigated lands.

Strategy 3.1.5 – Strengthen subdivision regulations to protect and preserve historical and prescriptive access to irrigation infrastructure by all irrigation users.

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Strategy 3.1.6 – Work with partner agencies to identify strategies that can help protect existing water quality from future development of all types.

Goal 3.2 – Work with water resource and land management agencies to maintain and improve surface and groundwater quality and quantity.

Strategy 3.2.0 – Continue to study the regional groundwater systems to:

- Better understand the quality and location of groundwater resources throughout the county.
- Identify land and water resource management practices to protect groundwater quality and quantity.

Strategy 3.2.1 – Develop standards for proposed future land uses and activities to avoid or minimize impacts on ground or surface water quality, and provide for water resource development and conservation.

Strategy 3.2.2 – Map groundwater and surface water source areas that supply domestic and irrigation providers.

Strategy 3.2.3 – Convene a working group of water interests and legal experts to evaluate Delta County's long term water supply, develop strategies for addressing long term policy in the county, and provide ongoing support to the County in its cooperative role with multiple water agencies.

2.4 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

VISION

Delta County encourages and welcomes new business and industrial growth and strives to clearly identify areas in the county where business and industry may locate with processes that are fair and predictable. Growing and diversifying the economy will create needed jobs and increase the tax base that funds critical assets and services.

CORE VALUES

Delta County is in a period of economic transition as the economic activity associated with coal mining is in a period of decline. Additionally, full recovery following the 2008 recession has yet to be achieved. The tax base of countywide governmental entities is at critical risk as internal and external forces exert downward pressure on the tax base; meanwhile demand for services, maintenance and upkeep of infrastructure is increasing. The economic development strategy and the county's fiscal goals and policies need to be aligned to generate the revenues that are and will be needed.

The county has always had and continues to have a strong agricultural and natural resource base. In the face of recent decline and ongoing uncertainty in the natural resources extraction sector, residents see growing opportunities in many other economic sectors. It is broadly recognized that Delta County's economic advantage is tied to its community and natural resources. Outdoor recreation on public lands is one of the county's greatest assets both for attracting visitors and as a major contributor to quality of life. To become more competitive, Delta County must continue to invest in its community, agricultural and recreational assets.

The county's current economy is built on the ingenuity and creativity of many individuals and local businesses across numerous economic sectors including government, health care, agriculture, retail, and more. Diversifying and expanding opportunities across the economic sectors will expand livelihoods and boost the tax base needed to provide public infrastructure and services. Delta County needs to grow the diversity of economic industries in the county, while maintaining what makes Delta County attractive to residents. This Master Plan recognizes and places the highest emphasis on economic growth that aligns with local values and does not degrade the characteristics that form the quality of life in

BROADBAND

Broadband networks support and enhance business development, increase productivity and facilitate job creation by opening new markets. The county continues to engage with partners to expand the broadband network. Local Broadband efforts began in 2013 with a planning grant award to Region 10 from the Department of Local Affairs to design and construct a Broadband "backbone" throughout the counties comprising Region 10.

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the county. Local values include a fierce sense of independence, strong support for private property rights, a reluctance for regulation but growing acknowledgement that reasonable thoughtful regulation is necessary, connection to outdoor recreation, personal connection to healthy local food, valuing community input, protection of the region's clean air and clean water and preservation of natural resources. Economic development efforts need to improve predictability for future businesses looking to grow or relocate; foster the entrepreneurial spirit and support home-based business and cottage industry; and promote, strengthen, preserve and build upon the county's strongest assets.

Delta County has many strengths that can help it expand its economy. In addition to its natural assets and quality of life, the county is home to an award winning hospital, recognized as one of the top 20 rural hospitals in the nation. The county has a great school district, and access to key transportation networks including highway corridors, access to rail, two county airports and regional air services.

Delta County has an extensive and expanding broadband infrastructure that opens the door to technology-based businesses and to attracting "location neutral" businesses and employees. "Location neutral" refers to business activities that do not require designated, physical spaces (such as an office headquarters) as long as a broadband connection is available. The county also has quality outdoor recreation access, excellent transportation corridors, access to rail, access to an educated and skilled work force, quality business support programs and unique communities. The county has a great opportunity to diversify outside of the traditional economic sectors moving forward to the next generation of economic development, particularly in the areas of creative industries, outdoor recreation services and equipment, information and technology, manufacturing, retail trade, wholesale trade, professional services and tourism.

WHAT ARE THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES?

The 'creative industries' refer to businesses that are founded with creativity as their basis. Examples include but are not limited to these examples: advertising & graphic design, computer designs/games, architecture, arts (painting, sculpture, drawing, etc.) design, film, music, the performing arts, podcasting, publishing, TV/radio, visual arts. More specifically, the industry is built on leveraging intellectual property to generate jobs.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal 4.0 – Explore options for utilizing incentives to encourage business development that supports the community's core values and results in improving livelihoods.

Strategy 4.0.0 – Promote the use of the state and federal economic development incentives that are currently available.

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Strategy 4.0.1 – Explore additional incentives that Delta County and its economic development partners could feasibly offer.

Goal 4.1 – Align land use and development policies and regulations with core values for economic development by defining where business and industry may locate as a permitted land use.

Goal 4.2 – Continue working with economic development partners county-wide and regionally to refine economic strategies that build on the diversity within the county and on the strengths of its communities.

Strategy 4.2.0 – Develop leadership programs to draw more business owners into county-wide discussions about economic development.

Strategy 4.2.1 – Develop a proactive strategy for attracting location neutral businesses and jobs to Delta County.

Strategy 4.2.2 – Work with each community to build collaborative partnerships to strengthen and enhance their economic advantages.

Strategy 4.2.3 – Identify barriers to economic development in Delta County and develop strategies to address those barriers.

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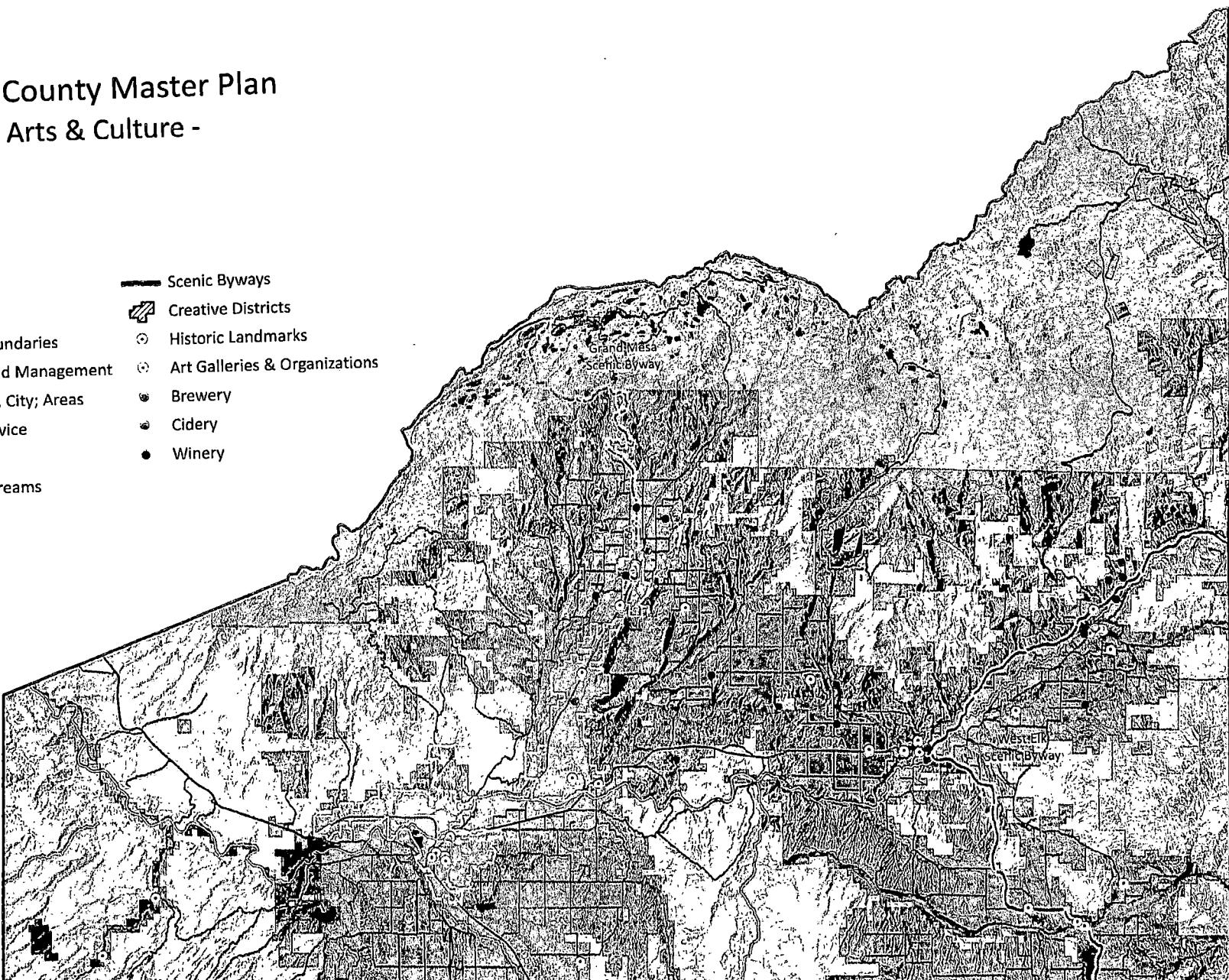
- Arts & Culture -

- Highways
- County Roads
- Municipal Boundaries
- Bureau of Land Management
- ▨ State, County, City; Areas
- ▨ US Forest Service
- ▨ Water Bodies
- Rivers and Streams
- Scenic Byways
- ▨ Creative Districts
- Historic Landmarks
- Art Galleries & Organizations
- Brewery
- Cidery
- Winery



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2.5 LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

VISION

Delta County's land use processes will be fair, predictable, defensible and easily understood. Growth and development in the county supports the community's desired future while enhancing health, safety, welfare, quality of life, while fostering innovation.

CORE VALUES

During the community vision meetings, residents expressed a desire to be a county where neighbors work with neighbors to address and resolve issues. This spirit was captured in the 1997 Master Plan and in the county land use regulations and is a guiding principle moving forward. Another guiding principle of the 1997 Master Plan and of the county's land use regulations since has been to limit how and when Delta County regulates land use. This limited regulatory environment, while intended to protect private property rights, has created an unpredictable system for both applicants seeking land use approval and neighbors. Limited land use and development regulations have advantages and are an important part of what makes Delta County unique. However, the complexity of land use and development applications continues to rise and the land use and development regulations need to be recalibrated to better serve the county.

The existing process for land use and development review needs to be more user-friendly for applicants and neighbors and needs to better implement the community's values and desired future. Revisions to the land use and development standards and procedures need to encourage thoughtful and beneficial development while also preserving the characteristics that form quality of life in the county while maintaining private property rights. Changes to the land and development regulations need to maintain flexibility to allow for innovation and creativity and to balance the needs of the applicant with those of their neighbors. Revised processes should create more meaningful ways for public participation that helps to resolve issues and conflicts as opposed to creating a stand-off between different interests.

Future development needs to fit within the existing carrying capacity of public infrastructure and services or it needs to add the capacity required to accommodate the new development. Development in the county should be directed to areas with adequate infrastructure such as drinking water and transportation and with adequate services such as law enforcement, fire and ambulance. Areas that have special characteristics such as productive agricultural land, wildlife habitat, historic resources, access to outdoor recreation, or natural hazards deserve careful consideration. Revisions to the land use and development standards and procedures are needed to promote long-term economic viability for landowners while protecting the foundational characteristics of the land.

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The intent of this Master Plan is to rationally plan for growth while also protecting property rights, addressing impacts on neighboring properties and protecting the most important land and economic resources. Future land use regulations need to maintain a balance between community goals and individual property rights and must be consistent, fair, predictable and easily understood. Today, most low-density residential and agricultural uses are allowed anywhere in the county with minimal regulations except for a list of specific types of uses that require county approval through the specific development regulations (Spring 2018). Specific development include confined feeding animal operations, salvage yards, gravel pits, oil and gas operations, and other commercial and industrial activity that might adversely impact neighboring existing uses. An access permit, a septic permit, and an address permit are the only approvals needed. All other uses require an application submittal and review process that includes public meetings with the designated Area Planning Committee, the County Planning Commission, and the Board of County Commissioners. Because the current review process results in either approval or denial of the proposed use, there is a high degree of uncertainty about what one can do on their property beyond the limited allowed land uses listed above. The intent of rewriting the land use regulations is to increase the level of certainty. By doing so, new land use regulations will support and encourage viable uses of private property while informing and offering protection to existing property owners.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal 5.0 – Facilitate business, industrial and residential development by revising the land use and development regulatory processes and standards to make the regulations clear, predictable, consistent, timely and cost-effective.

Strategy 5.0.0 – Update the land development regulations to clearly answer these questions for any landowner or applicant:

- What can I do with this property?
- What infrastructure is needed to support my use?
- What potential impacts on neighboring land uses need to be addressed?
- What is the process, start-to-finish?
- What are the definitions of the terms in the regulations?

Strategy 5.0.1 – Evaluate enforceability and ease of use when considering changes to the land use and development regulations.

Strategy 5.0.2 – Establish clear and timely development application procedures that encourage meaningful public participation.

Goal 5.1 – Encourage business, industrial, and residential development while protecting the resources that contribute to the economy and are integral to the quality of life in the

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county, protecting the health, safety, and welfare of residents, and while informing and offering protection to existing property owners.

Strategy 5.1.0 – Identify productive and potentially productive agricultural lands, including those that are or could be irrigated, and establish site planning and design standards and incentives that keep agricultural lands intact in future developments.

Strategy 5.1.1 – Identify valuable wildlife habitat, natural and cultural landmarks and natural hazards and avoid or minimize impacts on these features in site planning and design of future development.

Strategy 5.1.2 – Identify existing developed residential neighborhoods and rural-residential areas and apply consistent countywide standards for uses and physical development parameters.

Strategy 5.1.3 – Encourage home occupation and cottage industry businesses and set standards for allowed uses and physical development that may occur associated with home-based businesses.

Strategy 5.1.4 – Encourage a diversity of housing types and allow creativity and flexibility for buildings.

Strategy 5.1.5 – Establish clear standards and procedures for enforcing cleanup of refuse, debris, abandoned and dilapidated structures and inoperable vehicles and explore incentives and programs to encourage voluntary cleanup.

Strategy 5.1.6—Incorporate access and continuity of trails in future development design.

Strategy 5.1.7 – Preserve the dark sky resource of Delta County with the objective of minimizing light pollution created by new development

Goal 5.2 – Encourage and direct future development that optimizes access to existing infrastructure and public service capacity and that does not strain infrastructure and public service providers.

Strategy 5.2.0 – Identify locations and create standards for future business/industrial developments and residential neighborhoods where adequate water, public infrastructure and services are in place or can be feasibly expanded.

Strategy 5.2.1 – Develop revenue mechanisms to ensure that new development pays its fair share of the cost of expanding public infrastructure needed to serve that development.

Goal 5.3 – To protect citizens' core values of limiting county regulations, ensure that any new or existing land use regulations provide targeted regulations needed to effectively address clearly defined problems.

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2.6 PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE, SERVICES AND ASSETS

VISION

Delta County provides thoughtfully planned and coordinated infrastructure and services that support the health, safety, and welfare of county residents. Projects, improvements and maintenance are prioritized to meet the needs of the community, to maintain the physical assets already invested in by the community and to protect those investments well into the future.

CORE VALUES

Public services are provided by governmental and private entities throughout the county. Delta County has 33 separate governmental taxing entities, numerous private water providers and the presence of state and federal agencies including BLM, Forest Service and the USDA. All of these entities share a part in shaping future development and are part of day to day life including essential services such as public schools, health care, recreation, fire and ambulance. It is critical to communicate and coordinate ongoing efforts.

The public assets and public services provided by agencies throughout the county contribute to the overall quality of life for county residents and to the regional economy. Transportation networks, public lands access and management and core public services such as fire, law enforcement, education, water, sewer and public health are essential to the day to day lives of all residents. Residents look to Delta County to collaborate with the land managers, local governments and public service agencies to advocate for quality services, ongoing maintenance of infrastructure and ongoing investment in assets and infrastructure. Likewise, residents look to Delta County to manage and maintain its existing assets and infrastructure and provide thoughtful expansion of county infrastructure where it makes the most sense.

COUNTY ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION

CORE VALUES

The transportation network located throughout the county is an evolving system of rural roads, many of which were not built to handle large volumes of traffic or heavy truck traffic that exists today. There are 738 miles of county roads and maintenance of existing roads and reconstruction of key roads is an ongoing challenge. The County's limited resources are prioritized year-to-year to meet growing demands.

Delta County has a lack of multi-modal transportation, although limited regional bus service is provided through All Points Transit, a regional non-profit. Developing multi-modal transportation will be a challenge given the rural nature of the county. However, as

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we face growing and changing needs of the community such as an aging population and an influx of young families, the County needs to evaluate its transportation plans and policies. Community members have clearly expressed a desire for more bike-friendly transportation routes, such as increasing road width and paving road shoulders. There is likely going to be increased demand for transportation services as the senior population grows.

Community members expressed overall satisfaction with the way county roads are maintained, with some exceptions. Individuals expressed frustration about road networks outside of Delta County's control. This community sentiment emphasizes the need to work cooperatively to plan for local and regional transportation infrastructure including county roads, state highways and municipal roads. Partnering with municipalities to better coordinate road design and maintenance will help address concerns relating to public infrastructure that interfaces between Delta County and the municipalities.

The county is fortunate to have an active rail system running from Grand Junction south to Montrose and east to Paonia and into Gunnison County. The primary demand for rail activity is from the coal industry, but there are numerous other businesses dependent on access to rail. Maintaining and evolving the role of rail infrastructure for transporting goods and for public transportation will require deliberate and coordinated effort given that a continued decline in the coal industry is anticipated.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal 6.0 – Integrate land use planning with county transportation capital improvements planning and maintenance prioritization.

Strategy 6.0.0 – Inventory county roads and bridges constructed to serve high traffic volumes and evaluate the suitability of these travel corridors as areas to accommodate future development.

Strategy 6.0.1 – Inventory county roads and bridges constructed to serve commercial trucks and evaluate the suitability of these travel corridors to accommodate future development that includes commercial truck traffic.

Strategy 6.0.2 – Delineate areas served by county roads and bridges not designed to serve high traffic volumes or commercial truck traffic and recognize the constraints on future development in these areas.

Strategy 6.0.3 – Map planned county road extensions and capacity improvements to existing roads and evaluate the suitability of these travel corridors as areas to accommodate future development.

Strategy 6.0.4 – Plan for capacity improvements to county roads in areas that are exceptionally suitable for future development but that currently do not possess road capacities to serve future development.

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Strategy 6.0.5 – Identify routes for bike lanes and pedestrian paths that would be well-utilized along roads that could be feasibly improved to meet best practice design standards for connected community routes that include wayfinding.

Strategy 6.0.6 – Continue to refine and adapt the systematic approach to programming county road and bridge maintenance and concurrently plan for maintenance, capital improvements and long-term budgeting.

Goal 6.1 – Establish long range regional transportation policies to articulate the community's vision and goals to regional transportation infrastructure partners.

Strategy 6.1.0 – Continue to advocate for community transportation goals through Colorado Department of Transportation regional transportation planning and during the development of highway access management and corridor plans.

Strategy 6.1.1 – Advocate for sustaining rail infrastructure and evolving its use as a long-term component of local and regional transportation infrastructure including private rail sitings. The current railroad infrastructure is an essential asset that can move goods, provide mass transit, and help to minimize air pollution, safety risks, and upkeep costs to the County's transportation network as the population and economy grow.

Strategy 6.1.2 – Explore options with local, regional, state and federal partners for public transportation, especially for children, elders and special needs populations. These options will address access to essential services such as libraries, schools, post offices, medical providers, and grocery stores.

Strategy 6.1.3—Coordinate with municipalities regarding design and maintenance standards and plans where county-municipality jurisdiction overlaps, especially within each municipality's 3-mile planning boundary.

PUBLIC LANDS

CORE VALUES

Public lands make up 56% of Delta County, and forms the backdrop of Delta County, and is the foundation of much of the county's economy, agriculture, and quality of life. Delta County has a long history of working cooperatively with federal agencies including the BLM and US Forest Service. The County should continue to take a proactive approach to its relationship with these federal agencies to ensure coordination on issues that impact the County's economy, quality of life, and residents. Delta County asserts its role as a Cooperating Agency when the BLM or US Forest Service update their plans such as resource management plans, forest plans, rulemaking, species listing, etc. Likewise, Delta County coordinates with neighboring counties on issues of mutual concern.

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Delta County residents identify access to public lands and the activities that they participate in on public lands, whether it be for commerce or pleasure, as critical to their overall quality of life. Public lands contribute significantly to the Delta County's economy with inputs into several sectors such as agriculture, grazing, mining, recreation and tourism. Many of the county's ranchers rely on summer grazing on federal lands. Delta County is in full support of multiple use management of public lands and will work with federal and state agencies so that there is no net loss of Animal Unit Months for livestock grazing on public lands.

Access to all public lands and waterways is a shared value in the county and is the top priority. There is untapped potential to continue to build more economic activity from public lands activity in all industries. Recreation and tourism supported by public lands, especially the newly created National Conservation Areas, have great potential for the county. This will require careful coordination with public land management agencies to ensure adequate resources are made available to build the infrastructure necessary to support public access.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) oversee a wide range of activities that permit residents and visitors to enjoy the plethora of outdoor recreational opportunities available in our region. CPW oversees fishing and hunting licenses, monitors wildlife, and facilitates conservation efforts for the county's three state parks. Support for this agency is important to the county's citizens to preserve and enhance the value of the outdoors. Partnering with organizations like the CPW and others to enhance and install infrastructure such as directional signage, trailheads, parking, restrooms, picnic areas and campgrounds is critical for the long-term viability and attractiveness of our public lands. Delta County has been and will continue to be a cooperating partner with federal and state land agencies through such as the CPW and United States Forest Service and with other counties on issues of mutual concern.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal 6.2 – Support and advocate for multiple use of public lands that balances agricultural uses, recreation, habitat preservation, wildlife and natural resource development.

Strategy 6.2.0 – Work with federal and state land agencies to maintain livestock grazing activity on public lands to achieve no net loss of Animal Units Months.

Strategy 6.2.1 Identify wildlife habitat and corridors on state and federal lands to protect the economic and ecological value wildlife provides the county through hunting and tourism.

Goal 6.3 – Work with land management agencies to improve and expand outdoor recreation assets and to maintain and enhance public access to public lands.

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Strategy 6.3.0 – Work with state and federal land agencies to identify federal and state funding to address infrastructure impacts associated with public lands including impacts to roads and other public facilities.

Goal 6.4 – Identify and maintain the legitimacy of existing public easements and other established public access to public lands and waterways and work with partners to obtain additional easements from willing landowners that expand access to public lands.

Goal 6.5 – Continue to participate as a cooperating agency with federal regulatory and land management agencies, e.g., Bureau of Land Management (BLM), United States Forest Service (USFS), United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), etc.

Strategy 6.5.1 – Engage in active dialogue with land management and mineral management agencies to include county-wide values in natural resource management and development decisions.

Strategy 6.5.2 – Coordinate planning efforts and work to integrate county plans, such as this master plan and trails plan, into federal and state land decision processes.

Strategy 6.5.3 – Identify opportunities to improve mapping of resources between County, BLM, US Forest Service, and state agencies. Mapping efforts should be coordinated, and data shared, to identify key wildlife habitat and corridors, trails, recreation, and areas of economic activity including grazing allotments, timber allotments, and conservation easements.

HAZARD MITIGATION

At the time of writing this Master Plan, the County has a concurrent hazard mitigation plan underway. The intent is to revisit this section once that plan is complete and adopted.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal 6.6 – Create, adopt and periodically update a hazard mitigation plan.

Goal 6.7 – Secure federal and state funding pursuant to the hazard mitigation plan and complete the capital improvements needed to reduce risk.

Goal 6.8 – Create, adopt and periodically update an emergency preparedness plan.

COORDINATION WITH MUNICIPALITIES AND UTILITY PROVIDERS

CORE VALUES

Each municipality in Delta County plays an integral part in shaping future development and are the location of core services including water and sewer, fire stations, schools,

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hospitals/clinics, libraries and police stations. Strategic and coordinated development in the growth management areas around each municipality continues to be critical. Delta County has intergovernmental agreements with four of its municipalities that provide guidance for reviewing development applications in currently unincorporated growth management areas around each municipality. These agreements are the foundation for continued adaptive management of land uses and the provision of municipal utilities. Delta County and each municipality need to revisit these agreements in light of the policies contained in this Master Plan and the most current municipal master plans. Other utility providers such as natural gas, electricity and communications are equally important players in serving the residents and future development.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal 6.9 – Revisit the adopted intergovernmental agreements regarding development in growth management areas delineated around each municipality and determine the need for updates such as more closely aligning infrastructure standards for new development inside of the growth management area with those adopted by each municipality.

Goal 6.10 – Coordinate planning efforts between the municipalities and Delta County especially in designated growth areas. Specifically, ensure coordination and communication occurs related to economic development; transportation; land use; residential, commercial, and industrial development, in order to create greater consistency and mutual support among jurisdictions.

Goal 6.11 – Work with municipalities to better define potential annexation areas while being mindful of unincorporated county residents and agricultural operations.

Goal 6.12 – Encourage and support municipalities in adopting business-friendly environments through supportive regulations and procedures that aid in job creation.

Goal 6.13 – Identify opportunities to leverage shared services agreements with municipalities to maximize existing resources and minimize the cost of providing services.

Goal 6.14 – Increase communication with water, sewer and other utility providers to ensure growth is encouraged where adequate services can be feasibly provided.

Strategy 6.14.0 – Revisit land use and development referral procedures to ensure service providers are able to provide an adequate evaluation of proposed developments.

Strategy 6.14.1 – Ensure that access to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure are not impeded by future development and provide linkages to pedestrian trails and bike lanes to protect connected communities.

PUBLIC SAFETY

CORE VALUES

Public safety agencies including the sheriff, municipal police departments, fire and ambulance services continue to experience increased demands for services. The tax base of all public safety entities county-wide is at risk as internal and external forces exert downward pressure on the tax base, meanwhile demand for services is increasing. This challenge presents Delta County and the municipalities with an opportunity to further explore shared services, especially as they relate to public safety.

Public safety organizations have limited staff yet demand for services is growing. Likewise, there will be an ongoing need to continue to upgrade equipment and facilities such as the courthouse, jail and dispatch center to keep up with both emerging technology and changing requirements. Economic development efforts strive to diversify the tax base to more completely fund these services. The feasibility of providing and funding public safety needs to be evaluated when planning future development.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal 6.15 – Recognizing the challenge to provide public safety with existing resources and revenues, ensure that county law enforcement, emergency management and other public safety partners can adequately serve future growth and development.

Strategy 6.15.0 – Clarify and improve the process for the referral of development applications to public safety providers and the process for responding to comments submitted by those agencies or county departments.

Strategy 6.15.1 – Identify funding mechanisms for public safety infrastructure including facilities, vehicles and equipment.

Strategy 6.15.2 – Identify opportunities to coordinate public safety taxing requests to the public prior to engaging in formal ballot initiatives.

FISCAL VIABILITY OF PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

CORE VALUES

Pressures on Delta County's tax base, challenges in finding adequate funds and ensuring that development pays its own way are all themes throughout this Master Plan. Public infrastructure and services are largely funded by taxes. The tax base that supports all governmental entities county-wide is under pressure. The Gallagher Amendment is driving down property tax revenue while TABOR limits the ability to increase taxes. Meanwhile, retail industry and consumer trends are stunting local sales tax collections.

Growing and diversifying the economy will also grow and diversify the tax base that funds these critical assets and services. While it is always best to work locally to solve problems, there is also a need to work with neighboring counties and organizations to participate in, or even help initiate, a statewide discussion around Colorado's tax policy.

GOAL

Goal 6.16 – Establish an economic growth strategy that in addition to diversifying and growing the economic base will also diversify and grow the tax base that is necessary to support public facilities and services.

WHAT IS THE TABOR AMENDMENT?

TABOR stands for the Taxpayer Bill of Rights. Taxpayers voted this amendment into the Colorado Constitution in 1992. TABOR prohibits tax increases without vote. It also strictly limits how much revenue the state may keep and spend. Revenues collected that exceed the TABOR revenue limits must be refunded to taxpayers. The challenge TABOR presents to governments is that it imposes a "ratchet effect" during economic recessions, that limits the amount of revenue they may keep. When revenue dips during times of economic recessions, the "ratchet effect" establishes a new revenue ceiling at this lowered level. Revenue and tax levels are not permitted to adjust to economic recoveries. This presents a significant challenge especially to rural governments that already operate on skeletal budgets.

WHAT IS THE GALLAGHER AMENDMENT?

Taxpayers adopted the Gallagher Amendment in 1982. The amendment is intended to "maintain a constant ratio between the property tax revenue that comes from residential property and from business property," according to Great Education Colorado. In effect, the amendment works by reducing property assessment rates when residential property values increase faster than business property values. The result of this amendment is that residential property values have declined by more than two-thirds since the amendment was adopted. The direct result is further decline in revenues collected from property taxes.

COUNTY RECREATION & TOURISM

Community members countywide have identified recreation and access to recreation assets as critical to the quality of life available in the county. Recreation is an economic asset, not just in terms of jobs created through recreation and tourism, but also in how recreational

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assets serve as a key factor in creating healthy communities and attracting people to the community who will visit, stay, and prosper.

Recreational activities throughout the county include, but are not limited to:

- Motorized Trail Use (OHV, 4X4, Dirtbike, Snowmobiling, etc)
- Wildlife/Bird Viewing
- Non Motorized Trail Use (hiking, biking, backpacking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing)
- Photography
- Rock Climbing
- Shooting/Archery
- Rafting/Boating/Kayaking/SUP
- Heritage Tourism
- Hunting
- Agri-Tourism
- Fishing
- Outdoor Education
- Camping

Residents may enjoy more structured recreation, with recreation programming provided by municipal or recreation districts including swimming, sports, parks and playgrounds.

Additionally, there are numerous private and non-profit social clubs and organizations that provide specialized recreation, often times reflecting the strong agricultural roots of the county such as rodeos, as well as schools. Many of the recreational activities enjoyed by residents, and that serve as a tourism attraction, are located within public lands owned and managed by BLM and the US Forest Service.

Delta County itself owns and maintains limited recreational assets, and does not have a recreation or parks department that provides recreational programming. However, Delta County does own and maintain assets that support recreation and tourism including the county road network which provides critical access to public lands and state lands.

Additionally, the County owns and maintains the County Fairgrounds where numerous recreational and tourism driven events and activities occur.

Delta County has completed a Recreation Trails Master Plan (RTMP) along with this Master Plan. The RTMP addresses the variety of recreational activities enjoyed by residents and tourists throughout the county, and makes recommendations for project and policy priorities with a primary focus on trail development. Trails and road networks provide the connectivity and access to many of the places where Delta County residents and visitors recreate.

The County's Recreation Trails Master Plan is incorporated into this Master Plan By Resolution No. 2018-01. The RTMP and its goals and policies should be referenced and reviewed to better understand the County's recreational assets, and how the County will provide for the recreational needs and of residents and visitors as resources allow.

GOALS & STRATEGIES

Goal 6.17— When evaluating public land recreation access, parking and recreation objectives articulated in the Delta County Recreation Trails Master Plan, consider county road maintenance and capital improvement priorities.

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Strategy 6.17.0—Evaluate current and future access to recreation areas and trail systems and determine what land protections or other tools may be needed to address access.

Strategy 6.17.1—Work with partners to identify and obtain additional public trails easements from willing landowners.

Goal 6.18—Continue to coordinate and collaborate with municipalities, recreation districts, user groups, and public land agencies to facilitate the maintenance and development of county assets that improve recreational opportunities through thoughtful development of hiking trails, bikeways, and access to hunting, fishing, and boating potential on federal, state, municipal, and county lands.

Strategy 6.18.0—Ensure that the development of any new recreational assets, including trails minimizes impacts to natural resources, agricultural activities, wildlife and wildlife habitat.

Goal 6.19—Advocate for the development of recreational assets that meet the needs of all residents including the young, elderly, disabled, and all user types.

Goal 6.20—Continue to work with tourism related organizations including the Delta County Tourism Board, Chambers of Commerce, Scenic Byways committee, Public Land entities to market and promote Delta County's agri-tourism, heritage tourism, and recreation assets.

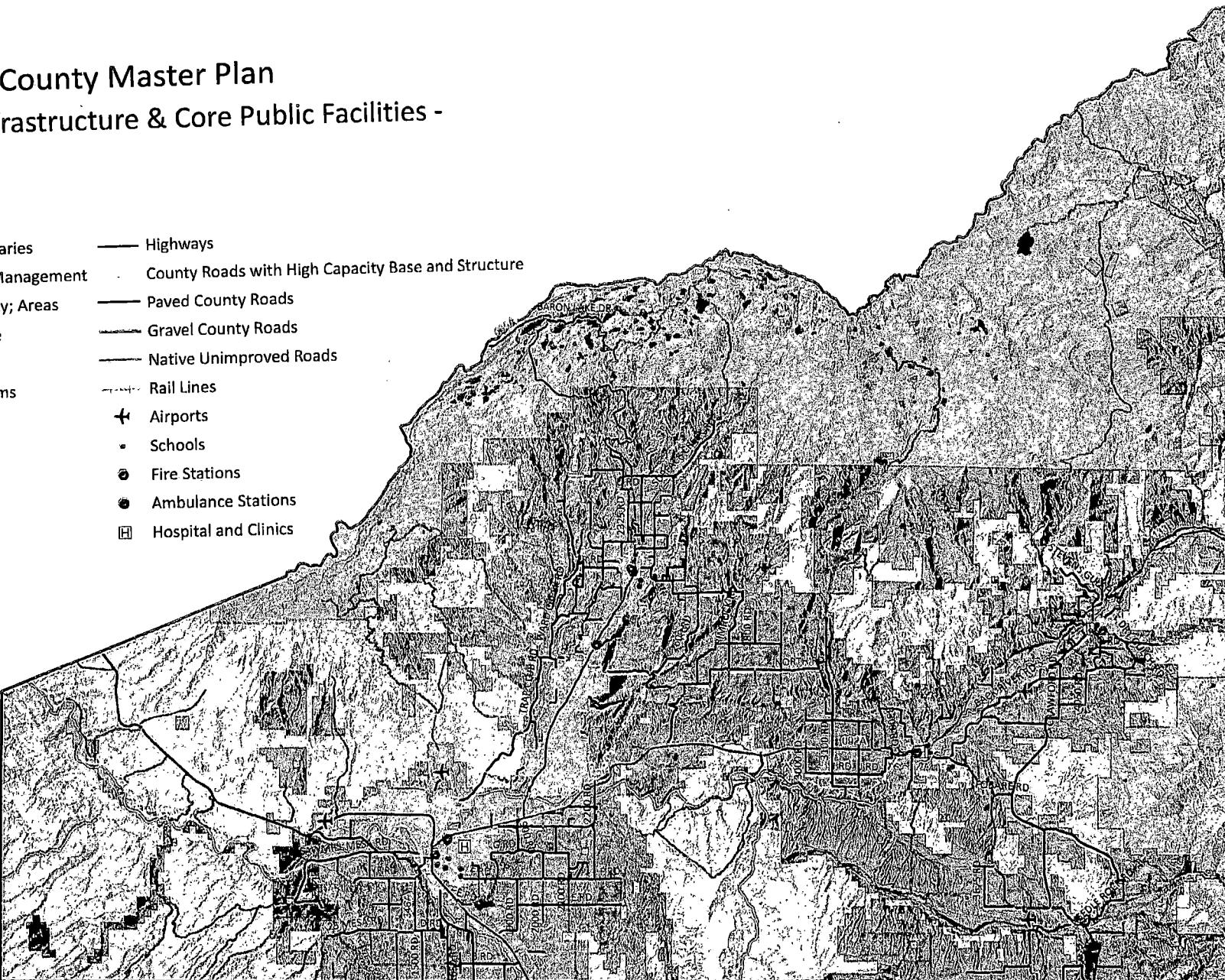
Delta County Master Plan

- Transportation Infrastructure & Core Public Facilities -



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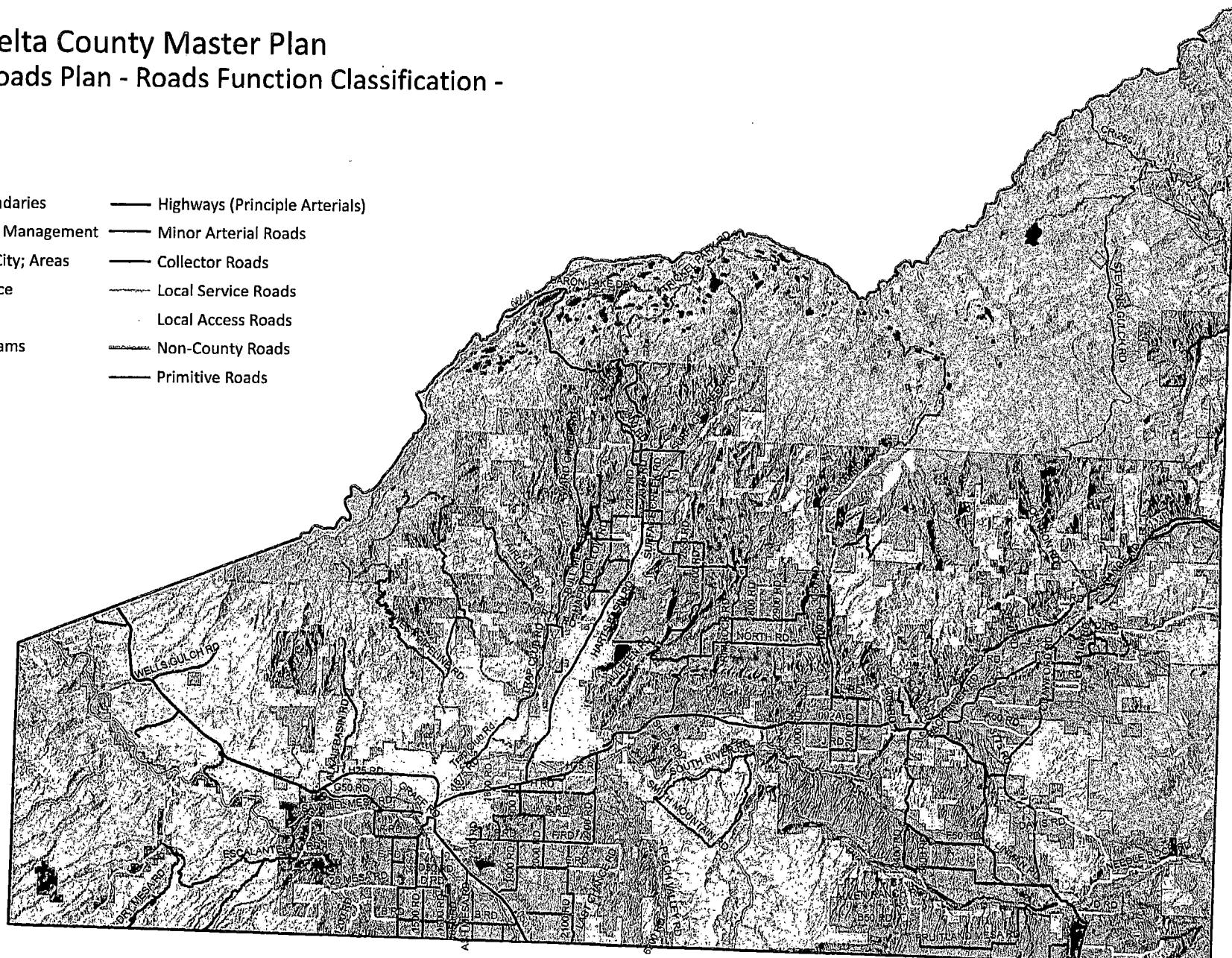
- 2009 Master Roads Plan - Roads Function Classification -

■ Municipal Boundaries	— Highways (Principle Arterials)
■ Bureau of Land Management	— Minor Arterial Roads
■ State, County, City; Areas	— Collector Roads
■ US Forest Service	— Local Service Roads
■ Water Bodies	— Local Access Roads
— Rivers and Streams	— Non-County Roads
	— Primitive Roads



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2.7 ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

VISION

Delta County has a vibrantly diverse energy development economy. The county is a leader in protecting clean air and water and continues to protect community health, safety, and welfare for present and future generations.

CORE VALUES

Delta County is the source for many types of energy resources including coal, oil and gas, biomass, hydro, coal methane and solar. Energy development has been a key part of the economy and culture of the county for decades. Coal will continue to be part of the energy sector but is subject to fluctuating markets. There is strong support county-wide for keeping energy development as a component of the economy and there is excitement about the future of renewable energy production.

Residents expressed support for oil and gas during the Master Plan process often citing the need for jobs and tax revenues. Residents also expressed concerns about the impacts and unintended consequences of future oil and gas development such as to water and air quality, county roads and other infrastructure and services. There is a concern that activity higher in the watersheds in Gunnison County will also impact Delta County.

Local government control over oil and gas development is limited in the State of Colorado. The Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (COGCC) and federal lands agencies including the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) have primary jurisdiction over oil and gas development including regulating, permitting, monitoring and enforcement on both public and private lands. In the early 2000's, Delta County was one of the first local governments to regulate oil and gas activity and challenge the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission for local control over many aspects of oil and gas development. Delta County's early efforts helped motivate the COGCC to appoint Local Government Designees (LGDs). The LDG is the liaison between local governments and the COGCC to provide communications, information sharing, facilities monitoring and to address local concerns and values during the oil and gas development permitting.

Moving forward, Delta County needs to calibrate its land use and development regulations to address the short and long-term impacts of solid and fluid mineral energy development within the limits of its authority. Continued advocacy for local values in cooperation with state and federal agencies is paramount. This includes participation in rule-making of state and federal agencies such as Colorado Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), COGCC, and CPW among others.

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The Oil and Gas working group is tasked with reviewing the County's oil and gas regulations, and helping the County and its partners better understand the County's role in oil and gas regulation. The oil and gas working group should look carefully at the Bureau of Land Management's Resource Management Plan for county watersheds, and consult with adjoining counties where oil and gas development is taking place, and visit those locations e.g. Colbran and Palisade and determine the impacts of such development. The working group should review any other available natural resource plans, and work to provide policy and regulatory recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners and Planning Commission that respect the County's regulatory authority, but also leverage the County's relationships with other agencies to help elevate county-wide values.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal 7.0 – Facilitate responsible, beneficial energy development in order to promote the wise use of natural resources, while also working with energy businesses, land and mineral management agencies, and neighboring county governments to eliminate or mitigate, to the maximum extent feasible within the County's jurisdiction, both on and off site impacts of energy development activities to the environment, water resources, communities, public infrastructure, surrounding land uses, and public health, safety, and welfare within.

Strategy 7.0.0 – Ensure that energy development pays for its impact to County infrastructure, facilities and services, and reclamation needed to serve business operations and facilities.

Strategy 7.0.1 – Evaluate county regulations covering oil and gas and mining to ensure that Delta County is effectively exercising the authority that is available to it.

Strategy 7.0.2 – Work in partnership with local, state, and federal agencies to maintain and improve communications and to advocate for local values. Consult with Mesa, Gunnison, and Montrose Counties regarding policies for oil and gas development and regulation thereof.

Strategy 7.0.3 – Develop and maintain an inventory and map of existing pipelines and other underground energy infrastructure.

Strategy 7.0.4 – Convene a working group of natural resource development experts, industry representatives, and residents for the time needed to evaluate Delta County's oil and gas regulations, keep the regulations up-to-date, and to make policy recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners.

Goal 7.1 – Encourage responsible and beneficial development of private, commercial and public renewable energy.

Strategy 7.1.0 – Develop clear standards for commercial renewable energy development covering location, scale, infrastructure needs and site planning.

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Strategy 7.1.1 – Continue to encourage small-scale private renewable energy systems that meet safety requirements.

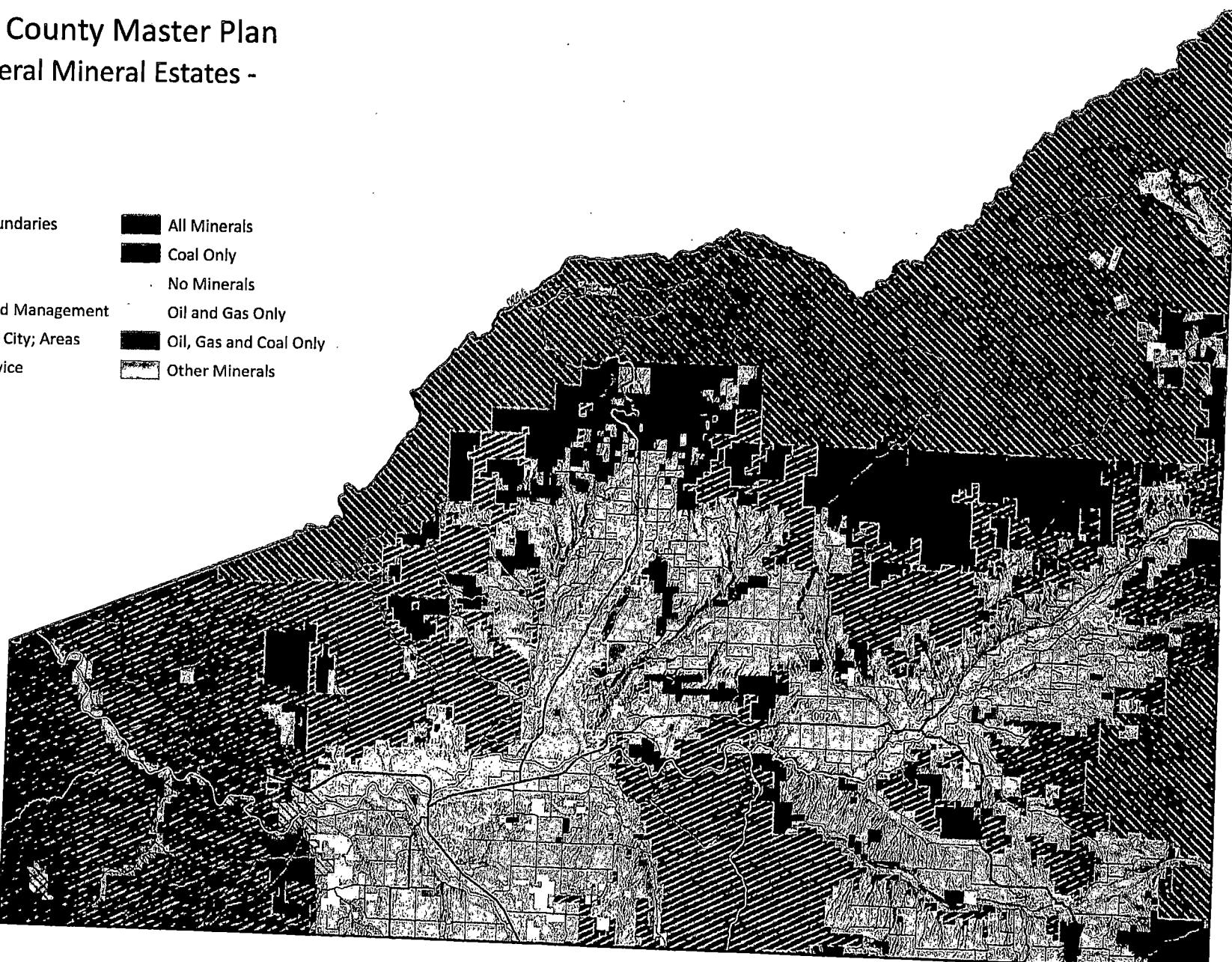
Delta County Master Plan - Federal Mineral Estates -

	Municipal Boundaries
	Highways
	County Roads
	Bureau of Land Management
	State, County, City; Areas
	US Forest Service
	All Minerals
	Coal Only
	No Minerals
	Oil and Gas Only
	Oil, Gas and Coal Only
	Other Minerals



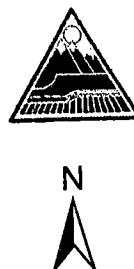
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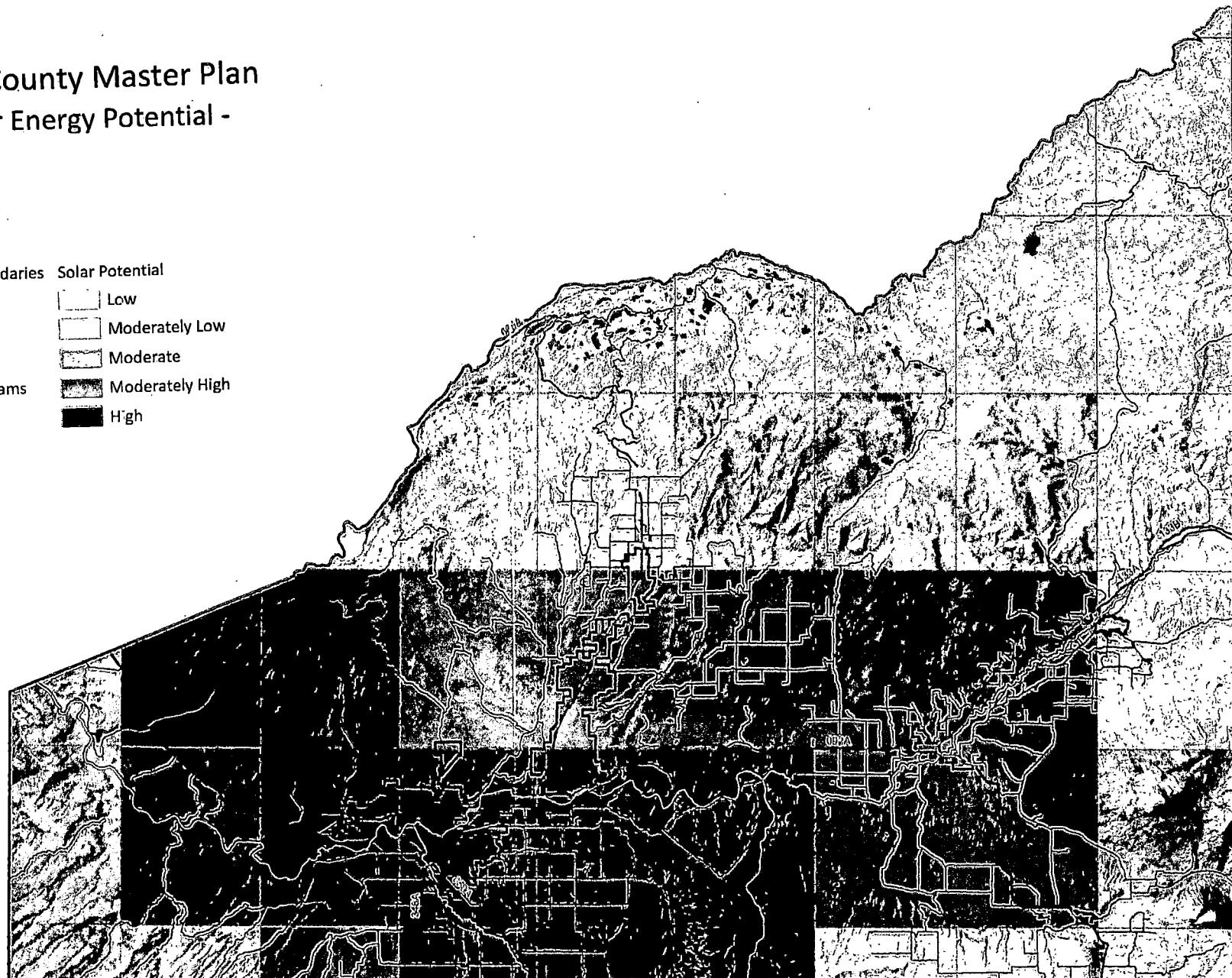


Delta County Master Plan - Solar Energy Potential -

Municipal Boundaries	Solar Potential
Highways	Low
County Roads	Moderately Low
Water Bodies	Moderate
Rivers and Streams	Moderately High
	High



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DELTA COUNTY MASTER PLAN

Chapter Three

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

3.1 FUTURE LAND USE PLAN OVERVIEW

The Future Land Use Plan provides additional physical planning guidance for implementing the Vision, Goals and Strategies. The Future Land Use Plan is advisory and presents general policy and is not the same as land use regulations. However, the Future Land Use Plan makes recommendations about changes to land use regulations and acts as a guide to property owners and developers to help them understand the community vision and make informed land-use decisions that support this vision. The Future Land Use Plan is broken into five designations that are applied in different locations across the county. These designations identify areas that have commonalities that will impact future growth and development. Each designation has a set of policies that can be used to help guide development of land use regulations. The designations are organized into three components:

- Existing Conditions – The current status of the land in each designation, the major assets and challenges that exist today.
- Desired Future Conditions – The vision for the future of the land in each designation, the desirable possibilities and opportunities and the preservation strategies.
- Infrastructure – The interrelationship between future land use policy and infrastructure current capacities and needed improvements.

The designation names, map symbols and a brief description are included below. For full details, refer to the full description of each designation following this introduction.

Designation	Description
Agriculture with Residential Interface 	These are areas where domestic water is widely available and where intact agricultural lands interface with residential development. Opportunity for future growth exists on non-agricultural undeveloped land where domestic water is available.
Intermixed Rural Communities & Agriculture 	These areas exhibit a diverse array of development patterns and land uses, with the underlying characteristic that there is a mosaic of agriculture and rural residential throughout the designation. These areas call for policies that balance between diverse land uses while assuring flexibility for creativity and adaptation.

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Agriculture and Domestic-Water-Limited Rural		The combination of limited domestic water supply and a development pattern founded on larger parcels used for hay farming and ranching means that this area is the least intensively developed in the county. Domestic water supply limitations have tempered development in this area to date, but deliberate land use policies are needed to foster agriculture and to balance land conservation with future development.
Remote Agriculture		These areas higher on the mesas and mountains hold many large intact ranch properties with dispersed clusters of residential parcels. These areas are mostly beyond the paved road network and remote from basic public services and while it is expected that the feasible development lots will develop, it is not an area where further subdivision is encouraged.
Growth Management Areas		These are the areas delineated in Growth Management Agreements between the county and individual municipalities between 2007 and 2014. The Master Plan establishes unified county-level guidance for these five distinct areas around the City of Delta and the Towns of Paonia, Hotchkiss, Orchard City and Cedaredge.

The Future Land Use Designations are followed by a series of maps displaying information utilized during the process of developing the designations (see 3.3 Background Information Maps, page 104). The maps show agricultural land use, residential land use, commercial land use, public infrastructure and facilities, water providers, natural hazards, jurisdictions and other land use and geographic information. The land use and parcel size analysis performed for each designation utilized Delta County GIS and Assessor data. The background information maps are intended to display some of the key information used in the land use analysis.

There are a lot of similarities in each FLUP designation, that may benefit from common approaches. The following general policies apply to all designations:

- The full range of land uses, activities, structures, future innovations and infrastructure associated with agricultural enterprises are allowed and expected uses on agricultural lands as well as other types of businesses that are symbiotic with agricultural lands and support the long-term viability of the agricultural use.
- Design future developments on agricultural lands to maximize the agricultural land that remains intact and productive for the long-term.
- A new regulatory system is needed to address future conflicts that are likely to continue between rural residential, agricultural, industrial, and commercial uses. This regulatory system should identify what range of land uses are permitted and

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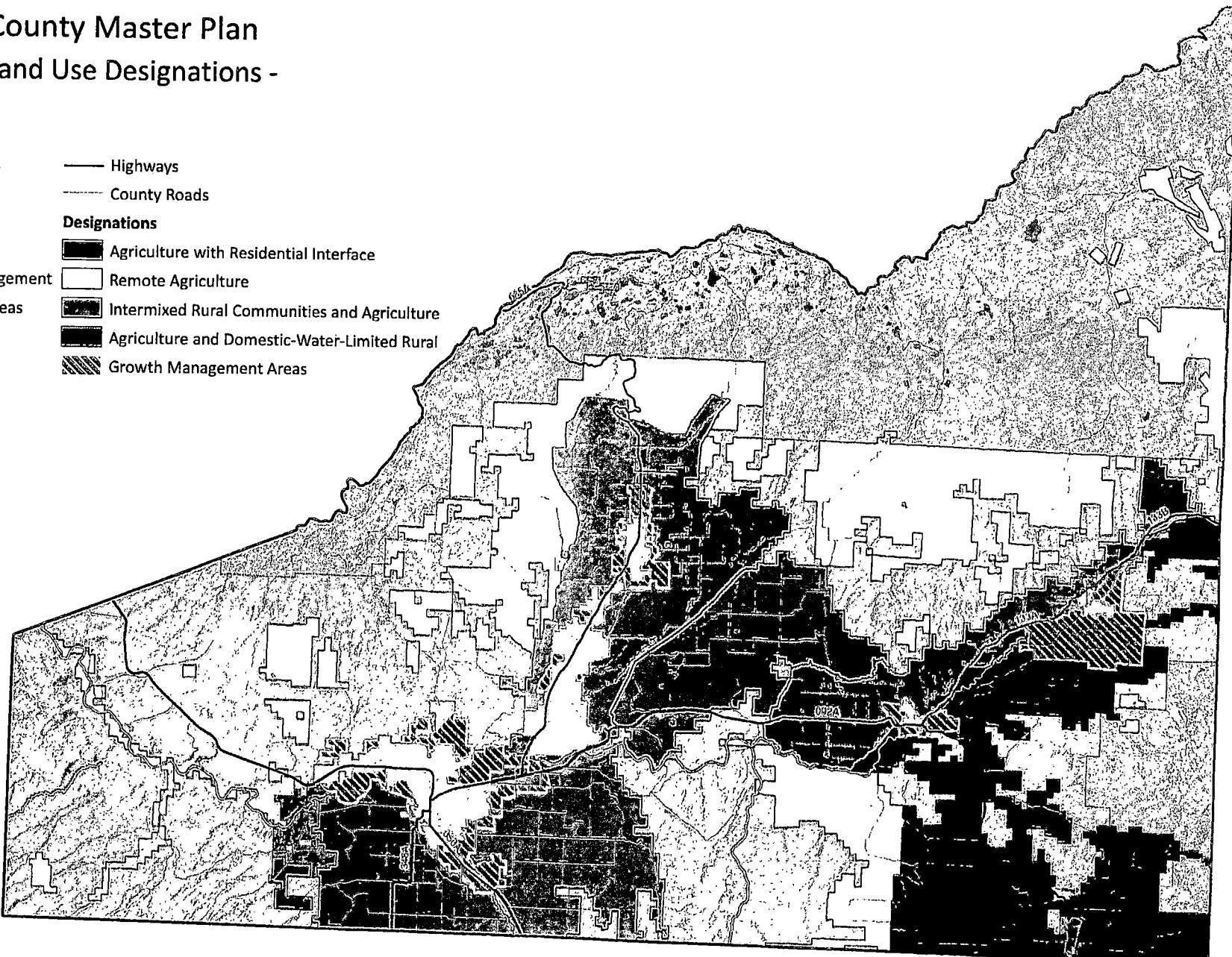
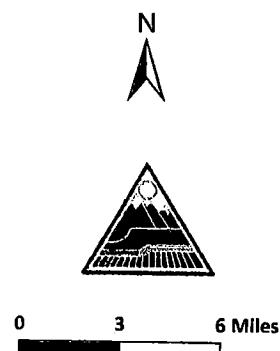
where different types of land uses are allowed. Property owners across the county will be encouraged to participate collaboratively in determining permitted land uses for their property based on new land use regulations that are fair, predictable and offer protection to property owners.

- Encourage future higher impact commercial and industrial development to locate in proximity to similar existing operations and in locations with adequate road, water, utility, and sewer infrastructure, while mitigating impacts on surrounding agricultural and residential uses.

However, there are some unique qualities in each designation that may require additional policy consideration. These differences are identified in greater detail further in this document. The policies in each Future Land Use Designation need to be read collectively. The policies are not listed by or intended to be viewed as one having priority over another.

Delta County Master Plan - Future Land Use Designations -

 Municipal Boundaries	 Highways
 Water Bodies	 County Roads
 Rivers and Streams	
	Designations
	 Agriculture with Residential Interface
	 Remote Agriculture
Public Lands	 Intermixed Rural Communities and Agriculture
 Bureau of Land Management	 Agriculture and Domestic-Water-Limited Rural
 State, County, City; Areas	
 US Forest Service	 Growth Management Areas



3.2 FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

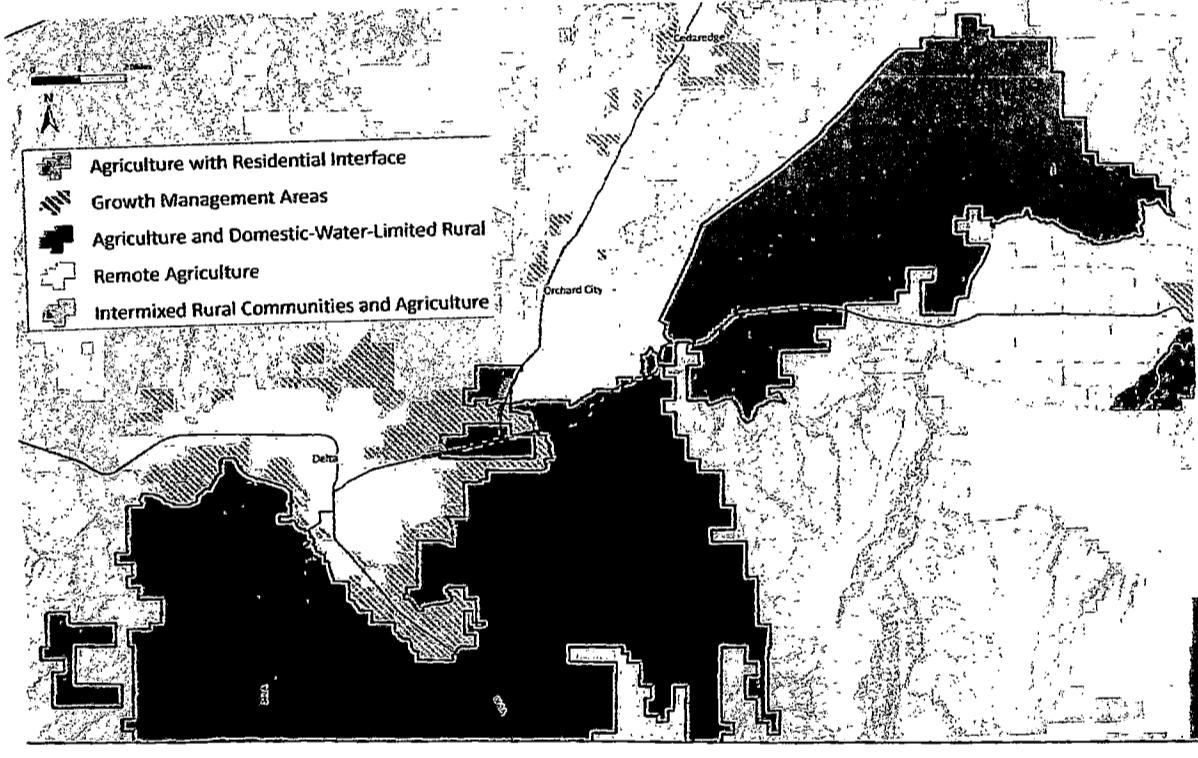
AGRICULTURE WITH RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT INTERFACE

This designation applies to areas in the county that have a strong agricultural presence. Residential and commercial development, and large areas of vacant land are present, but agriculture is a predominant use in these areas.

Existing Conditions

Irrigated lands are interspersed with subdivisions and various metes and bounds neighborhoods, some of which are built out and some of which have vacant lots. Higher terrain that is too irregular for crops or lacks irrigation is typically assessed as grazing. There are sizable areas of non-agricultural land and other undeveloped-vacant land in Peach Valley in areas where domestic water is available, in the dry areas along Highway 92 just east of Austin, and in other areas within this designation.

Figure 44 – Agriculture with Residential Development Interface

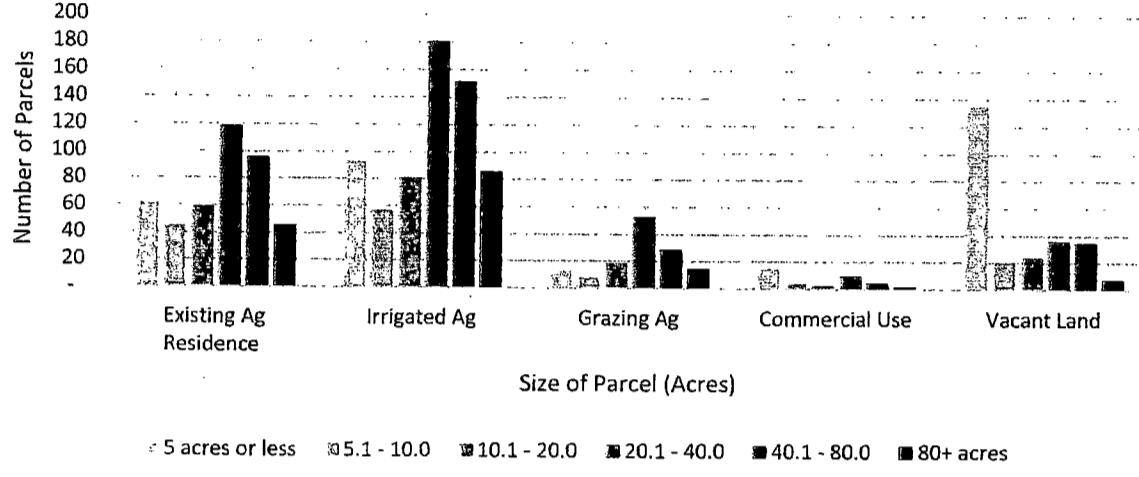


GIS analysis of Delta County Assessor information shows that agriculture in this designation occurs on a wide range of parcel sizes and that most agricultural-assessed properties have at least some portion that is irrigated. Of agriculture-assessed properties, 650 of the 790 parcels in this designation include a portion of the property that is classified

Delta County Master Plan

as irrigated agriculture, while the remaining 140 parcels are classified as grazing land. Just over half of the 790 agriculture-assessed parcels in this designation are between 20.1 acres and 80 acres and 100 of these agriculture-assessed parcels are larger than 80 acres. The remaining 35% of the agriculture-assessed parcels are 20 acres or less.

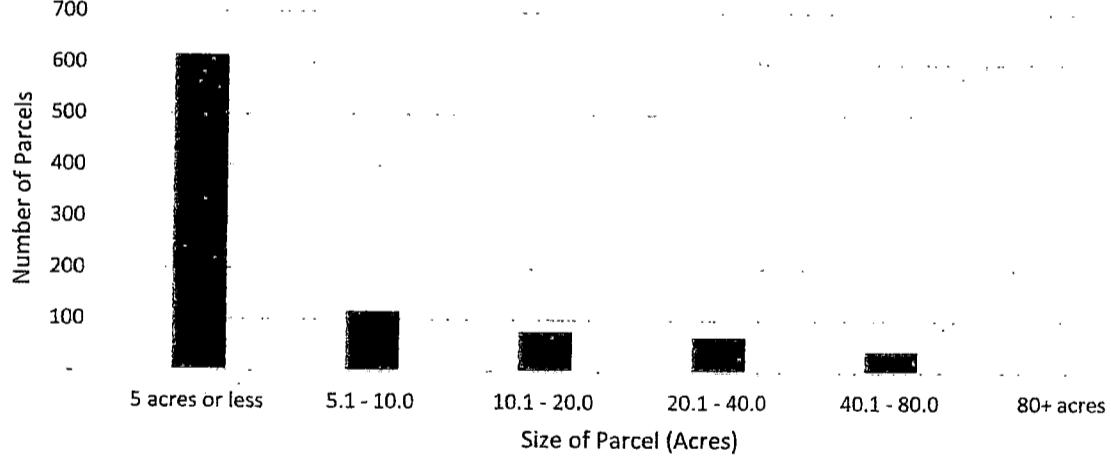
Figure 45 – Number of Parcels by Assessor Classification and by Acres



Source: Delta County Assessor

Homes are part of the landscape, 430 of the agriculture-assessed properties across all parcel sizes contain at least one residence. When a residence occurs on irrigated or grazing land, then the assessor classifies the residence as an agricultural residence. When a residence is not on agricultural land the assessor classifies it as simply a residential-assessed property. An additional 920 residential-assessed properties contain at least one residence throughout this designation, two-thirds of which are 5 acres or less.

Figure 46 – Number of Residential-Assessed Parcels with Existing Residence(s) by Size



Source: Delta County Assessor

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Commercial use is present throughout this designation in a dispersed pattern across the range of parcel sizes, with 39 properties that contain at least one commercial use. About half of the 258 parcels classified as vacant land are 5 acres or less while there are 80 vacant parcels that are 20 acres or larger. In total, there are over 5,000 acres of land in this designation classified as vacant.

Desired Future Conditions

The agricultural operations of all sizes throughout this designation are highly valued by the community and they contribute substantially to the local economy. Land use policy and regulations are needed to direct future growth and development so that agriculture remains intact. Most of the agriculture occurring in this designation is irrigated and this designation contains some of the most productive land on the Western Slope. The development patterns show that residences are part of agricultural operations across the full range of parcel sizes. Non-agricultural residences have been built incrementally throughout this designation on individual parcels and within platted subdivisions. Similarly, thinly dispersed commercial uses are in place throughout this designation. Without a deliberate approach, incremental conversion of agricultural lands to other uses and an increase in conflicts between land uses will continue.

The desired future conditions for this designation are as follows:

- Larger, undeveloped non-agricultural parcels in areas with adequate infrastructure are development opportunities.
- Design future development to reduce impacts on agricultural operations.
- Develop incentives for landowners to keep agricultural lands intact and productive.
- Explore mechanisms that encourage buildout of existing residential subdivisions and other residential vacant parcels.
- The full range of land uses, activities, structures, future innovations and infrastructure associated with agricultural enterprises are allowed and expected uses on agricultural lands as well as other types of businesses that are symbiotic with agricultural lands and support the long-term viability of the agricultural use.
- Design future developments on agricultural lands to maximize the agricultural land that remains intact and productive for the long-term.
- A new regulatory system is needed to address future conflicts that are likely to continue between rural residential, agricultural, industrial, and commercial uses. This regulatory system should identify what range of land uses are permitted and where different types of land uses are allowed. Property owners across the county will be encouraged to participate collaboratively in determining permitted land uses for their property based on new land use regulations that are fair, predictable and offer protection to property owners.

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- Encourage future higher impact commercial and industrial development to locate in proximity to similar existing operations and in locations with adequate road, water, utility, and sewer infrastructure, while mitigating impacts on surrounding agricultural and residential uses.

Infrastructure

Domestic Water: County water maps indicate that most of the area is served with domestic water by Tri-County Water Conservation District in the Delta area and by the Upper Surface Creek Water Users Association east of Cedaredge and Orchard City. Both of these water providers serve a significant amount of development and could serve more in the future. County GIS mapping shows that the dry areas along Highway 92 just east of Austin have limited domestic water service, so future development in these areas will rely on groundwater wells or on extension of domestic water service.

Roads: The county road network maintains a grid pattern as terrain allows, so the connectivity and efficiency of access is relatively high. There is a relatively connected network of county roads that were originally built or have been rebuilt with a base and structure that can handle heavier loads and higher volumes of traffic. The 2008 City of Delta Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Plan designates several existing county roads as Minor Arterials with 80 feet rights of way within their 3-mile planning area and it will be important to coordinate on road infrastructure in this area. These designations are in no way binding on the county, but they are an important factor for the county to consider when making road infrastructure investment decisions.

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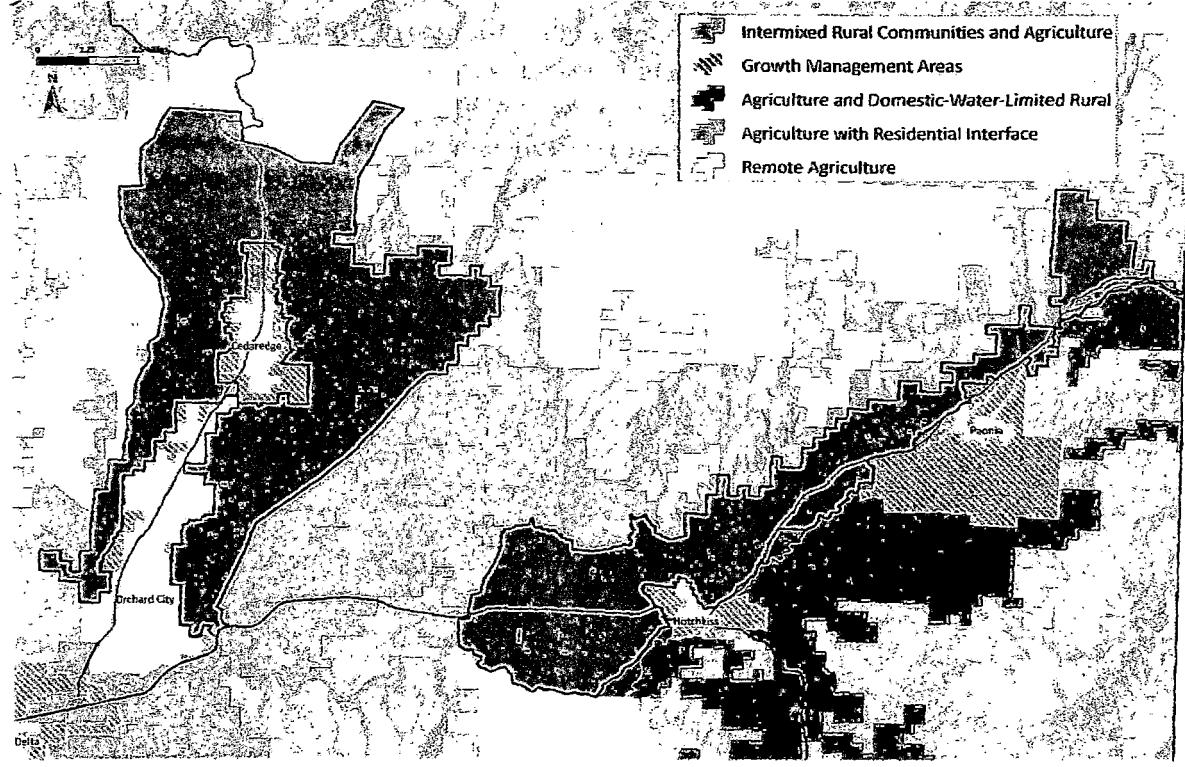
INTERMIXED RURAL COMMUNITIES & AGRICULTURE

This land use designation applies to areas of the county where there are large areas of productive agriculture, but the area also has a lot of rural residential properties dispersed across the designation area.

Existing Conditions

These areas encompass a diverse array of development patterns and land uses, with the underlying characteristic that there is a mix of small and large agricultural operations and rural residential subdivisions and individual residences throughout the designation. Many of these areas identify with one of the municipalities such as the areas around Cedaredge and Paonia while others identify with the land feature that defines the area such as Rogers Mesa or Hanson Mesa. Thinly dispersed commercial is also part of the mix. These areas exhibit a diverse array of agricultural practices and agricultural enterprises on properties ranging from less than an acre to hundreds of acres.

Figure 47 – Intermixed Rural Communities & Agriculture

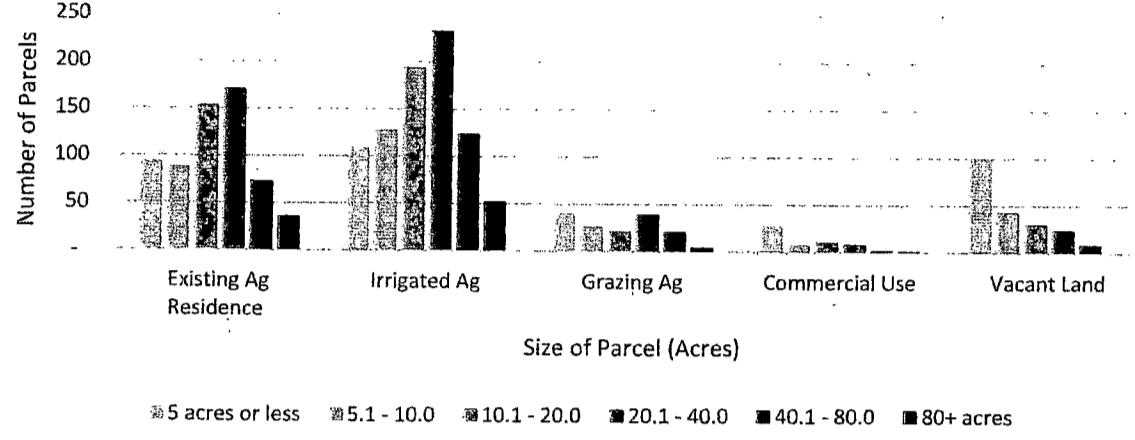


GIS analysis of Delta County Assessor information shows that 840 of the 1,000 agriculture-assessed parcels in this designation include a portion of the property that is classified as irrigated agriculture, while the remaining 160 parcels are classified as grazing land. Forty-two percent (42%) of agriculture-assessed parcels in this designation are between 20.1 acres

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and 80 acres and 58 (6%) of these agriculture-assessed parcels are larger than 80 acres. The remaining 52% of the agriculture-assessed parcels are 20 acres or less.

Figure 48 – Number of Parcels by Assessor Classification and by Acres

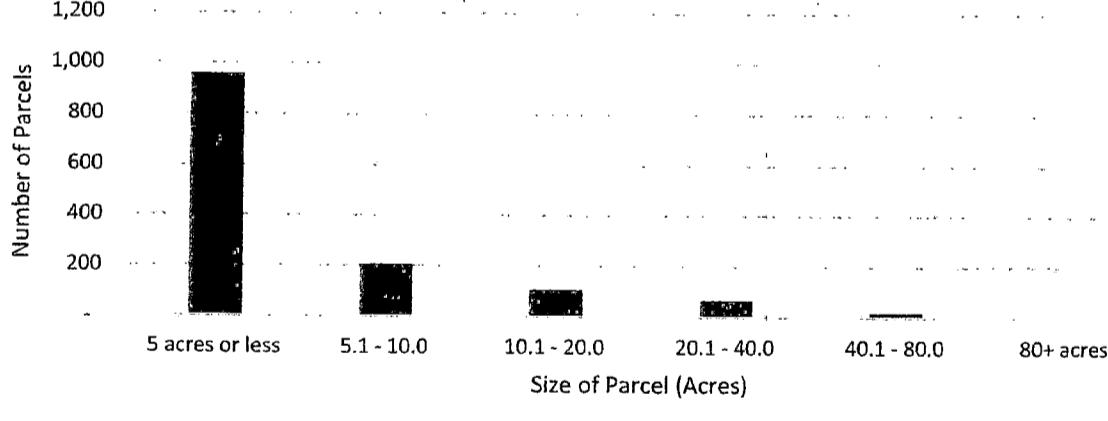


Source: Delta County Assessor

The development pattern analysis shows residences throughout this designation, with nearly 2,000 parcels that have at least one residence. Of agriculture-assessed properties in this designation, 620 have at least one residence and 29% of these agricultural properties are ten or less acres. An additional 1,350 residential-assessed properties have at least one residence throughout this designation, 71% of which are 5 acres or less, occurring in clusters of parcels or as platted subdivisions.

Commercial use is present throughout this designation in a dispersed pattern across the range of parcel sizes, with 60 properties that contain at least one commercial use. Just under half of the 210 parcels classified as vacant land are 5 acres or less and 79 of these parcels are larger than 20 acres. In total, there are about 5,100 acres of vacant land in this designation.

Figure 49 – Number of Residential-Assessed Parcels with Existing Residence(s) by Size



Source: Delta County Assessor

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Desired Future Conditions

The extent of residential development in these areas reflects geographic factors such as adjacency to four municipalities (Orchard City, Cedaredge, Hotchkiss and Paonia), availability of domestic water, and the varied terrain and working agriculture that make these areas appealing places to live. It is essential that agriculture continues to grow and adapt. The landscape has evolved and will continue to evolve, calling for deliberate land use policies and regulations aimed at maintaining the balance between diverse land uses while assuring flexibility for creativity and adaptation. Delta County has no land use regulations to determine where land uses may locate. As a result, there are areas of the county where rural residential, agricultural, industrial, and commercial land are mixed. This mix creates neighborhood conflict, especially when new more intensive uses are proposed. The goal is not to change these areas, the goal is to take deliberate steps to ensure the most valued core elements remain intact as future growth and development occur.

The desired future conditions for this designation are as follows:

- Design future development to reduce impacts on agricultural operations.
- Develop incentives for landowners to keep agricultural lands intact and productive.
- Explore mechanisms that encourage buildout of existing residential subdivisions and other residential vacant parcels.
- The full range of land uses, activities, structures, future innovations and infrastructure associated with agricultural enterprises are allowed and expected uses on agricultural lands as well as other types of businesses that are symbiotic with agricultural lands and support the long-term viability of the agricultural use.
- Design future developments on agricultural lands to maximize the agricultural land that remains intact and productive for the long-term.
- A new regulatory system is needed to address future conflicts that are likely to continue between rural residential, agricultural, industrial, and commercial uses. This regulatory system should identify what range of land uses are permitted and where different types of land uses are allowed. Property owners across the county will be encouraged to participate collaboratively in determining permitted land uses for their property based on new land use regulations that are fair, predictable and offer protection to property owners.
- Encourage future higher impact commercial and industrial development to locate in proximity to similar existing operations and in locations with adequate road, water, utility, and sewer infrastructure, while mitigating impacts on surrounding agricultural and residential uses.

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Infrastructure

Water: Domestic water supply has been and likely will be the primary limitation on how much and where future development can occur. The multitude of domestic water providers throughout the county make it difficult to determine how much development could be served with the existing water capacity, but some water providers possess capacity to serve future customers. The development pattern mirrors the water provider service areas, showing that water has been available and could continue to be available. The Towns of Orchard City, Cedaredge, Hotchkiss and Paonia and the Upper Surface Creek Water Users Association have the most capacity for supplying treated water to future customers. Several others have some limited capacity including Lazear, Sunshine Mesa and Stewart Mesa Domestic Water Companies. The Towns of Paonia, Hotchkiss and Cedaredge currently provide water to some water distribution companies that serve unincorporated properties around the municipalities. While older parcels that were legally created may be eligible for an exempt groundwater well permit, finding sustainable potable groundwater in Delta County can be difficult.

Roads: The county road network is already in place to serve these areas and in a grid network as terrain allows. Connectivity breaks down at higher elevations where a single road provides access to several drainages and areas north of Highway 133 between Hotchkiss and Paonia. Several county roads also end at the Gunnison River. Significant development in these areas that currently lack connectivity may not be feasible and/or safe. Incremental increases in traffic are expected as more properties develop, so safety-related improvements to the two-lane roads and intersections will be among the top priorities. Highways 92 and 133 provide the arterial network that connects to the broader region. Colorado Department of Transportation highway access management plans along Highway 133 near Paonia and along Highway 92 in the Rogers Mesa area provide specific standards. Many county roads lead to BLM parcels, so working with land managers to accommodate recreation traffic and parking will be essential in popular recreation areas.

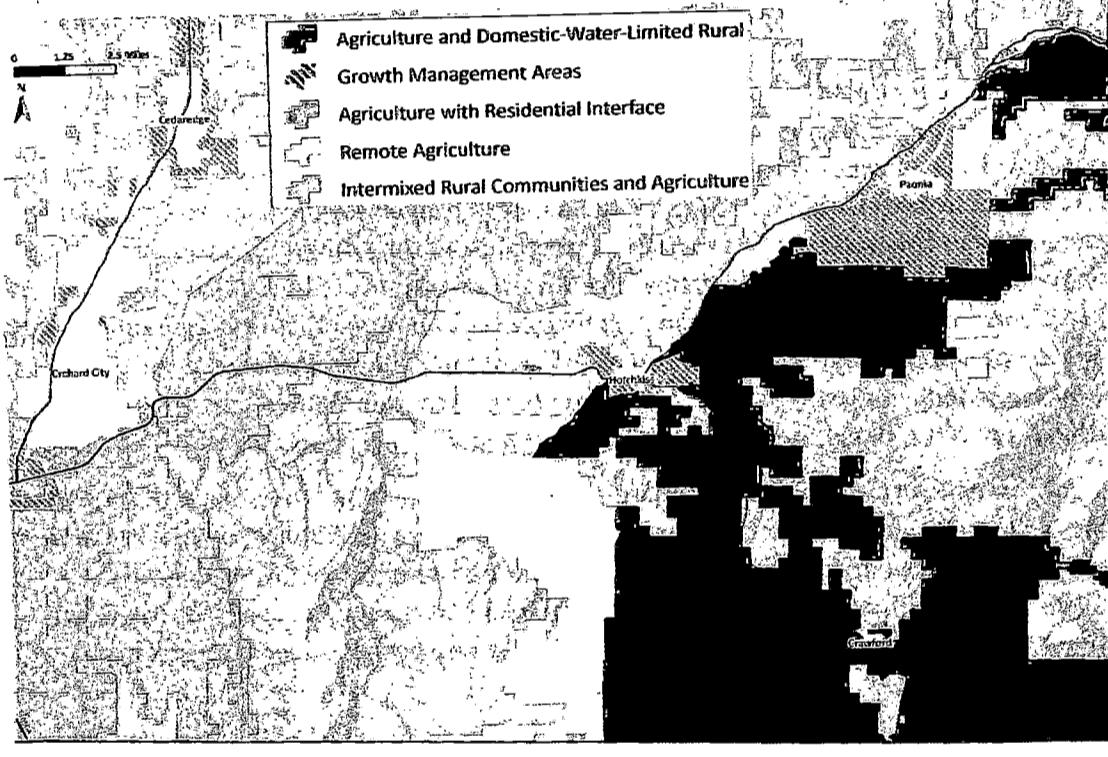
Rail: Rail infrastructure is available along the North Fork of the Gunnison River corridor and passes through four municipalities as well as through the historic townsite of Lazear. Most of the track through this designation runs along the highway, the river, and agricultural land. While the railroad is an underlying development opportunity, it runs alongside the river along some reaches to form a defined geographic edge, and in this respect is a constraint.

AGRICULTURE AND DOMESTIC-WATER-LIMITED RURAL

This designation applies to areas in the county that have a strong agricultural presence. There is residential development dispersed in the area, but future development may be limited by the availability of domestic water.

Existing Conditions – This designation is characterized by hay farming and ranching with subdivisions and various metes and bounds neighborhoods located in pockets where domestic water is available, mostly along the southern county border. There are domestic water providers in some areas but only a couple of these have indicated that they have capacity to serve future growth. In general, the parcels are larger in this area overall than in other parts of the county, and residential development is not as consistently dispersed as in other parts of the county. The combination of limited domestic water supply and a development pattern founded on larger parcels used for hay farming and ranching means that this area is the least intensively developed in the county.

Figure 50 – Agriculture and Domestic-Water-Limited Rural

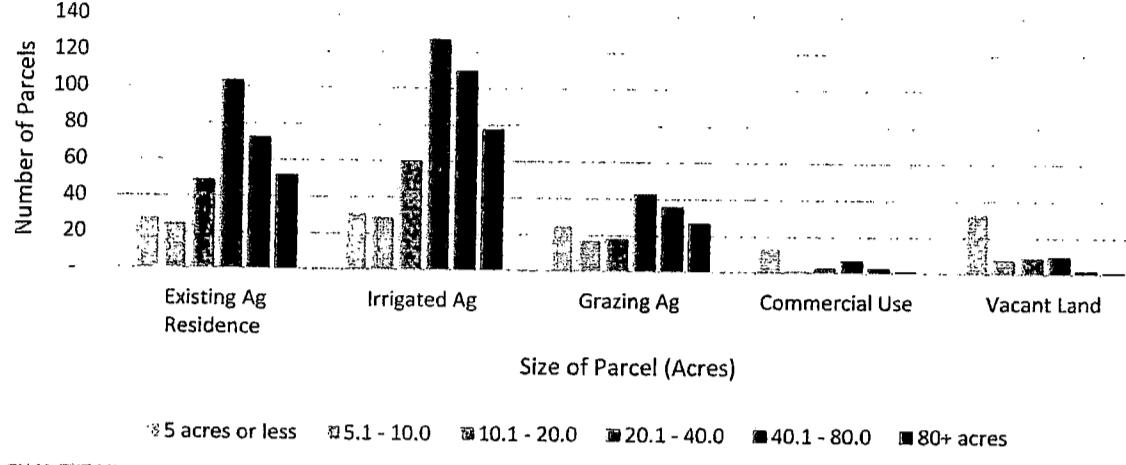


GIS analysis of Delta County Assessor information shows that agriculture in this designation occurs on a wide range of parcel sizes and that most agricultural-assessed properties have at least some portion that is irrigated. A total of 435 of the 600 agriculture-assessed parcels in this designation include a portion of the property that is classified as irrigated agriculture. Slightly over half of the 600 agriculture-assessed parcels in this

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designation are between 20.1 acres and 80 acres while 105 (17%) of these agriculture-assessed parcels are larger than 80 acres. The remaining 17% of the agriculture-assessed parcels are 20 acres or less.

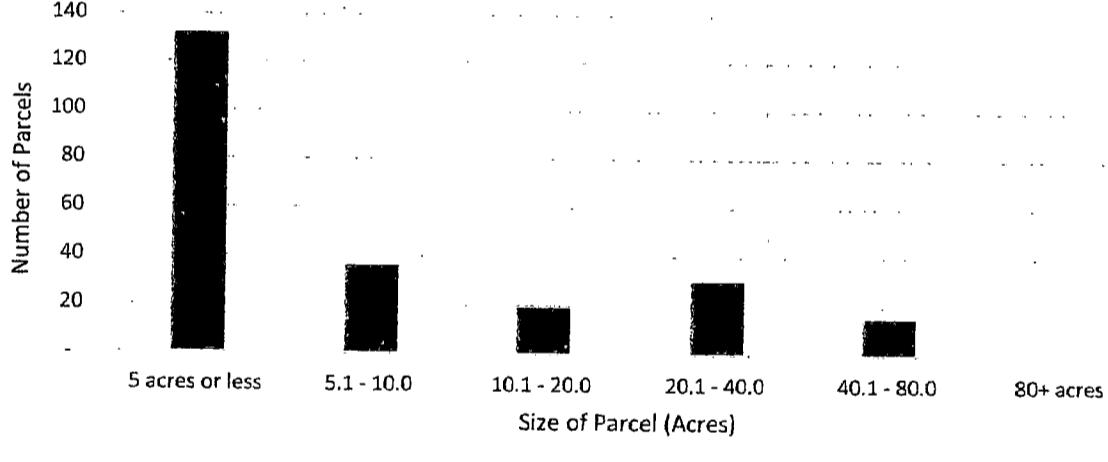
Figure 51 – Number of Parcels by Assessor Classification and by Acres



Source: Delta County Assessor

Homes are part of the landscape with 232 of the agriculture-assessed properties across all parcel sizes containing at least one residence. An additional 331 residential-assessed properties contain at least one residence throughout this designation, 57% of which are 5 acres or less.

Figure 52 – Number of Residential-Assessed Parcels with Existing Residence(s) by Size



Source: Delta County Assessor

Commercial use is present throughout this designation in a dispersed pattern across the range of parcel sizes, with 28 properties that contain at least one commercial use. There are just 63 vacant lots or parcels, half of which are five acres or less, for a total of 775 acres of vacant land.

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Desired Future Conditions

Domestic water supply is finite and the low intensity development patterns in this designation reflect this limitation. Residents value agricultural, larger properties and space in between properties. While water supply has tempered development in this area to date, it may not always be the case. Deliberate land use policies and regulations will help foster agriculture and balance land conservation and future development.

The desired future conditions for this designation are as follows:

- Design future development to reduce impacts on agricultural operations.
- Develop incentives for landowners to keep agricultural lands intact and productive.
- Explore mechanisms that encourage buildout of existing residential subdivisions and other residential vacant parcels.
- The full range of land uses, activities, structures, future innovations and infrastructure associated with agricultural enterprises are allowed and expected uses on agricultural lands as well as other types of businesses that are symbiotic with agricultural lands and support the long-term viability of the agricultural use.
- Design future developments on agricultural lands to maximize the agricultural land that remains intact and productive for the long-term.
- A new regulatory system is needed to address future conflicts that are likely to continue between rural residential, agricultural, industrial, and commercial uses. This regulatory system should identify what range of land uses are permitted and where different types of land uses are allowed. Property owners across the County will be encouraged to participate collaboratively in determining permitted land uses for their property based on new land use regulations that are fair, predictable and offer protection to property owners.
- Encourage future higher impact commercial and industrial development to locate in proximity to similar existing operations and in locations with adequate road, water, utility, and sewer infrastructure, while mitigating impacts on surrounding agricultural and residential uses.

Infrastructure

Water: Domestic water supply has been and could be the primary limitation on how much and where future development can occur. The multitude of domestic water providers make it difficult to determine how much development could be served with the existing water capacity. The water company survey results indicate that just two providers, the Town of Crawford and the Deutsch Pipeline Needle Rock Water Company, have capacity to supply domestic treated water for future growth. While older parcels that were legally created may be eligible for an exempt groundwater well permit, finding viable groundwater in Delta

Delta County Master Plan

County can be difficult. The tight supply of domestic water means that any significant development opportunities will be focused where water is available.

Roads: The county road network maintains a grid pattern as terrain allows but the pattern breaks down near the edges of private lands and due to drainages and the predominance of federal lands. There is a relatively connected network of county roads that were originally built or have been rebuilt to be structurally and geometrically sound. Highways 92 and 133 provide the arterial network that connects to the broader region.

Delta County Master Plan

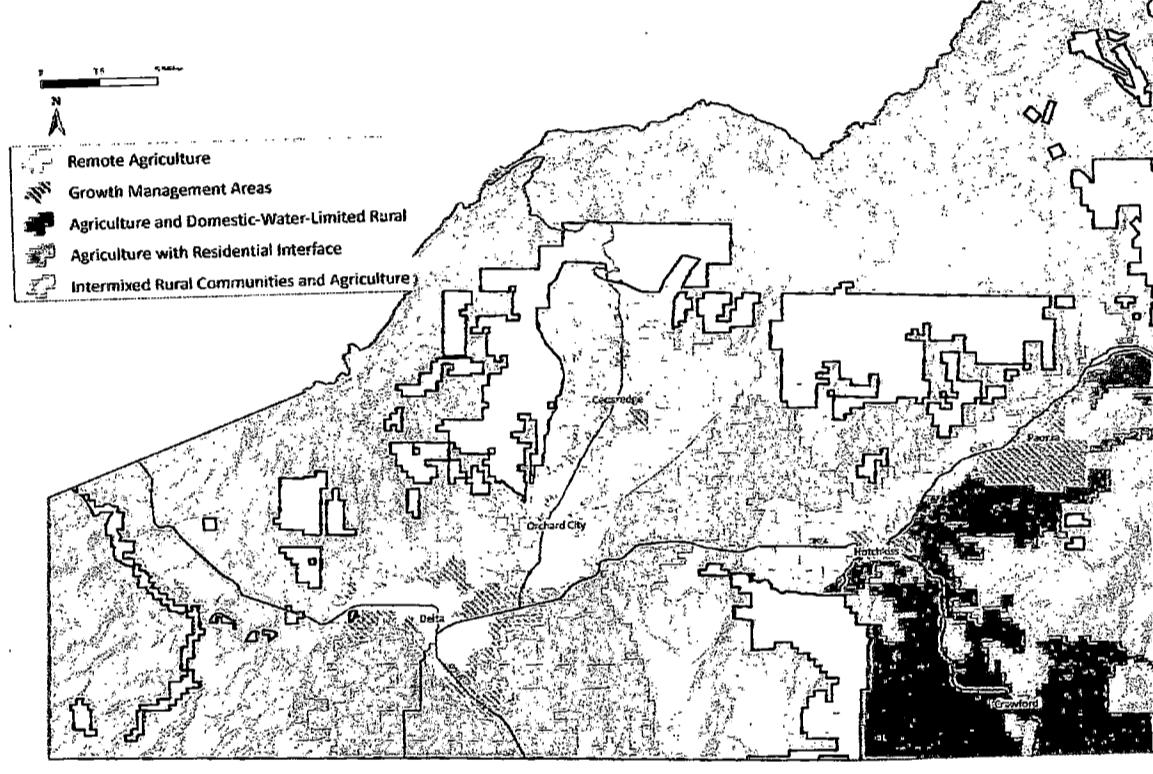
REMOTE AGRICULTURE

This designation applies to areas in the county that are dominated by properties located at higher elevations with limited infrastructure including roads and water.

Existing Conditions

There are many private parcels located high on mesas or in the mountains and are mostly beyond the paved road network. These areas are primarily grazing lands and many large intact ranch properties with interspersed clusters of 35 acre parcels and other metes and bounds parcels. Some of these areas are inholding, entirely surrounded by federal lands and many are adjacent to federal lands. Mineral estates underlie most of the land in this designation.

Figure 53 – Remote Agriculture

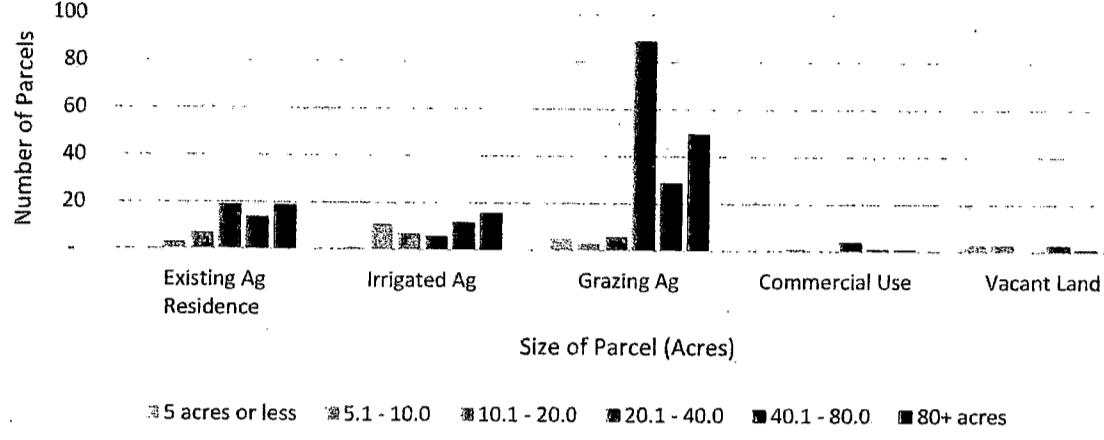


GIS analysis of County Assessor information shows that agriculture in this designation occurs on a wide range of parcel sizes and that 23% of agricultural-assessed properties have at least some portion of the parcel that is irrigated. A total of 182 of the 235 agriculture-assessed parcels in this designation include a portion of the property that is classified as grazing agriculture but do not include any portions classified as irrigated agriculture. This designation is comprised of larger parcels overall compared with other areas in the county. 58% of the agriculture-assessed parcels in this designation are between 20.1 acres and 80

Delta County Master Plan

acres while 28% of these agriculture-assessed parcels are larger than 80 acres. The remaining 14% of the agriculture-assessed parcels are 20 acres or less.

Figure 54 – Number of Parcels by Assessor Classification and by Acres



Source: Delta County Assessor

Homes are thinly dispersed in this designation with 62 of the agriculture-assessed properties across all parcel sizes containing at least one residence. An additional 42 residential-assessed properties contain at least one residence throughout this designation, across the full range of parcel sizes.

Figure 55 – Number of Residential-Assessed Parcels with Existing Residence(s) by Size



Source: Delta County Assessor

Commercial use occurs in this designation, with 7 properties that contain at least one commercial use. There are just 10 vacant lots or parcels, six of which are ten acres or less, for a total of 166 acres of vacant land.

Desired Future Conditions

These areas are in the public and private land interface and at the edges of the county road network. Ranching is an important pillar of the economy and ranchers are the stewards of

Delta County Master Plan

these larger and more remote parcels and it is essential that agriculture continues to grow and adapt. The close proximity of many properties in this area and the agricultural and natural setting create opportunities for outdoor recreation, hunting and agritourism to supplement revenues for agricultural businesses. There are some non-agricultural residences in this area and a limited number of vacant lots appear to have been developed for residential purposes, and it is expected that feasible lots will develop over time. Because this area is remote from basic public services and is mostly used for ranching and hunting, it is not an area where additional subdivision is encouraged.

- Expect development of existing residential or agricultural/residential properties where adequate access to public roads can be achieved and viable water is available.
- These are areas where further subdivision of land is not encouraged.
- Continue collaboration with federal public land agencies to address issues along the interface between public lands and private lands.
- Develop incentives for landowners to keep agricultural lands and wildlife habitat intact.
- The full range of land uses, activities, structures, future innovations and infrastructure associated with agricultural enterprises are allowed and expected uses on agricultural lands as well as other types of businesses that are symbiotic with agricultural lands such as hunting and dude ranches and support the long-term viability of the agricultural use.
- Design future developments on agricultural lands to maximize the agricultural land and wildlife habitat that remains intact for the long-term.
- A new regulatory system is needed to address future conflicts that are likely to continue between rural residential, agricultural, industrial, and commercial uses. This regulatory system should identify what range of land uses are permitted and where different types of land uses are allowed. Property owners across the county will be encouraged to participate collaboratively in determining permitted land uses for their property based on new land use regulations that are fair, predictable and offer protection to property owners.
- Encourage future higher impact commercial and industrial development to locate in proximity to similar existing operations and in locations with adequate road, water, utility, and sewer infrastructure, while mitigating impacts on surrounding agricultural and residential uses.

Infrastructure

Water: These areas lie beyond central water services and rely on the availability of groundwater. While older parcels and parcels 35 acres and larger that were legally created

Delta County Master Plan

may be eligible for an exempt groundwater well permit, finding viable groundwater in Delta County can be difficult.

Roads: Providing increased levels of county road maintenance in these remote portions of the county would put further strain on the already tight county budgets. Most of these areas are beyond the paved road network and the public road network lacks connectivity and alternate emergency access as county roads reach higher in the watersheds.

Fire and Ambulance: From an EMS and fire-protection standpoint, this area is at higher risk and more difficult to access.

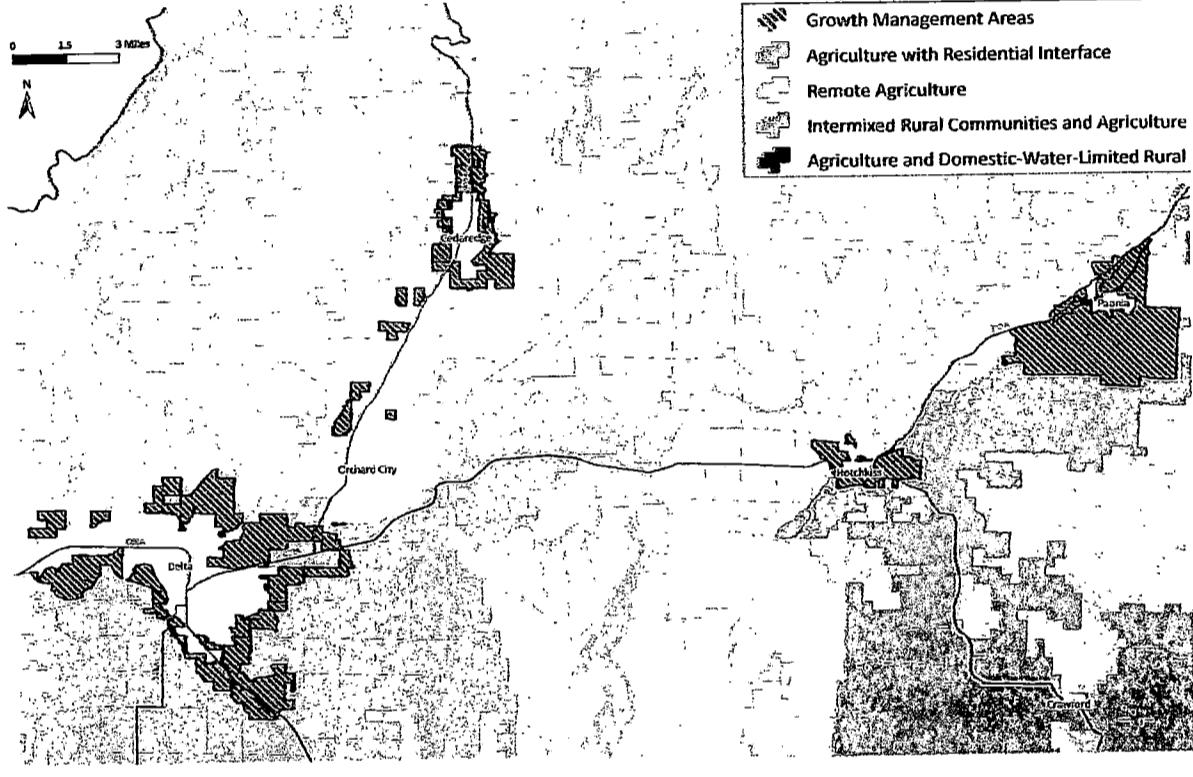
Delta County Master Plan

MUNICIPAL GROWTH MANAGEMENT AREAS

Existing Conditions

These are the areas delineated in Growth Management Agreements between the county and individual municipalities between 2007 and 2014. The Master Plan establishes unified county-level guidance for these five distinct areas around the City of Delta and the Towns of Paonia, Hotchkiss, Orchard City and Cedaredge. Because these areas are close to towns, residential development is common, but working agriculture on the edge of town remains a defining characteristic of Delta County.

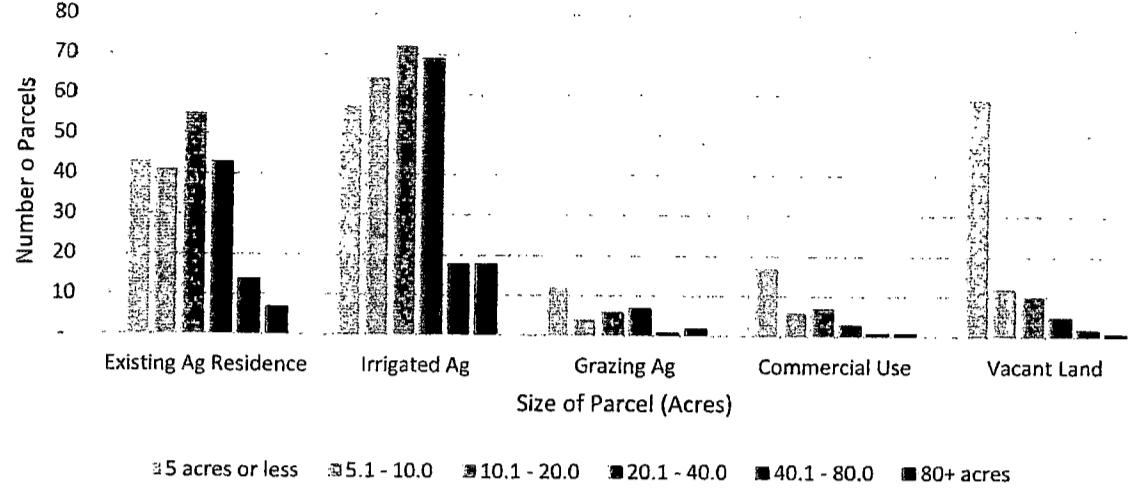
Figure 56 – Municipal Growth Management Areas



GIS analysis of County Assessor information shows a total of 298 of the 330 agriculture-assessed parcels in this designation include a portion of the property that is classified as irrigated agriculture. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of the agriculture-assessed parcels in this designation are between 20.1 acres and 80 acres while 6% of these agriculture-assessed parcels are larger than 80 acres. The remaining 65% of the agriculture-assessed parcels are 20 acres or less.

Delta County Master Plan

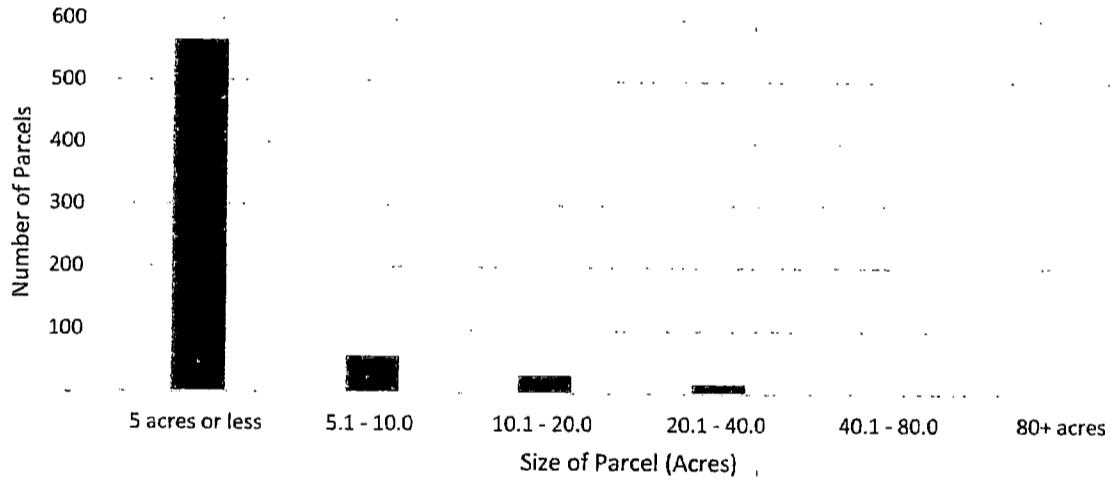
Figure 57 – Number of Parcels by Assessor Classification and by Acres



Source: Delta County Assessor

Homes are part of agricultural operations with 200 of the 330 agriculture-assessed properties containing at least one residence across the range of parcel sizes. An additional 670 residential-assessed properties contain at least one residence throughout this designation, 85% of which are 5 acres or less.

Figure 58 – Number of Residential-Assessed Parcels with Existing Residence(s) by Size



Source: Delta County Assessor

Commercial use occurs in this designation, with 35 properties that contain at least one commercial use. There are 90 vacant lots or parcels, most of which are five acres or less, for a total of 166 acres of vacant land.

Municipal Plans Summary

The City of Delta and the Towns of Orchard City, Hotchkiss, Cedaredge, and Paonia comprehensive plans and other long-range plans contain guidance relating to annexation, extension of municipal infrastructure and coordinated planning.

- Town of Paonia Highway 133 Corridor Master Plan, 2011 – This plan concerns the major gateway to Paonia and strives to protect the rural, small town character of the corridor. The plan cites a range of design considerations including building massing, architectural style, protecting the Highway 133 West Elk Scenic Byway, lighting and other details. The plan calls for reduced town water tap charges as an incentive for compliance with the corridor master plan.
- Town of Cedaredge Master Plan, 2017 – The plan calls for gradual, compatible growth through infill and compact expansion adjacent to the town in areas that are easily serviced by existing town infrastructure. It cites compliance with the state ‘3-mile’ planning provisions including a circulation plan and 201 Plan concerning the area that can be served with municipal water and sewer.
- Town of Orchard City Master Plan, 2016 – This plan makes only a single reference to state statutes regarding annexation. The Town of Orchard City is highly supportive of agriculture and agricultural land uses and has an adopted Right to Farm and Ranch Ordinance.
- Town of Hotchkiss Master Plan – This plan references the Growth Management Agreements and promotes ongoing coordination of land use and infrastructure in feasible annexation areas. The plan lists general criteria for evaluating annexations and cites options for the potential annexation areas: south of the Town across the river, east of the Hotchkiss High School and Lower Barrow Mesa.
- City of Delta – The city’s future land use plan extends a couple of miles or more beyond its municipal boundaries, mostly designated as medium density residential. To accommodate this level of development, the plan includes a network of minor arterials and neighborhood commercial nodes.
- The Crawford County Addendum to the 1997 Delta County Master Plan – This succinct plan references the importance of a sustainable natural resource base including water, vegetation, wildlife and views. It encourages a diversity of housing styles, building materials and creativity in future development. The plan includes a development review process and areas that need to be addressed in proposed developments such as water, infrastructure, impact on public services and wildlife habitat.

Desired Future Conditions

These areas around the periphery of the municipalities are extremely important because with favorable circumstances, property owners could initiate the annexation process to

Delta County Master Plan

bring the property under municipal jurisdiction. The municipalities possess the only infrastructure and services capable of serving higher density residential development, more intensive commercial uses and community facilities. In general, municipalities provide infrastructure and services only once a property is annexed. It is essential to strive for utility and road right of way standards in future county developments that will allow for viable annexation. Today, there is a mix of agriculture and rural residential development, and although towns are nearby, ensuring that agriculture remains intact and viable in these areas is no less important than in other areas in the county.

The desired future conditions for this designation are as follows:

- Encourage density and higher intensity business development by supporting municipal annexation to provide critical services and infrastructure.
- Engage with each municipality to review the growth management agreements and to revise as needed.
- Encourage municipalities to maintain and regularly update their comprehensive plans, master plans and corridor plans.
- Larger, undeveloped non-agricultural parcels in areas with adequate infrastructure are development opportunities.
- Strive for road and utility right of way standards in future developments that are consistent with the standards of each municipality.
- Explore mechanisms that encourage buildout of existing residential subdivisions and other residential vacant parcels.
- The full range of land uses, activities, structures, future innovations and infrastructure associated with agricultural enterprises are allowed and expected uses on agricultural lands as well as other types of businesses that are symbiotic with agricultural lands and support the long-term viability of the agricultural use.
- Design future developments on agricultural lands to maximize the agricultural land that remains intact and productive for the long-term.
- A new regulatory system is needed to address future conflicts that are likely to continue between rural residential, agricultural, industrial, and commercial uses. This regulatory system should identify what range of land uses are permitted and where different types of land uses are allowed. Property owners across the county will be encouraged to participate collaboratively in determining permitted land uses for their property based on new land use regulations that are fair, predictable and offer protection to property owners.

Delta County Master Plan

3.3 BACKGROUND INFORMATION MAPS

The GIS data utilized in this Master Plan comes from a variety of public domain sources. Most of the data was obtained from the Delta County GIS department and from the Delta County Assessor. GIS data sources include:

- Delta County GIS Department
- United States Geologic Survey
- Bureau of Land Management
- United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Colorado State Forest Service
- Colorado Department of Transportation
- Colorado Oil and Gas Commission
- U.S. Department of Energy
- ESRI Community
- North Fork Valley Creative Arts District
- City of Delta

Delta County Master Plan - Irrigated Lands -

Municipal Boundaries

Highways

County Roads

Bureau of Land Management

State, County, City; Areas

US Forest Service

Water Bodies

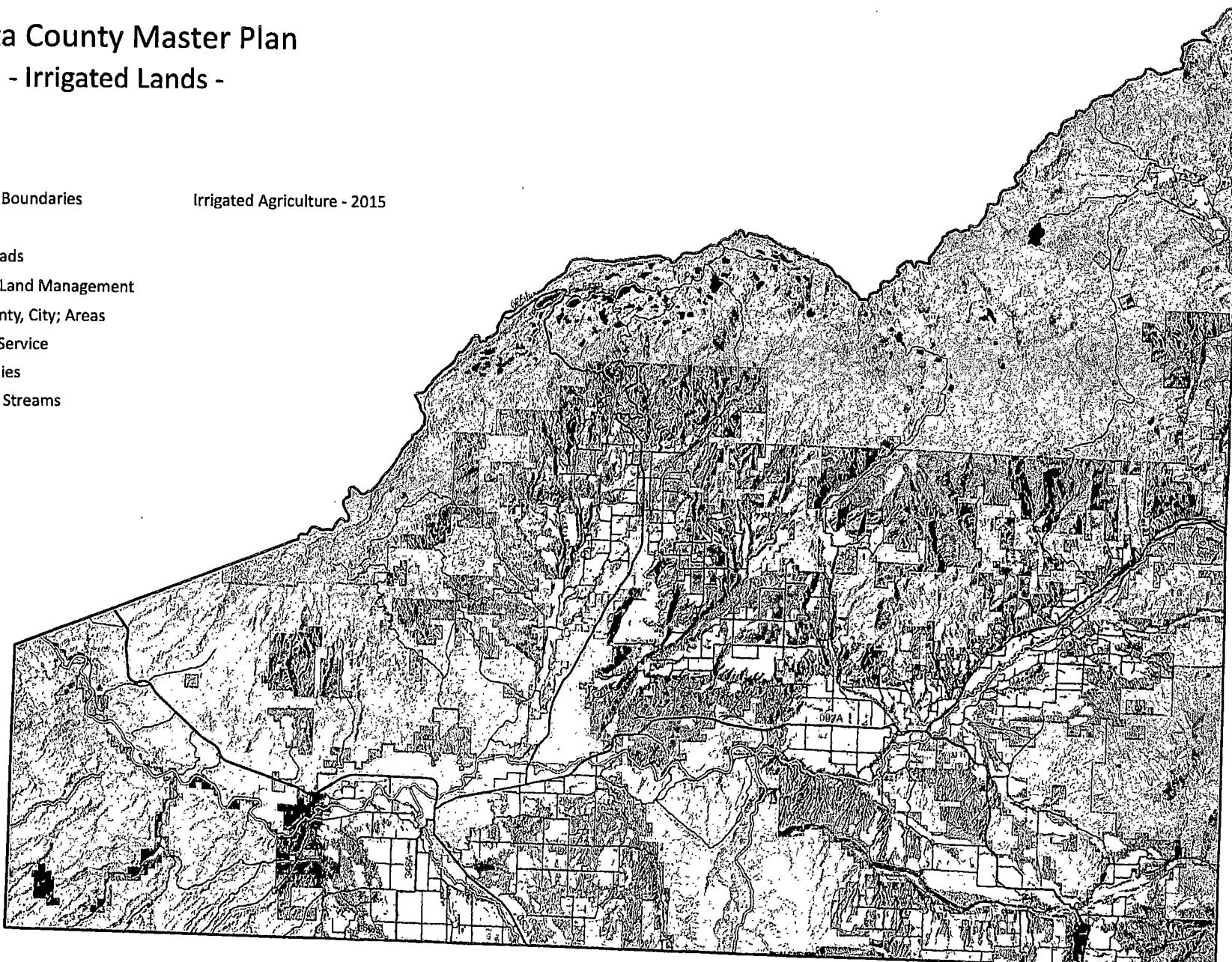
Rivers and Streams

Irrigated Agriculture - 2015



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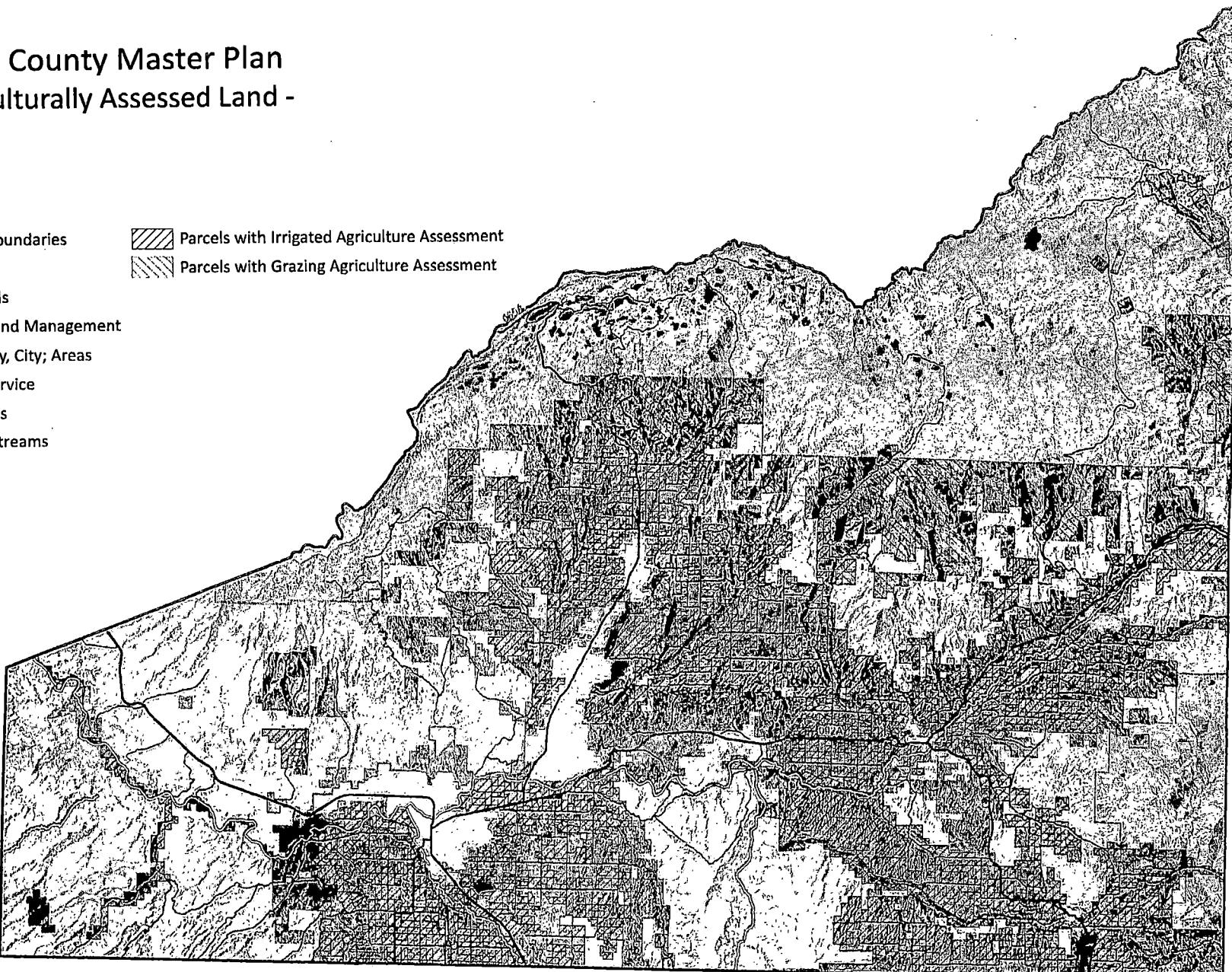
Delta County Master Plan
- Agriculturally Assessed Land -

-  Municipal Boundaries
-  Highways
-  County Roads
-  Bureau of Land Management
-  State, County, City; Areas
-  US Forest Service
-  Water Bodies
-  Rivers and Streams
-  Parcels with Irrigated Agriculture Assessment
-  Parcels with Grazing Agriculture Assessment



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0 3 6 Miles



Delta County Master Plan

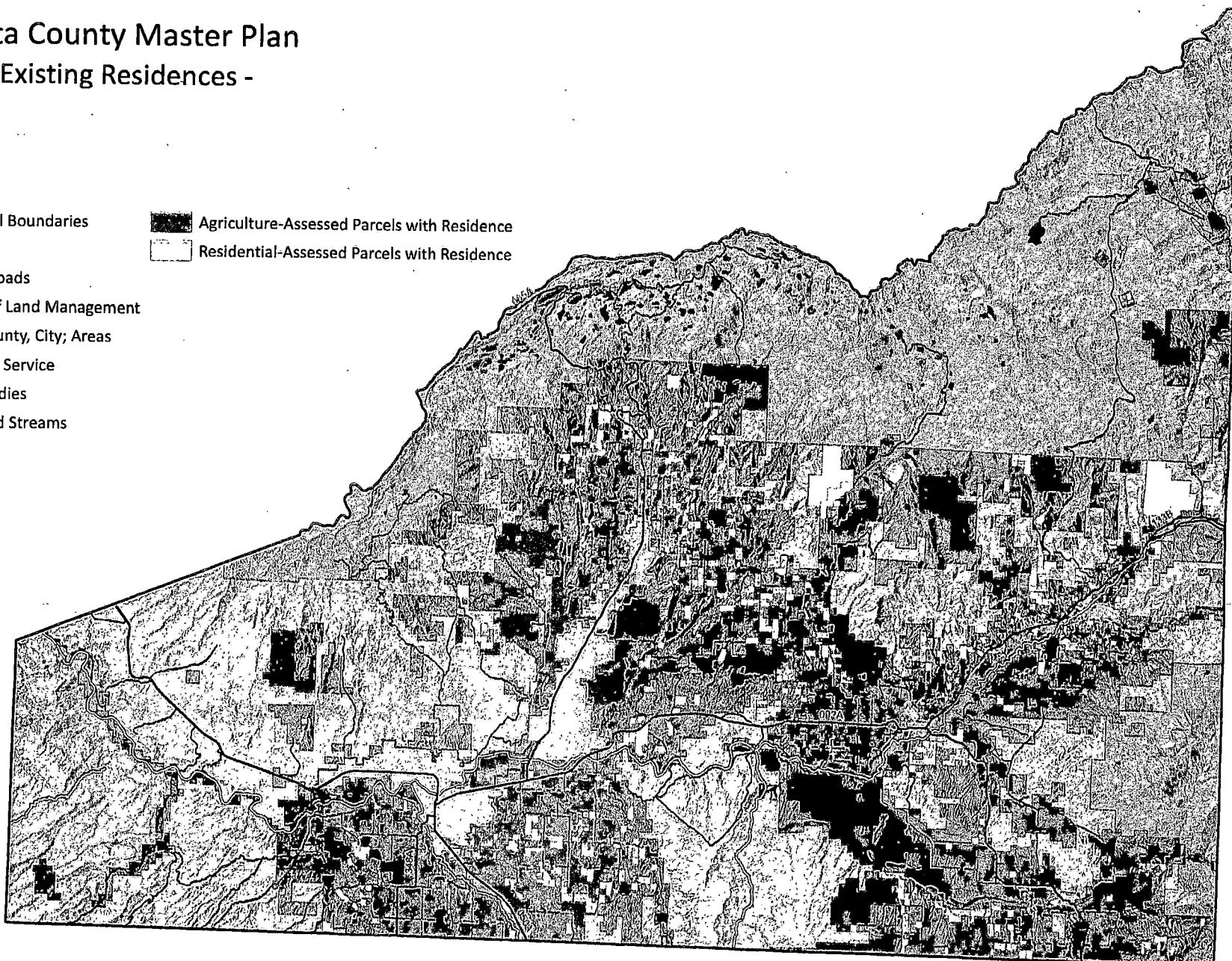
- Existing Residences -

 Municipal Boundaries	 Agriculture-Assessed Parcels with Residence
 Highways	 Residential-Assessed Parcels with Residence
 County Roads	
 Bureau of Land Management	
 State, County, City; Areas	
 US Forest Service	
 Water Bodies	
 Rivers and Streams	



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0 3 6 Miles



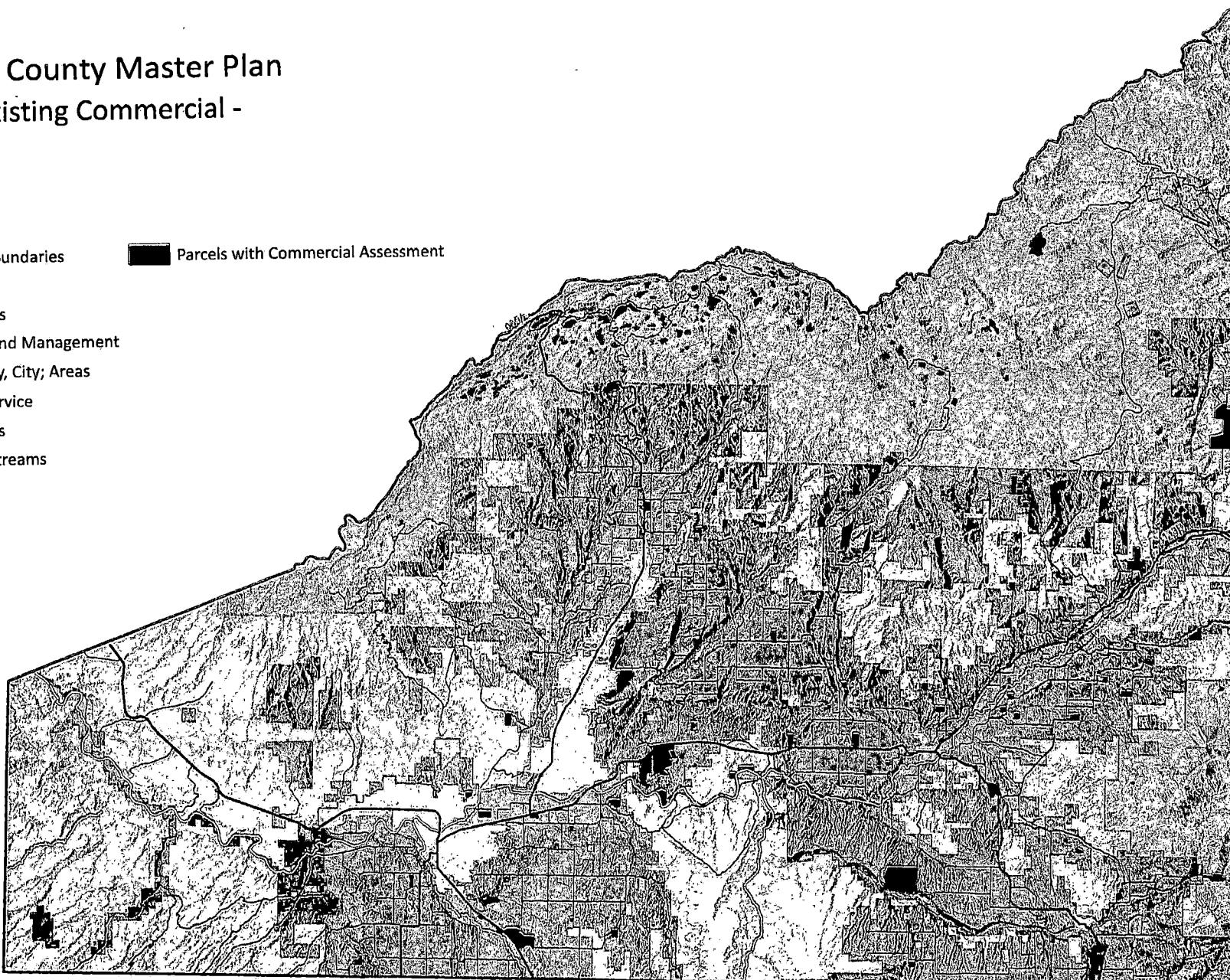
Delta County Master Plan - Existing Commercial -

- Municipal Boundaries
- Parcels with Commercial Assessment
- Highways
- County Roads
- Bureau of Land Management
- State, County, City; Areas
- US Forest Service
- Water Bodies
- Rivers and Streams



N

0 3 6 Miles



Delta County Master Plan

- Transportation Infrastructure & Core Public Facilities -

Municipal Boundaries

Bureau of Land Management

State, County, City; Areas

US Forest Service

Water Bodies

Rivers and Streams

Highways

County Roads with High Capacity Base and Structure

Paved County Roads

Gravel County Roads

Native Unimproved Roads

Rail Lines

Airports

Schools

Fire Stations

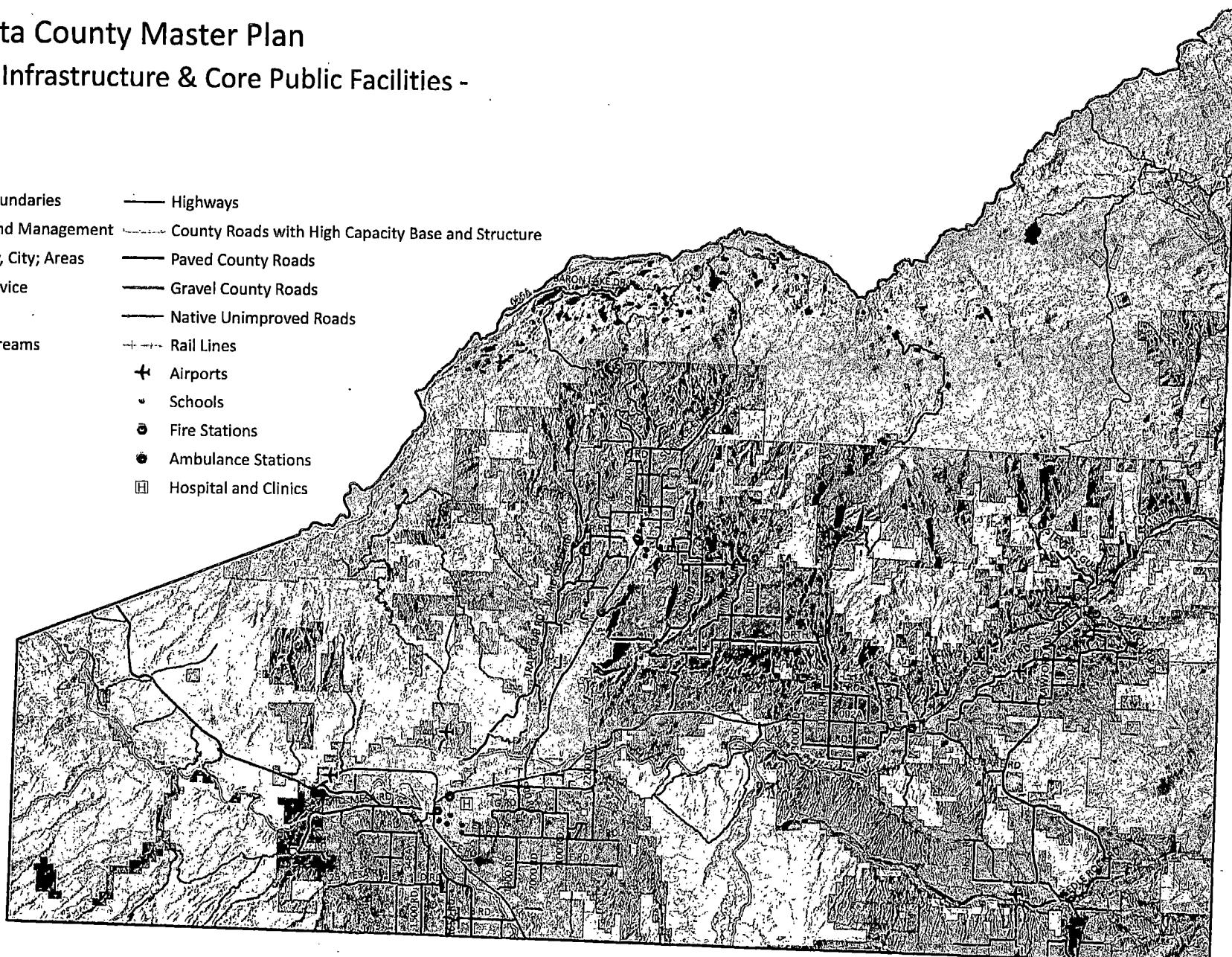
Ambulance Stations

Hospital and Clinics



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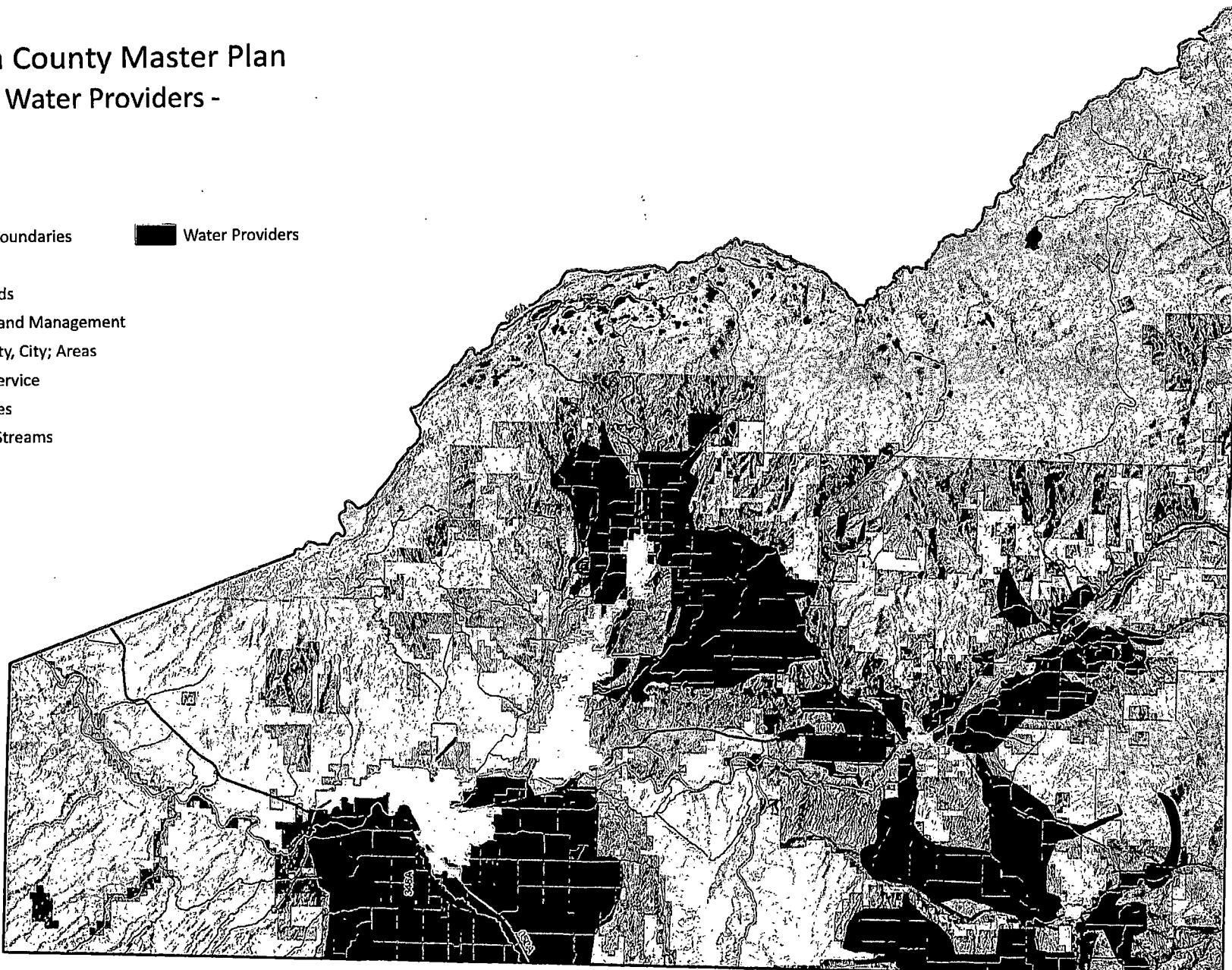
Delta County Master Plan - Water Providers -

-  Municipal Boundaries
-  Water Providers
-  Highways
-  County Roads
-  Bureau of Land Management
-  State, County, City; Areas
-  US Forest Service
-  Water Bodies
-  Rivers and Streams

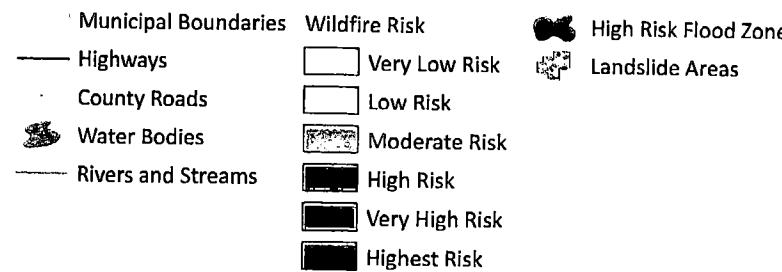


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Delta County Master Plan - Natural Hazards -

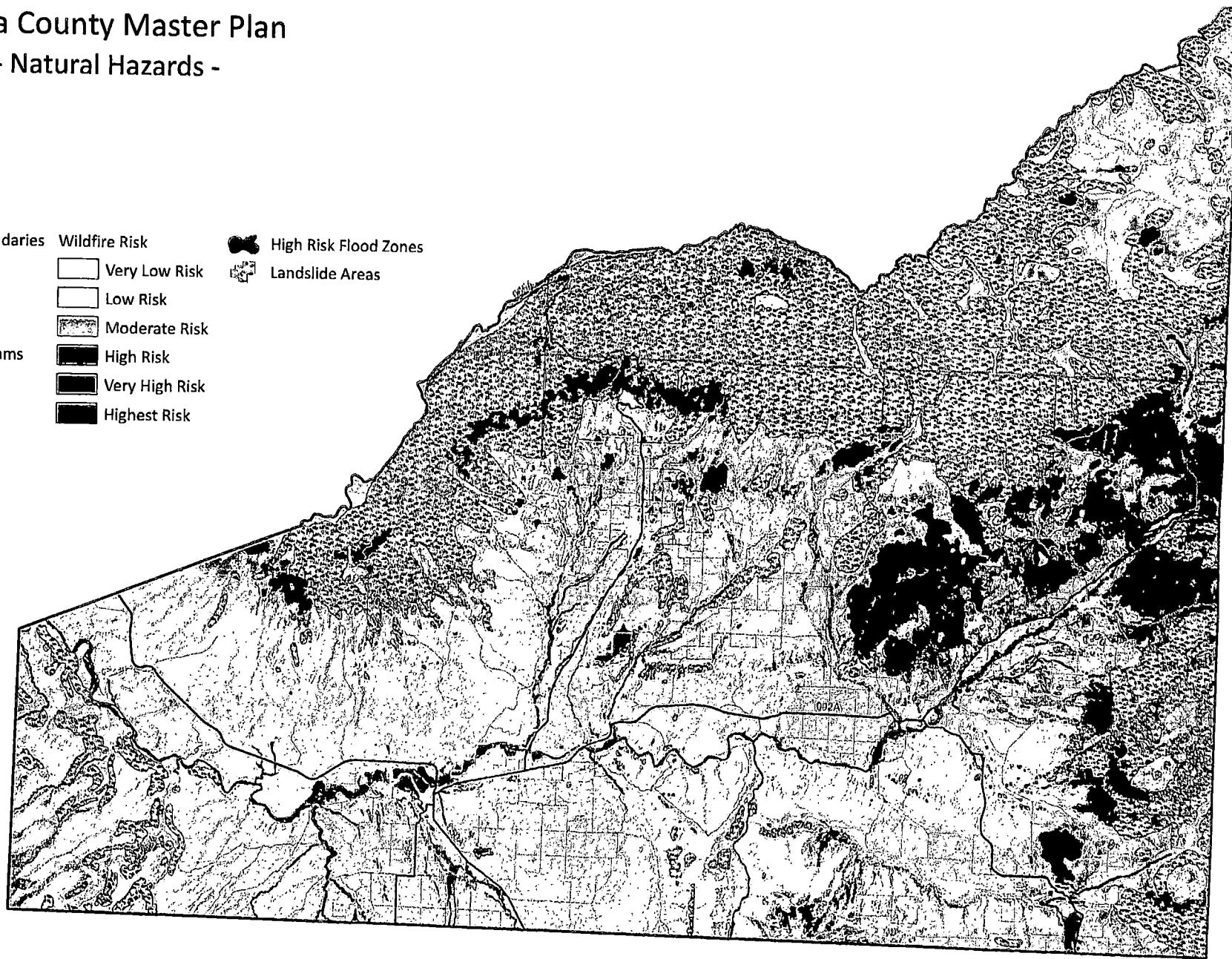


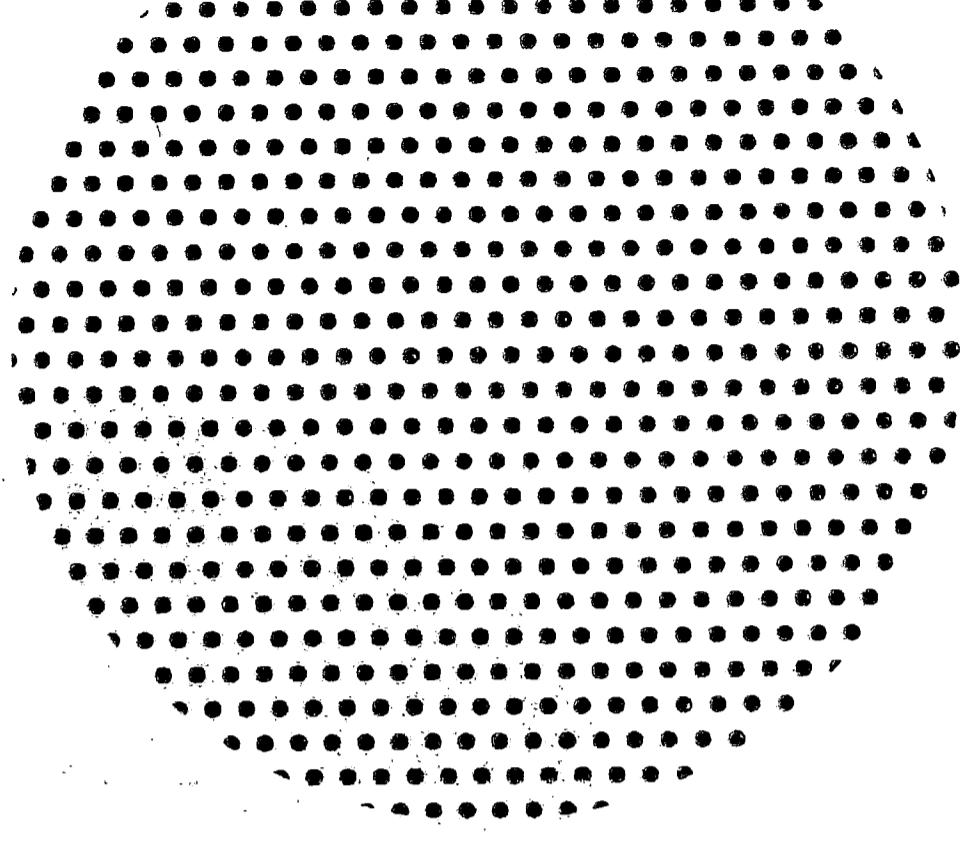
High Risk Flood Zones
Landslide Areas



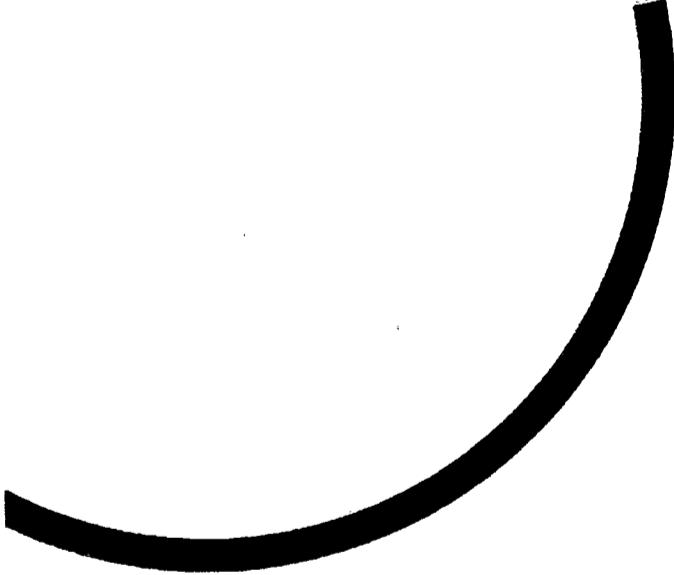
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APPENDICES



DELTA COUNTY MASTER PLAN

Delta County 2018 Master Plan Appendices

[Appendix A: Citizen Survey Results](#)

[Appendix B: Community Workshops Summary](#)

[Appendix C: Newspaper Headline Summary](#)

[Appendix D: Property Owner Drop Ins](#)

[Appendix E: Interviews Summary](#)

[Appendix F: Document Links](#)

[Appendix G: DeltaOilGasLeases Alternatives](#)

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TERI A. STEPHENSON, DELTA COUNTY, CO CLERK AND RECORDER



**DELTA COUNTY RECREATION
AND TRAILS MASTER PLAN**

FINAL DRAFT: MAY 3, 2018

Prepared by DHM Design Corporation with SGM, Inc.



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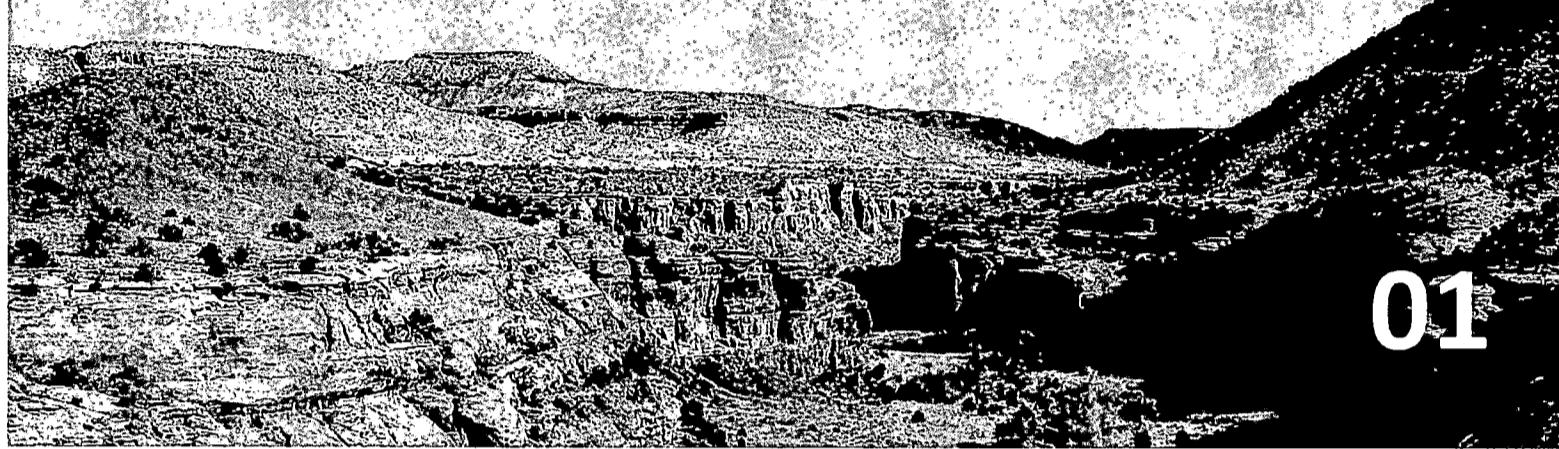
Delta County Recreation and Trails Master Plan

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01

INTRODUCTION/ PURPOSE

Delta County Recreation and Trails Master Plan

01: INTRODUCTION / PURPOSE

In 2016, Delta County identified the development of a Recreation and Trails Master Plan ("Trails Plan" or "Plan") as a priority component of the County's long range planning efforts. The County enjoys significant and varied natural landscapes and access to large areas of public lands, and the population is increasingly embracing outdoor recreation across a broad spectrum of user types. Access to public recreation presents an opportunity for the county to diversify economically, building on its history of mining, ranching, and farming, and on the current trends toward active outdoor recreation pursuits and the production of niche agricultural products to attract tourism to the area. Additionally, the intentional and appropriate development of public recreation assets in the county can increase the desirability of Delta County communities for those considering locating in the area¹. For trail development to be successful for the greater population of Delta County, thoughtful and careful planning which considers community priority, existing and historic uses, and potential impacts to natural and cultural resources is necessary.

Need

The County has identified several needs/challenges that served as the impetus for the development of this trail plan: the lack of comprehensive and easily obtainable information about the existence, location, and access to existing trail infrastructure; the lack of comprehensive guidance for staff and land managers in evaluating proposed projects; and the lack of community trails infrastructure connecting public amenities and trail assets.

Context and community values

The 1997 County Master Plan identified several priority community values that established the initial context for this planning process. That context was tested and refined during the public process, and is presented in greater detail later in this document (see Grounding Principles). It is important to identify those community values here, as they are foundational to the process and recommendations set forth in this plan. In 1996-1997, those overarching community values included:

- Preservation of agricultural lands and open space
- Protection of private property rights
- Maintaining rural lifestyle (culture and character)
- Judicious use of public funds
- Encouraging economic development

During the process, several other values were added to this list:

- Preservation of critical wildlife habitat
- Protection of ranching interests, allotments, and routes on public land
- Stewardship of natural resources
- Encouraging connection to the outdoors
- Public health and safety

¹ <http://www.americantrails.org/resources/adjacent/sumadjacent.html>

Delta County Recreation and Trails Master Plan

- Maintaining access to existing trails and routes
- Protection of existing cultural and economic drivers on public lands (OHV, hunting, hiking, XC skiing, snowmobiling) while accommodating many user groups and allowing for growth/new uses (e.g. mountain biking, outdoor education programs, multi-use paths)

Goals and value of the plan

This plan is supportive of sensitive, thoughtful development of trails, public access, and recreational opportunities in the county. Recognizing the cultural, environmental, and historical context of land use in the county, recreation improvements add value across a range of categories that are consistent with the overarching values of the people of Delta County.

The initial goals set forth for the project included:

- 1) Inventory, collect, and compile data on existing trails, parks, recreation infrastructure and amenities throughout Delta County.
- 2) Assess the condition of existing trails, recreation infrastructure, and facilities.
- 3) Engage the public in the process.
- 4) Develop feasible, fiscally responsible and prioritized implementation recommendations.
- 5) Compile GIS database.

During the process, the goals were refined to a list of eleven categories, expressing the community's priorities, desired outcomes, and value of the project to the County.

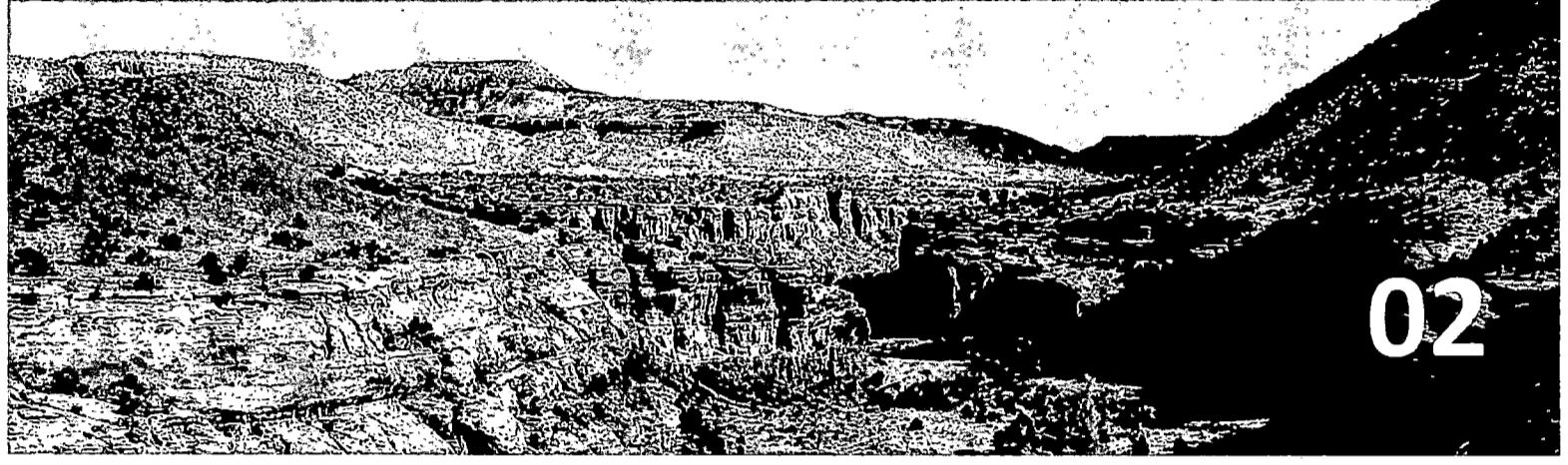
- 1) Culture: Respect and preserve history, current uses, core community values. Respect private landowner rights.
- 2) Stewardship: Promote – through careful planning, increased public awareness, access, pride of ownership, and programs – the stewardship, preservation, and enhancement of trails and sensitive ecological areas.
- 3) Connectivity: Provide multi-modal town inter- and intra-connectivity for users of all types and abilities. Provide developed trail access to important businesses, institutions, ecological and cultural resources and recreational opportunities (schools, libraries, commercial centers, rivers, parks, trailheads, public facilities).
- 4) Safety: Improve pedestrian and bicycle safety through dedicated facilities, wayfinding, and access.
- 5) Infrastructure: Improve infrastructure at trailheads including parking, signage, trash receptacles and bathrooms, etc.
- 6) Information: Provide the public with information about available recreation and trails assets.
- 7) Inventory: Provide a compiled database (GIS) of existing and proposed trail assets.
- 8) Independence: Encourage forms of transportation other than an automobile.
- 9) Wellbeing: Promote better community health through fitness and regular physical activity; preserve environmental (air, water, land, wildlife) quality.
- 10) Economic Growth: Promote economic growth and development for the tourism and outdoor industries; increase desirability and livability of Delta County communities.

Delta County Recreation and Trails Master Plan

- 11) Sustainability: Identify realistic priorities while planning with vision; evaluate potential funding sources; understand ongoing maintenance costs and responsibilities.

Scope of the Project: This Master Plan includes the entirety of Delta County, coordinates with the 2018 City of Delta Trails Master Plan, and considers adjacent or overlapping infrastructure and management planning beyond the county border. Community priorities identified during the planning process further refined the focus of planning efforts, which are reflected in the study areas and potential projects and project priorities as identified in this plan. This Plan is intended to reflect the *entirety* of user groups, from casual walkers and commuters, equestrians, hunters, OHV enthusiasts, cyclists, hikers, ranchers, children, adults, locals, and visitors; and the diverse modes of transportation used to access and enjoy trails.

It is important to note that proposed trail alignments as identified in the narratives and maps of this Plan are indicated for planning purposes only. Final number of trails, alignments, permissible uses, and management are to be developed under the specific planning processes of the land management agency holding purview over a specific area. These planning processes typically include public scoping/comment, assessment of environmental impacts, and management requirements associated with a given trail proposal.



GROUNDING PRINCIPLES

Delta County Recreation and Trails Master Plan

02: GROUNDING PRINCIPLES

Introduction

Trails provide a variety of opportunities and benefits including greater community and individual health, recreation opportunities, economic growth and stimulus and environmental benefits. Community impacts can be summarized into four broad categories, boosting our local economies, improving our physical health, achieving a cleaner environment and providing affordable transportation access for everyone. In Delta County many trails exist and there are ample opportunities to improve bicycle and pedestrian transportation connectivity. Conversely, connections within and between communities are lacking. Delta County has a unique and strong culture; it is paramount that the character and vision of the communities of Delta County guide this plan. The following grounding principles outline the benefits of trail systems and the framework that grounds this document:

1. To respect and reflect Delta's County's community values.
2. To revitalize, build and strengthen Delta County's economy.
3. To plan for and create trail systems that maximizes public safety and risk management.
4. To enhance safe and livable Delta County communities.
5. To build healthier Delta County communities by encouraging physical activity as part of daily life.
6. To maintain the ecological and cultural integrity of Delta County while providing trails and active transportation infrastructure.
7. To provide accessible and affordable outdoor resources for many forms of recreation to a wide user group.

Culture

The primary principle of this plan is to guard and reflect Delta County's community values. The trail plan acknowledges and reinforces these values through collaborative planning and thoughtful analysis.

The culture and make-up of Delta County is diverse but through community meetings and planning processes the following local values are consistent: a fierce sense of independence, strong support for private property rights, placing a high priority on protecting existing public land use permits/values such as ranching and hunting, protecting wildlife and habitat, a reluctance for regulation but growing acknowledgement that reasonable thoughtful regulation is necessary, connection to the outdoors, valuing community input, protection of the region's clean air and clean water, and preservation of resources.¹

¹ Draft 11.7.17 Master Plan Goals, Page 7

Delta County Recreation and Trails Master Plan

Delta County Community Values	Trails Plan Grounding Principles
Respect for History	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The citizens of Delta County place a great deal of value on the rich history of agriculture, ranching, and mining; an authentic western Colorado tradition. This history is to be preserved and celebrated.• Ongoing operations in keeping with historic economic drivers (e.g. ranching, farming, hunting, public lands access) should be accommodated and supported.
Respect for Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The culture of Delta County is reflected in these Grounding Principles. Self-sufficiency, hard work, independence, personal rights, stewardship of the land, and appreciation for the outdoors and the resources it has to offer defines much of life in Delta County.• The evolution of the culture commensurate with modern life, economic diversification, changing demographics and preferences should be encouraged in a way that respects the existing culture of the County.
Precedent of Existing Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Significant areas of public lands contain permits for livestock, including cattle and sheep; and guided hunting. A high priority is placed on the continuity and quality of these uses as a cultural and economic driver.• The community values continued access to existing recreation/trail infrastructure by use and location – preserving existing access and use type is a community priority.
Independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Active transportation such as bike and pedestrian paths provides transportation access to all citizens regardless of age, gender, socioeconomic status or disability² giving every resident of Delta County the ability to participate in recreation and independently commute and travel.
Private Property Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This plan respects the community imperative to respect private property rights. Access and easements for trails and associated amenities should be granted by willing partners.
Reasonable and Thoughtful Regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trails, pathways and bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure require planning, maintenance and regulation, and should be designed and constructed to contemporary standards. However, regulation should be minimized to that which ensures safety and the respect of all community members.
Connection to the Outdoors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trails offer an opportunity for connection to the outdoors for everyday travel and for recreation. This plan actively encourages outdoor participation for health, economic and community benefits.
Community Input	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The community values representation and responsiveness to public concerns and priorities. This plan and

² Active Transportation and Parks and Recreation, National Recreation and Park Association.

Delta County Recreation and Trails Master Plan

	<p>recommendations are based on the results of extensive public feedback via a variety of mechanisms.</p>
Protection of Wildlife and Habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The county enjoys significant acreage of high-quality wildlife habitat. Trail and management planning is to recognize and prioritize habitat preservation and habitat continuity, especially where sensitive or high-value habitat exists.• Robust wildlife populations contribute to the economy and overall quality of the rural experience in the county.
Protection of Clean Air and Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trail systems help lessen air pollution when people choose to commute and travel by foot or bike instead of automobile.• Trail systems provide opportunities for interpretation and education regarding environmental stewardship and human impacts.• Trail construction and maintenance must use best management practices to limit impacts to water quality.
Preservation of Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The quality of the natural landscape and its value to the community is critical to the long-term cultural and economic sustainability of the County's communities.• Trail construction and maintenance must use best management practices to reduce impacts to natural resources. Trails must be built with sustainable trail building principals in mind and respect flora and fauna.• Natural resource impacts and population growth are parallel issues. Access to trails and active transportation networks can give residents a better quality of life. Planning trails in a responsible way which preserves and enhances natural resources ensures smart growth.• Trail networks are planned within a financially sustainable system that emphasizes maintenance over new trails and eventually has a dedicated funding stream for projects and programming.
Economic Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to outdoor recreation provides an avenue for attracting economic growth through tourism and an increase in desirability/livability.• A robust outdoor recreation sector also creates new market opportunities for goods and services within the County.
Public Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thoughtfully planned trail improvements increase access to safe travel routes for non-auto users.• A comprehensive network of trails, connections, and formally recognized routes over existing roads enhances safety across a broad spectrum of user types.
Public Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to outdoor recreation provides low-cost, local opportunities for physical exercise and psychological relief.• Trail and recreation infrastructure creates venues for organized, community-based recreation and healthy living

Delta County Recreation and Trails Master Plan

	education and programs.
Environmental Stewardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interaction with outdoor amenities engenders a sense of ownership of public spaces on behalf of the members of the community.• Trail and recreation infrastructure creates venues for organized, community-based stewardship programs and activities.

Economy

Community and Recreation Assets

Trails, pathways and access to public lands are important parts of an overall strategy for economic revitalization, building and strengthening of Delta County businesses.

"The County has always had and continues to have a strong agricultural base and natural resource base. In the face of recent decline and ongoing uncertainty in the natural resources extraction sector, residents see growing opportunities in many other economic sectors. It is broadly recognized that Delta County's economic advantage is tied to its community and natural resources. Outdoor recreation on public lands is one of the county's greatest assets both for attracting visitors and as a major contributor to quality of life. To become more competitive, Delta County must continue to invest in its community, agricultural and recreational assets.³"

Tourism and recreation-related revenues from trails come in several forms such as; opportunities in construction and maintenance, rentals (such as bicycles, kayaks, and canoes), services (such as shuttle buses and guided tours), historic preservation, restaurants, lodging and real estate value.⁴ Many studies demonstrate that parks, greenways and trails increase nearby property values. In turn, increased property values can increase local tax revenues and help offset greenway acquisition costs. "Active transportation projects generate direct, indirect and induced jobs. Improved walking and biking conditions improve the quality of life by making an area more attractive for business relocations and in-migration. Direct jobs are created from the engineering and construction process itself. Indirect jobs are those initiated through product and service industries required in the construction phase such as cement manufacturing, trucking, etc. Induced jobs are produced due to demand from local residents such as retail positions and food services specialists. Investments in active transportation can partly mitigate high unemployment rates through the potential to create jobs.⁵"

³ Draft 11.7.17 Master Plan Goals, Page 7

⁴ "Studies show that homes located near bicycling and walking trails typically sell faster and at higher prices, and realtors often highlight the trails as an amenity." - Shinkle, Douglas, and Anne Teigen. "Encouraging bicycling and walking: The state legislative role." National Conference of State Legislatures, 2008.

⁵ Active Transportation and Parks and Recreation, National Recreation and Park Association. Puentes, R. & Tomer, A. 2008. The Road...Less Traveled: An Analysis of Vehicle Miles Traveled Trends in the U.S. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

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Opportunities for marketing the availability of recreational trails should be considered. Trails that are easy to find and use, offer unique experiences, and have quantifiable distances and elevation gain will be more marketable. Furthermore trails are cost effective in comparison to other recreational facilities. They occupy minimal land and may be located in floodplains, utility corridors, irrigation canals, along roads, and in areas that cannot be developed. The simplistic nature of trails typically lends themselves to less maintenance than other recreational amenities.

Individual and Health Benefits

The personal and overall economic benefits of bicycling and walking can be significant.

- "From an individual perspective, walking and bicycling, either in combination with public transit or exclusively, are less costly than driving an automobile. Annual bicycle operation and maintenance cost approximately \$120, compared to \$13,950 per year for a car that is driven 15,000 miles, according to calculations at commutesolutions.org."⁶
- Trails and active transportation networks are associated with greater levels of community health and lower levels of obesity. This leads to lower health care spending and a more resilient workforce.

By the Numbers

- Outdoor recreation directly supports 201,442 jobs in Colorado each year.
- Outdoor recreation (including hunting, fishing, wildlife watching and many other types of outdoor activities) contributes nearly \$34.5 billion to Colorado's economy annually. Direct economic impacts of outdoor recreation total \$21 billion annually.
- "Colorado found that bicycling generates more than \$1 billion per year for the state. Colorado is a hot spot for bicycle manufacturing, which generated \$763 million in revenue. Other sources such as bicycle sales and tourism generated close to \$400 million."⁷
- A National Association of Homebuilders study found that trails are the second most important community amenity that potential homeowners cite when choosing a new community. Trails were cited by 57 percent of prospective buyers in a 2004 survey by the association, ahead of public parks and outdoor pools.⁴ Additionally, the study found that "trail availability" outranked 16 other options including security, ball fields, golf courses, parks, and access to shopping or business centers. Those home-buyer preferences translate into increased property values and enhanced tax revenue for communities that incorporate trails into planning.

The economic impact of hunting and fishing has grown in Colorado from \$0.85 billion in 2004, to \$1.02 billion in 2008 and \$1.60 billion in 2012. Wildlife watching has grown from a \$0.53 billion industry in 2004 to \$0.70 billion in 2008 and \$1.32 billion in 2012.

⁶ Shinkle, Douglas, and Anne Teigen. "Encouraging bicycling and walking: The state legislative role." National Conference of State Legislatures, 2008.

⁷ Shinkle, Douglas, and Anne Teigen. "Encouraging bicycling and walking: The state legislative role." National Conference of State Legislatures, 2008.

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Table S1. Total Economic Contribution of Outdoor Recreation in Colorado, by Region (\$millions)

	North					South			State
	Northwest	Central	Metro	Northeast	Southeast	Central	Southwest		
Output	\$9,284	\$8,295	\$3,630	\$385	\$1,053	\$4,142	(\$2,173)	\$34,514	
Salaries & Wages	\$3,355	\$2,940	\$1,460	\$116	\$324	\$1,344	(\$714)	\$12,431	
GDP Contribution	\$5,432	\$4,734	\$2,216	\$204	\$580	\$2,282	(\$1,242)	\$19,931	
State/Local Taxes	\$697	\$582	\$259	\$34	\$97	\$341	\$182	\$2,404	
Federal Taxes	\$718	\$619	\$295	\$25	\$70	\$258	(\$148)	\$2,546	
Jobs	91,822	78,521	34,057	4,528	12,705	47,017	(24,568)	313,404	

8

Safety

Safety regarding trails, pathways and active transportation networks has a twofold priority; to plan for and create trail systems that maximize public safety and risk management and to enhance safe and livable Delta Country communities.

Public Safety and Risk Management

To maximize healthy outdoor lifestyles users require a challenging, yet safe and maintained trail system within a risk management framework that includes standards and regulations for trail use. Risks of use should be clearly communicated to trail users through appropriate trail signage and educational information. Implementation of an effective trail maintenance program also promotes good risk management.

Enhancing Safe and Livable Communities

- “Roadway improvements to accommodate bicycles, such as the addition of paved shoulders, have been shown to reduce the frequency of certain types of motor vehicle crashes.”
- “Measures to reduce vehicle speeds, which can encourage greater pedestrian activity in residential or downtown shopping and business areas, also impact positively on motor vehicle safety.”⁹
- Trails can reduce crime and illegal activity through regular use and high visibility of users.
- Trails provide informal opportunities to meet and interact with neighbors creating comradery, a sense of place, community pride and protection.
- Neighborhoods where children can safely walk or bike to a park, school, or to a neighbor’s home are generally also good places to live.¹⁰

⁸ The Economic Contributions of Outdoor recreation in Colorado: A regional and county-level analysis. Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Colorado Statewide Outdoor Recreation Plan. Southwick Associates, Fernandina Beach, FL. February 24, 2014.

⁹ Federal Highway Administration University Course on Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation, Publication Number: FHWA-HRT-05-133, July 2006

¹⁰ Benefits of Trails & Greenways. National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program PWR

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Health

Trails and active transportation infrastructure will build healthier Delta County communities by encouraging physical activity as part of daily life.

Increased levels of bicycling and walking result in significant health and physical fitness benefits. Research has shown that even low to moderate levels of exercise, such as regular bicycling or walking, can reduce the risk of coronary heart disease, stroke, and other chronic diseases. Two-thirds of U.S. adults are overweight or obese, which increases the likelihood of serious health issues such as hypertension, diabetes, stroke and some forms of cancer. Health care spending averages approximately 30 percent of a state budget. Opportunities to bike and walk can help reduce health care costs, contribute to greater functional independence in later years of life and improve quality of life at every stage.¹¹ Bicycling and walking also can improve mental health; a 2007 study found that a 30-minute bike commute positively influenced men's mental health.¹²

Trails, pedestrian pathways and bike paths grant opportunities for people to walk, bike, jog and skate in safe places. Many trails located close to residential areas provide residents with free access to participate in physical activity.

Ecology

This trail plan works to maintain the ecological integrity of Delta County while providing trails and active transportation infrastructure.

Through careful planning and analysis trails and active transportation infrastructure can help to preserve wildlife, preserve habitat, protect water quality, manage storm water, preserve vegetation, and create useful barriers such as firebreaks. Furthermore, biking and walking in place of driving offers significant environmental benefits such as reduced air and water pollution. 60 percent of automobile pollution occurs within the first few minutes of operation, before the catalytic converter begins to work efficiently. Nationally, if 13 percent of trips less than three miles were taken by foot or 9 million tons of carbon dioxide could be eliminated from America's air each year.

- Planning and creating appropriate supporting amenities like trailheads/access points and regulations regarding use.
- Deliberate strategies and actions will recognize and respect the importance of protecting sensitive areas like winter range habitat for deer and elk, and will develop initiatives to enhance the ecological values of the system.
- Community education can help encourage residents to travel by foot or bike.
- Education efforts can also help encourage stewardship and responsible use of trails.

¹¹ Federal Highway Administration University Course on Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation, Publication Number: FHWA-HRT-05-133, July 2006

¹² Shinkle, Douglas, and Anne Teigen. "Encouraging bicycling and walking: The state legislative role." National Conference of State Legislatures, 2008.

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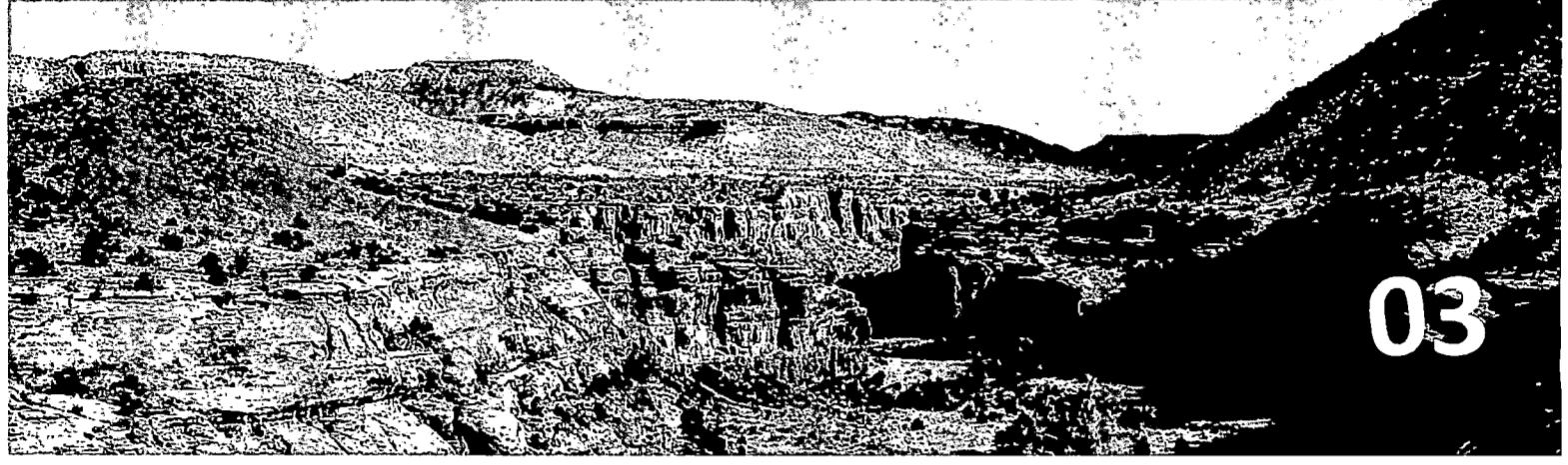
Recreation

Trails provide accessible and affordable outdoor resource for many forms of recreation to a wider user group.

- Trails greatly increase community access to nature, cultural and historic landscapes.
- Trails make communities better places to live by preserving and creating open spaces for recreation.
- Trails provide new opportunities for outdoor recreation and non-motorized transportation.
- Trails also provide a unique facility to serve a diverse population of a community that may otherwise have limited opportunities to access natural areas due to financial or transportation constraints.
- Trails provide affordable exercise and recreational opportunities within the community.

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PROJECT PROCESS AND PUBLIC OUTREACH

Delta County Recreation and Trails Master Plan

03: PROJECT PROCESS AND PUBLIC OUTREACH

Project Process and Phases

This master plan is intended to be a reflection of the community's priorities and values, and is built on extensive public and stakeholder outreach and feedback. The process included ten phases/milestones:

- 1) Stakeholder identification
- 2) Data collection and evaluation
- 3) Individual stakeholder outreach
- 4) Public Open House #1 – existing conditions and community values
- 5) Summary reporting to Planning Commission
- 6) Draft text and potential projects/priorities
- 7) Public Open House #2 – potential projects/priorities, grounding principles
- 8) BOCC / Planning Commission work session: refined text and maps
- 9) Final Plan development: refined text and maps
- 10) Plan adoption

Genuine engagement of the public, stakeholder groups, and public lands management agencies is foundational to the process and outcomes of this plan. In the early stages of the planning process, a stakeholder outreach list was compiled, with individual contacts made via phone, email, and in-person meetings. The stakeholder list attempted to cover the broad spectrum of users and overseers of the (primarily public) lands studied. Early meetings with motorized and non-motorized user groups, and coordination with individual municipalities and advocacy groups guided the development of the existing conditions maps and the draft potential projects and priorities lists.

DHM initiated the project process by conducting a detailed compilation of existing trails and recreation resources in the Delta County. DHM met with and gathered available data from Delta County Staff, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) and Dave Armlovich (GIS consultant and retired USFS) to inventory, collect and compile data on all existing trails, parks, recreation areas and infrastructure located throughout Delta County. Additional data for proposed and existing trails was provided by Delta Area Mountain Bikers (DAMB), Thunder Mountain Wheelers, and the Western Slope Conservation Center (WSCC). The data collected was used to create a comprehensive, single GIS database profile and GIS base maps (See Existing Conditions, Appendix A). The maps created were used for analysis and review of existing recreational trail assets and to identify future recreational trail and infrastructure opportunities and constraints, and were utilized at the first public open houses.

Public and Stakeholder Process

Numerous tools were used to communicate with the public regarding opportunities to provide feedback and contribute to the plan, including printed newspaper advertisements, a project web site, social media, radio underwriting, and direct email and telephone invitations.

As part of the early planning process the consultant team conducted meetings and interviews with identified stakeholders, user groups, and individuals within the community to bring a high level of constructive citizen and stakeholder engagement to this project including assisting with the

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development of goals and priorities for the plan. Following the initial data collection and inventory mapping, the public-at-large was invited to attend an open house series – one held in Hotchkiss and one in Delta – to review and comment on the existing inventory maps, and to provide feedback about new trail and support infrastructure that may be important in the future of trails development in the County. Attendees were encouraged to add comments to the physical maps and to fill out a survey questionnaire.

Federal and State Agency, Stakeholder Coordination and Information Gathering

In addition to the map data provided, DHM also reviewed countywide travel access plans, BLM resource management plans, and the USFS Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison Forest Management plans. The consultant team held meetings with BLM and USFS staff to review and discuss these plans and how the Delta Recreation and Trails plan would respond to existing plans and inform future planning efforts.

Numerous stakeholder meetings throughout the process included:

- Samantha Staley (USFS Planner)
- Edd Franz (BLM Outdoor Recreation Planner)
- Julie Jackson (BLM Recreation Planner)
- Brian Magee (CPW Landuse Coordinator - Southwest Region)
- Andrew Taylor (CPW District Wildlife Manager)
- Heath Kehn (CPW SW Region Deputy Regional Manager)
- Brian Magee (CPW SW Region Land Use Coordinator)
- Kathleen Sickles (Town Administrator - Cedaredge)
- Wendall Koontz (Mayor of Hotchkiss)
- Anita Evans (Nature Connection, Hotchkiss)
- Ken Knight (Town Administrator, Paonia)
- Delta County Livestock Association
- Delta Area Mountain Bikers (DAMB)
- Thunder Mountain Wheelers
- Alex Johnson (Executive Director Western Slope Conservation Center)
- Jake Hartter (Watershed Coordinator, Western Slope Conservation Center)
- The Nature Connection – Anita Evans
- Jeff Wright - Delta County Emergency Management Director
- Kim Shea - Delta County Search and Rescue
- North Fork Trails Advocacy Group (NFTAG)
- Delta School District

Following the initial public open house, trends and priorities were developed based on the feedback received through the outreach and open house efforts. This information was summarized in an initial public comment findings summary, which is attached to this master plan as Appendix B.

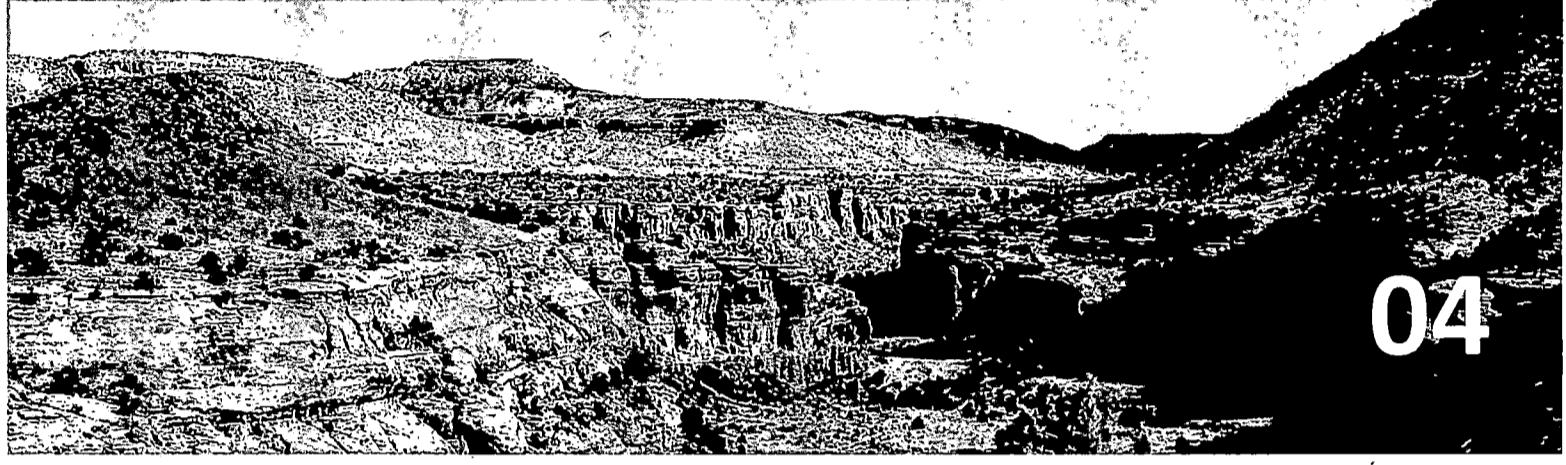
The preliminary mapping created in response to the outreach process was then shared with stakeholder and staff for review and comment; refined maps were then used in a second public open house series, held in Orchard Mesa and Paonia, in late January of 2018. At that time a draft narrative including the grounding principles, potential projects, areas of interest, and priorities (by study area) were included with the maps. These products were also posted to the project web site, with an email blast inviting the

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public to review and comment on the draft products. The questionnaire used at the second open house was converted to a web-based survey accessible via the project web site.

Prior to the second open house series the maps, map narratives and plan recommendations were shared with land management agencies and other stakeholders. The documents were revised in response to initial feedback and presented in two open houses in late January 2018. The second open houses were held in Orchard City and Paonia.

The results of the second open house series, and web-delivered responses, were compiled and appended to the public comment summary. Further coordination with stakeholders and land managers following the open houses aided in distilling public sentiment against land management goals. Refinements to the maps and written products were then made to respond to the overarching trends from the public comment and to correct errors as identified by stakeholders and the public. The result of this process was a draft of the Master Plan text and map documents, submitted to the Delta County Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners in March 2018.



BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Delta County Recreation and Trails Master Plan

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Study Area Overview

This section provides a general overview of the planning sectors for Delta County. This plan references the 2018 Delta County Master Plan; see that document for more detailed planning sector information.

Geography

Delta County covers 1,157 square miles of the Gunnison and Uncompahgre River valleys in west central Colorado in a geographic area generally known as the Western Slope. The county has unique and diverse landforms and topography including Grand Mesa, "adobe" badlands, Escalante and Dominguez Canyons, the North Fork of the Gunnison River, Gunnison River and Uncompahgre River, flat irrigated farmlands, and the West Elk Mountains. The elevation within Delta County ranges from 4,000 to over 11,000 feet.

Delta County borders Gunnison, Montrose and Mesa counties. The county is named for the confluence of the Gunnison and Uncompahgre Rivers, which meet at the County Seat of Delta, the most populous city in the county. Additional towns include Cedaredge, Crawford, Hotchkiss, Orchard City and Paonia. There are four unincorporated communities; Austin, Cory, Eckert and Lazear.

Economy

Historically Delta County has been based on agriculture and mining. Although mining has significantly declined in the 21st century it remains embedded in the community culture of the County. Agriculture remains an important and vital part of the culture and history of Delta County. The county contains more than 250,000 acres of farmland. Delta County is one of the top fruit-producing counties in the state, and also ranks high in sales of vegetables, potatoes, milk, poultry, eggs, and sheep products¹. Recreation and tourist based economies are on the rise state-wide and within Delta County.

Population

Delta County's population is on the rise with an influx of retirees, migrants, and those seeking a high quality affordable community on the Western Slope. The County's population grew by about 2% between 2015 and 2016, and is projected to grow by 38% by the year 2050. Nearly half of that population change is expect to be through in-migration of new residents into the County.²

Natural Resources

Fifty-five percent of the county's 740,000 acres of land is federally owned and managed by the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forest and the Uncompahgre Resource Area of the Bureau of Land Management. This land contains multiple wilderness and national conservation areas and

¹ <https://coloradoencyclopedia.org/article/delta-county>

² Colorado Department of Local Affairs State Demography Office, 2017

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several State Wildlife Areas. There are two state managed areas, Crawford State Park and Sweitzer Lake State Park. These public lands provide ample acreage for recreation activities for residents and tourists.

The geographic location of Delta County within two river valleys has made it an ideal setting for a diversity of agriculture practices. Forestry and mineral extraction, especially coal, have also played an important role in the growth and economy of the county. Controlled grazing, lumber production, recreational activities, hunting and wildlife viewing, and mineral extraction all occur on Delta County public lands.

Cultural Resources

Delta County has a rich history and a wealth of cultural resources. Cultural preservation, celebration and commodification are important for the economy and perpetuation of heritage within Delta County. Delta County contains major portions of one National Historic Byway, the Old Spanish National Historic Trail, one National Scenic Byway, Grand Mesa Scenic and Historic Byway and one state Scenic and Historic Byway, the West Elk Loop. Additionally Pioneer Town and Fort Uncompahgre celebrate and maintain the history of Delta County. The historic and current culture of Delta County is the embodiment of the character and story of the American West, and is a valuable asset on its own merit.

Government

Delta County has thirty-three separate governmental taxing entities, an additional twenty-five private water providers, and the presence of numerous state and federal agencies including BLM, Forest Service, and USDA. Delta County has no zoning regulations.

Delta County is made up of six municipalities. Each municipality has its own governing body. County wide governance relies on citizen participation and advisory groups. County commissioners meet quarterly with locally elected officials to confer and coordinate common solutions. Regional coalitions also exist to address specific issues. Public services are provided by many governmental and private entities throughout the County.

Federal Lands, 54.8%

State Lands, 1.2%

Private Lands, 43.6%

Community Infrastructure and Services

See the 2018 Delta County Master Plan.

Transportation Networks

See the 2018 Delta County Master Plan.

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Existing Conditions and Recreation/Trail Assets -

“Delta County residents identify access to public lands and the activities that they participate in on public lands, whether it be for commerce or pleasure, as critical to their overall quality of life. Access to all public lands and waterways is a shared value in the county and is the top priority. Supporting infrastructure such as directional signage, trailheads, parking, restrooms, picnic areas and campground are critical for the long-term viability and attractiveness of our public lands.³”

“The County has a lack of multi-modal transportation. Developing multi-modal transportation will be a challenge given the rural nature of the County. However, as we face growing and changing needs of the community such as an aging population and an influx of young families, the County needs to evaluate its transportation plans and policies. Community members have clearly expressed a desire for more bike friendly transportation routes, such as increasing road width and paving road shoulders.⁴”

The county enjoys access to a broad array of landscape types and vast acreage of public lands. With the exception of individual municipalities and Delta County School District properties, the County’s recreational assets are located on federal and state public lands. Trails, mining/logging roads, livestock access routes, and river access provide numerous opportunities for access to recreation. In many cases, however, the infrastructure and/or management of recreation access is limited, and knowledge of access high-quality trails and routes is often limited to individual user groups. Additionally, within individual municipalities, non-automobile routes connecting public amenities, facilities, and services is discontinuous or altogether lacking.

Wildlife and Fisheries

Introduction

The protection and preservation of wildlife and fisheries as part of the development of recreational trails in Delta County is a high priority for the general public, stakeholder groups and County officials. The Delta County Recreational Trails Plan is supportive of the vision and goals of Colorado Parks and Wildlife’s (CPW) 2016-2026 Statewide Trails Strategic Plan and the CPW 2015 Strategic Plan. With regards to environmental resources and trail development, the plans intent is to clearly communicate expectations for projects with the goal of sustainable trails that protect the environment, especially habitats and sensitive species, and recognize the importance of natural resources conservation, including wildlife and habitat, in conjunction with trail recreation, in the design, construction, maintenance, and enjoyment of trails⁵. Wildlife and wildlife resources provide a variety of recreational opportunities and economic contributions to the County as a whole. A recent study, Southwick and Associates (2014) quantified the total economic contribution of hunting to Delta County as \$7.3 million

³ Ibid. Page 13

⁴ Ibid. Page 11-12

⁵ 2016-2026 Statewide Trails Strategic Plan. Strategic Goals and Objectives

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annually. This is a sustainable economic contribution to the County if quality hunting areas and the big game they support are maintained.

Federally Threatened and Endangered Species

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, as amended, and its implementing regulations were designed to protect and recover species in danger of extinction and the ecosystems that they depend upon. The ESA is jointly administered by the Secretaries of the Interior and Commerce. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) is responsible for terrestrial and freshwater species. The FWS is responsible for listing species under their authority as threatened or endangered as appropriate. If an agency determines that a proposed action may affect one or more listed species, it must formally consult with the Service office or offices responsible for the affected species. The federally listed species in Delta County are shown in table 1 below.

Table 1. Federally listed species in Delta County

Group	Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Birds	Yellow-billed Cuckoo	<i>Coccyzus americanus</i>	Threatened
Birds	Gunnison sage-grouse	<i>Centrocercus minimus</i>	Threatened
Fishes	Colorado pikeminnow (=squawfish)	<i>Ptychocheilus lucius</i>	Endangered
Fishes	Greenback Cutthroat trout	<i>Oncorhynchus clarki stomias</i>	Threatened
Fishes	Razorback sucker	<i>Xyrauchen texanus</i>	Endangered
Fishes	Humpback chub	<i>Gila cypha</i>	Endangered
Fishes	Bonytail chub	<i>Gila elegans</i>	Endangered
Flowering Plants	Colorado hookless Cactus	<i>Sclerocactus glaucus</i>	Threatened
Flowering Plants	Clay-Loving wild buckwheat	<i>Eriogonum pelinophilum</i>	Endangered
Mammals	Canada Lynx	<i>Lynx canadensis</i>	Threatened
Mammals	North American wolverine	<i>Gulo gulo luscus</i>	Proposed Threatened

Source: USFWS Environmental Conservation Online System
<https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp0/reports/species-by-current-range-county?fips=08029>

Wildlife Species

Delta County contains large acreages of high quality wildlife habitat that support a variety of species. CPW Species Activity Mapping Data (SAM), shows a total of 45 different mapped species located in Delta County including Elk, Mule deer, Desert Bighorn Sheep, Black Bear, Mountain Lion, Turkey, Gunnison Sage Grouse, Boreal Toad and a variety of snake and lizard species. Additionally, there are 122 different mapped habitat use types located in Delta County including winter and summer concentration areas, severe winter range, and production areas for several key species. A full list of species and habitat use types is included in Appendix X.

Fisheries

The Gunnison River in the Black Canyon and Gunnison Gorge is a Gold Medal wild trout fishery that stretches over 40 miles from Crystal Reservoir to the town of Austin and provides many diverse wading and float fishing opportunities for Rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) and Brown trout (*Salmo trutta*). In addition to sport fish, the Gunnison River is home to a variety of native fish species including the Flannelmouth Sucker (*Catostomus latipinnis*), Bluehead Sucker (*Catostomus discobolus*), and Roundtail

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Chub (*Gila robusta*)⁶. There is significant public river access from the Gunnison Gorge Recreation Areas to the Town of Austin. Public access is currently limited from the Town Austin to the City of Delta and further downstream. The North Fork of the Gunnison runs from Paonia Reservoir to the confluence with the mainstem at Pleasure Park. The North Fork contains Rainbow trout, Brown trout, and Brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*) as well as Flannelmouth and Bluehead Suckers. The Uncompahgre River runs from Ridgeway Reservoir to Delta where it joins the Gunnison River at Confluence Park. There is little information on fish species on the Uncompahgre through Delta County, water quality from excess agricultural runoff has impacted water quality greatly in this section. In addition to rivers, Delta County has countless miles of creeks and streams and numerous reservoirs, lakes and ponds that support a wide variety of fish habitat and species.

Potential Trail Use Impacts

Trail-related recreation and trail development can potentially affect a variety of wildlife, fish and plants and other natural resources directly and indirectly. Impacts to wildlife from trail use are most often associated with increased direct disturbance and displacement from optimal habitat. When elk and deer are disturbed by trail and/or other activity, they increase their daily activity levels and movements and reduce the time spent feeding or resting (Naylor et al 2009, Wisdom et al 2004). This increased energy demand, decreased forage intake and displacement to areas with poorer quality forage result in decreased body condition, which affects individual health, survival and reproduction (Bender et al 2008) and an effectively decreased carrying (Taylor and Knight 2003) (Miller et al 2001, Anderson 1995) Elk and deer generally do not habituate to hiking or mountain biking (Wisdom et al 2004, Taylor and Knight 2003)³. Without careful trail planning for new trail development and maintenance of existing trails, sedimentation and erosion can have significant impacts on water quality which can negatively impact fisheries. Direct and indirect impacts to soils and vegetation can also occur from improper planning and maintenance of recreational trail systems.

The general public and CPW are concerned that additional /trail development and use in Young's Peak (Map 5), McDonald Mesa (Map 6), Jumbo Mountain and Elephant Hill Lone Cabin (Map 7) Areas of Interest is likely to cause significant impacts to wintering mule deer and elk. Some deer and elk herds ⁷wintering at lower elevations in Delta County are migratory and come from the surrounding Counties of Pitkin, Montrose, Mesa, and Gunnison. These herds have regional economic significance.³

Big game winter habitats and migratory corridors are known to be a limiting factor on big game populations in western Colorado and other high mountain areas of the western United States (Sawyer et al. 2009, Bishop et al. 2009, Bartman et al. 1992). The protection of mule deer winter range habitat is one of the foremost management objectives in the Colorado West Slope Mule Deer Strategy (2014), which was developed with the public. Winter range and movement corridors are important for a variety of reasons, including:

⁶ Kowalski, Dan A. Colorado River Aquatic Resource Investigations. Federal Aid Project F-237-R21.

^{3;4;5;6}Brian Magee (CPW) letter to Jason Jaynes (DHM). February 2018. *Delta County Recreation Master Trails Plan*

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1. Lower elevations tend to concentrate deer and elk during winter months due to an influx of migratory animals as snow accumulates at higher elevations.
2. Mule deer and elk typically display high site fidelity to winter range, preferring to use the same areas year-after-year. CPW maps these areas as winter range, severe winter range and winter concentration areas for elk and deer.
3. Big game winter range provides essential forage and thermal cover to help mule deer and elk minimize energy expenditure. Mule deer and elk are in a nutritional negative energy balance during the winter months, making energy conservation critical for calf and fawn survival and adult female reproductive success.⁴

Potential Agricultural Conflicts/Game Damage from trail displacement

Displacement of mule deer and elk from public lands to adjacent private lands can lead to an increase in agriculture/wildlife conflicts. Most studies on displacement and avoidance distances for mule deer and elk from trail-based recreation suggest between 100m-1500m of displacement.

CPW Summary of Recommendations

- Limit the densities of trails to existing routes in Jumbo and Young's Peak Areas of Interest;
- No expansion of motorized or non-motorized trails/routes in the Young's Peak, Elephant Hill/ Lone Cabin, Jumbo Mountain, and McDonald Mesa Areas of Interest;
- Implement winter seasonal closures for existing trails on Jumbo Mountain and Young's Peak Areas of Interest;
- Keep trails and parking areas away from wildlife and livestock water developments;
- Involve local DWMs and Biologists to draft and review the trail plan specifics;
- Minimize redundant routes and decommission non-system routes in the Triangle;
- Minimize trails below and directly above canyon rims including a buffer away from the rim;
- Focus on existing trail maintenance.

Overall Summary of Recommendations

This plan supports the recommendations of CPW as outlined above. Although the recommendations are restrictive to recreation and trail development in specific areas, these areas often include existing use, access and routes; other areas not indicated as susceptible to negative impacts by trail development are identified and prioritized in the Plan.

Land Management and Use Types

Summary land management information is presented here. For fuller land management analysis, see Appendix C of this document.

BLM Administered Surface Lands and Federal Mineral Estates

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is the federal agency responsible for managing 258 million acres of land--about one-eighth of the land in the United States--and approximately 700 million acres of subsurface mineral resources. The Bureau of Land Management administers more surface land and more subsurface mineral estate than any other government agency in the United States. Most of the

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lands the BLM manages are located in the western United States, including Alaska, and are dominated by extensive grasslands, forests, high mountains, tundra, and deserts. The BLM manages a wide variety of resources and uses, including energy and minerals; timber; forage; wild horse and burro populations; fish and wildlife habitat; wilderness areas; archaeological, paleontological, and historical sites; and other natural heritage values.

The BLM's mission, which is principally defined by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA for short), directs the agency to carry out a dual mandate: that of managing public land for multiple uses while conserving natural, historical, and cultural resources. In the language of FLPMA, the BLM is to administer public lands "on the basis of multiple use and sustained yield" of resources. Except in areas specifically set aside for conservation purposes, the BLM must multitask to manage a myriad land uses, some of which may appear to conflict with other uses or resources. Multiple uses under BLM management include renewable energy development (solar, wind, other); conventional energy development (oil and gas, coal); livestock grazing; hardrock mining (gold, silver, other), timber harvesting; and outdoor recreation (such as camping, hunting, rafting, and off-highway vehicle driving).

The priorities of the BLM are to⁸:

- Make America Safe through Energy Independence (encouraging environmentally responsible development of energy and minerals on public lands);
- Make America Great through Shared Conservation Stewardship (by working with our partners to promote multiple-use on public lands);
- Make America Safe – Restoring Our Sovereignty (through effective management of the borderlands and cooperation with the Department of Defense on public land issues);
- Get America Back to Work (by promoting job creation and supporting working landscapes); and
- Serve the American Family (by being good neighbors, supporting traditional land uses such as grazing, and providing access to hunting, fishing, and other recreational opportunities).

The BLM manages 8.3 million acres of public lands and 27 million acres of federal mineral estate in Colorado. Most of the BLM public lands are concentrated on Colorado's Western Slope. In 2015, all activity on BLM lands contributed \$5.4 billion to Colorado's economy. Statewide, more than 23,500 jobs are tied to activities on BLM public lands. Colorado's economic health is supported by ranching, energy development, recreation and tourism on public lands. In Fiscal Year 2016, oil and gas development on public lands directly contributed \$796 million to Colorado's economy. BLM Colorado received more than \$98 million in federal revenues, including royalties, rents and bonus bids, from oil and gas development on public lands. The State of Colorado receives 49 percent of these revenues.

In Colorado, the BLM manages three national conservation areas, 53 wilderness study areas, five wilderness areas and two national monuments so they may be preserved for their cultural, ecological and scientific values. The intent of the BLM's recreation-focused laws, policy, and guidelines is to meet public demand for outdoor land- and water-based recreation opportunities, while preventing or

⁸ BLM.gov/basic/national-priorities

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minimizing adverse impacts on the natural and cultural resources on BLM-administered lands in Colorado.

In Delta County, the BLM manages a large portion of land through the Uncompahgre Field Office. This includes two National Conservation areas (Dominguez-Escalante and Gunnison Gorge) discussed in the following section, *National Conservation Lands*.

Uncompahgre Planning Area

The planning area includes all lands, regardless of jurisdiction, within the planning area boundaries. However, the BLM makes decisions on only those lands and federal mineral estate that it administers (the decision area). The Uncompahgre Resource Management Plan planning area includes BLM; US Department of Agriculture (USDA), Forest Service (Forest Service); US Department of the Interior, National Park Service (NPS); State of Colorado lands; and private property. It totals approximately 3.1 million acres in Delta, Gunnison, Mesa, Montrose, Ouray, and San Miguel Counties in southwestern Colorado. The planning area also includes 2,234,670 acres of federal mineral estate. The Uncompahgre RMP decision area includes 675,800 acres of BLM-administered lands, which includes withdrawn lands. While there are over 2.2 million acres of federal mineral estate in the planning area, there are 971,220 acres of federal mineral estate in the decision area.

The planning area receives around 320,000 visits per year (BLM 2009d). Visitors utilizing the planning area for recreation come from not only the local area (including cities such as Montrose and Delta and smaller communities such as Ridgway and Paonia) and other regions of Colorado, but also from other national and international locations.

The study area supports a wide range of users, economic pursuits, recreation types and land/land management types.

- Outdoor Recreation Service Providers
 - Information and Marketing such as local chambers of commerce
 - Outdoor gear providers, rentals and retail
 - Outfitters, hunting, fishing, boating, rock climbing
 - Recreation based tourism, food, fuel, goods, lodging
- Two SMRAs exist in the planning area, neither is within Delta County.
- There are no ERMAs in the decision area.

Recreation Visits have increased in the last decade, participation in some recreational activities has substantially increased. These activities include OHV travel, camping and picnicking, hunting, nonmotorized travel, pleasure driving, and nonmotorized winter activities. Increased recreation use is attributed to population growth, local marketing efforts, and a desire by local residents and visitors to enjoy a healthy, outdoors-oriented lifestyle.

Five key issues are causing the setting character of the planning area to change:

- Population growth and changing demographics;

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- Changing public expectations and demand for outdoor recreation opportunities, especially for dispersed recreation;
- Increased energy development;
- Close proximity of BLM-administered lands to private property and the growing use of public lands as a backyard recreation destination; and
- Technological advances in OHVs as well as better outdoor equipment and clothing.

Popular recreation opportunities in the planning area include hunting, fishing, whitewater rafting, OHV use, canoeing, kayaking, camping, hiking, backpacking, mountain biking, horseback riding, rock climbing, photography, and scenery and wildlife viewing. Recreation activities have increased in most areas since the 1985 and 1989 RMPs were adopted, with the greatest increase in OHV use, mountain biking, river recreation use, and rock climbing. In accordance with BLM's multiple-use mandate, per FLPMA, the agency seeks to provide recreational opportunities that include dispersed, organized, competitive, and commercial uses. Recreation in the planning area is managed primarily through licensing, permit fees, and enforcement of federal regulations.

Most developed local trail systems are cooperatively administered with communities and community groups. Each partner shares responsibility for the development, administration, and maintenance of local trail systems. For the past several years OHV trails have been managed in cooperation with the Colorado State Parks State Trails Program.

The majority of the existing route system in the decision area was not built with consideration for sustainability, resource concerns or conditions, or recreation experiences. Most routes either follow historic routes, such as those for grazing, mining, timber, or administrative access, or were user created. Many routes were not necessarily intended to be left open for recreational use. As a result, these trails do not always provide desirable recreation experiences and can have unmitigated impacts on natural or cultural resources. The existing travel network, especially those routes lacking professional design, is expected to cause increasing impacts on natural and cultural resources.

Increased transportation demands for non-recreational uses, such as oil and gas exploration and development and livestock grazing, have greatly affected recreation travel in some areas. Recreation experiences can suffer when transportation systems for other uses are increased or created.

OHVs commonly used in the planning area include off-road motorcycles, all-terrain vehicles, utility terrain vehicles, jeeps, specialized 4-by-4 trucks, and snowmobiles. Current OHV use exceeds historic levels and new, more-powerful vehicles are capable of accessing steeper and rougher terrain. In the past, visitors drove principally Jeeps, trucks, and motorcycles. Today the BLM has seen an increase in use of OHVs of all types and sizes. Increased visitation and the use of more-powerful vehicles have contributed to the widening, deepening, braiding, and eroding of some existing vehicle routes, and an increasing number of hill-climb, play, and camping areas.

Other modes of travel include mountain biking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, horseback riding, pack animal driving, hiking, boating, hang-gliding, paragliding, ballooning, and wheelchairs. The type and amount of use and the location of roads and trails influence physical, social, and administrative

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recreation setting and the overall quality of the recreation experience. Hiking, bicycling, and horseback riding have generally been increasing throughout the planning area, with pockets of growth concentrated along the urban interface (BLM 2009d). Foot and horse travel is not limited to existing or designated routes and areas closed to motorized use and seasonal closures currently do not apply to foot, horse, or bicycle travel.

National Conservation Lands

Managed by the Bureau of Land Management, National Conservation Lands are designated by Congress and the President to conserve special features under the National Landscape Conservation System. The BLM manages public lands for the benefit of current and future generations, supporting conservation as a part of the BLM's multiple-use mission.

Recreation Management Areas:

- Special recreation Management Areas (SRMAs) - Administrative units where the existing or proposed recreation opportunities and recreation setting characteristics are recognized for their unique value, importance and/or distinctiveness, especially as compared to other areas used for recreation. SRMAs are managed to protect and enhance a targeted set of activities, experiences, benefits, and desired recreation setting characteristics. Supporting management actions and allowable use decisions are required to:
 - Sustain or enhance recreation objectives
 - Protect the desired recreation setting characteristics
 - Constrain uses, including non-compatible recreation activities that are detrimental to meeting recreation or other critical resource objectives (e.g., cultural or threatened and endangered species).
- Extensive Recreation Management Areas (ERMAs) - administrative units that require specific management consideration in order to address recreation use, demand or recreation and visitor service program investments. ERMAs are managed to support and sustain the principal recreation activities and the associated qualities and conditions of the ERMA. Management of ERMA areas is commensurate with the management of other resources and resource uses. Supporting management actions and allowable use decisions must facilitate the visitors' ability to participate in outdoor recreation activities and protect the associated qualities and conditions. Non-compatible uses, including some recreation activities, may be restricted or constrained to achieve interdisciplinary objectives.

Dominguez/Escalante National Conservation Area

The 210,172-acre Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area, which includes the 66,280-acre Dominguez Canyon Wilderness, was created by the 2009 Omnibus Public Lands Management Act and is part of the Bureau of Land Management's National Conservation Lands. The NCA contains spectacular red-rock canyons within the Uncompahgre Plateau. 30 miles of the Gunnison River flows through the NCA and four major creeks flow through the area; Escalante, Cottonwood, Little Dominguez and Big Dominguez. There are significant geologic resources within Unaweep Canyon. The old Spanish National Historic Trail goes through the NCA. The NCA hosts a variety of animals and plants. The/

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Dominguez/Escalante National Conservation Area (D-E NCA) is part of the BLM's National Conservation Lands and is an administrative unit within the BLM's Southwest District. The southwest boundary of the NCA planning area borders the Uncompahgre National Forest. The northwest boundary runs along Colorado Highway 141 and includes approximately 10 miles of the Tabeguache-Unaweep Scenic and Historic Byway. The northeastern boundary is defined by U.S. Highway 50 and adjacent private lands, while the southeastern boundary is defined by Delta-Nucla (25 Mesa) Road, which runs south to the national forest boundary. Elevations within the NCA range from approximately 4,700 feet to over 8,200 feet above sea level, resulting in great biological, geological, and topographical diversity.

List of recreation areas:

- Gunnison River: The relatively flat stretch of river between Escalante Canyon and the mouth of the Dominguez Canyon is attracting increasing numbers of commercial and private boaters, with its unprecedented views of stunning red-rock canyons and wildlife viewing opportunities. Nearly 30 miles of the river flow through the NCA. Campsites are marked and available along the river.
- Escalante Canyon: Escalante Canyon includes the Potholes Recreation Area, popular with extreme kayakers in the spring and picnickers in the summer. Restrooms and picnic tables are available for day-use recreation as well. The Escalante Canyon Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) contains sensitive plant species, natural seeps, and several globally-unique plant associations including beautiful hanging gardens of small-flowered columbine and Eastwood's monkeyflower. A 15-mile county road offers visitors a trip back to pioneer days through Escalante Canyon's "Red Hole in Time" (popularized by local author Muriel Marshall). The road provides easy vehicle and viewing access to historic cabins and trails, rock walls with early settler and Native American inscriptions, and spectacular geologic formations.
- Sawmill Mesa: Immediately adjacent to the town of Delta, this area provides critical motorized links to the Uncompahgre National Forest. The Delta-Nucla/25-Mesa Road borders the NCA on the southeast and connects Delta to Nucla and the Divide Road, which follows the spine of the Uncompahgre Plateau. Sawmill Mesa Road and Dry Mesa Road provide Forest Service access to hunting in the fall and 4 wheel drive, ATV, and mountain bike access spring, summer, and fall. This area is rich in history, providing the only access route for settlers in Escalante Creek to Delta in the 1800s and early 1900s.
- Hunting Grounds: West of Hwy 50 and east of the Gunnison River this area is rich in cultural heritage resources and a popular location for dispersed recreation. The area was the traditional hunting area for Ute and Fremont Indians that migrated and hunted through the area. The area provides valuable opportunities for many different forms of recreation, particularly OHV and horseback riding.
- The Old Spanish National Historic Trail recognizes the land route traveled by traders from 19th-century Mexico - today's New Mexico - and California. From 1829 to 1848, this trail was the shortest-known route from Santa Fe to Los Angeles, through red-rock mesas, below snow-capped peaks, and fording untamed rivers, following a loose network of Native American footpaths across the Colorado Plateau and Mojave Desert. Old Spanish National Historic Trail is

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composed of three main routes: the Main Route, the Armijo Route, and the North Branch. Use would depend on peril, weather, or simple opportunistic stops.

Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area

The NCA consists of 62,844 acres of public land managed by the BLM Uncompahgre Field Office under the 2004 Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area Resource Management Plan. Initially designated through the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park and Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area Act of 1999 (Public Law 106-76), the Black Canyon of the Gunnison Boundary Revision Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-128) expanded the NCA from 57,725 acres to its current size of 62,844 acres. The NCA has a diverse landscape ranging from adobe badlands to rugged piñon and juniper-covered slopes. At the heart of the NCA, the Gunnison Gorge Wilderness Area encompasses a spectacular black granite and red sandstone double canyon formed by the Gunnison River.

List of recreation areas in Delta County:

- Numerous trails/trailheads, OHV routes, river access points, campgrounds throughout the NCA.
- Gunnison Gorge Wilderness Area: Gunnison Gorge Wilderness Area is managed for challenging whitewater boating, Gold Medal trout fishing and backcountry experiences.
- Smith Mountain Recreation Site
- Orchard Boat Ramp
- Cottonwood Grove Campground

Wilderness

Wilderness is a legal designation outlined in the Wilderness Act of 1964. This designation offers long-term protection and conservation of landscapes, natural values, habitat and sources of clean water on public lands while also focusing on unique features of particular wilderness areas. These special places have little to no human made improvements and are managed to maintain their primitive character. The National Wilderness Preservation System is made up of individual Wilderness areas that share a common management vision toward preserving naturalness, limiting the influence of man and providing outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

Gunnison Gorge Wilderness Area

Gunnison Gorge Wilderness is comprised of 17,700-acres north of the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park. It is the second BLM-administered wilderness in Colorado.

Dominguez Canyon Wilderness Area

The Dominguez Canyon Wilderness is a 66,280-acre expanse located in the heart of the Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area. Made a Wilderness Area in 2009, Dominguez Canyon is replete with cultural and natural resources.

Wilderness Study Areas

Only the U.S. Congress has the authority to designate Wilderness. In the Wilderness Act of 1964, Congress directed the Forest Service, National Park Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to set

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aside wilderness areas. In 1976, Congress directed the BLM to inventory lands suitable for wilderness designation. The areas BLM found that had wilderness qualities were designated as Wilderness Study Areas (WSA). Until Congress designates a land as Wilderness, or releases it from WSA status, the BLM manages the area to preserve its wilderness qualities. Historic uses such as livestock grazing may be permitted. WSAs must be managed in a manner that would not impair the suitability of the area for preservation as wilderness and to prevent unnecessary or undue degradation. Except for grandfathered uses and valid existing rights, permitted activities in WSAs are temporary uses that create no new surface disturbance and don't involve placement of permanent structures.

Adobe Badland Wilderness Study Area

6,383 Acres, Scenic Mancos Shale hills, flats, and unique formations created by wind and water erosion, Highly erodible and saline soils resulting in high sediment loads and very saline runoff, Known and potential habitat for several federally endangered and threatened plant species. Located three miles northwest of Delta, the area is surrounded by both public and non-public lands, and the northern boundary is contiguous with the Grand Mesa National Forest. This area consists of Mancos shale hills and flats which, through wind and water erosion, have formed unique scenic formations. The area's soils are highly erodible and saline, resulting in high sediment loads and high salinity runoff. The ACEC contains occupied habitat for the threatened Colorado hookless cactus (*Sclerocactus glaucus*) and other native plants. The area supports small populations of the BLM sensitive species white-tailed prairie dog and provides potential habitat for other sensitive species, such as burrowing owls, ferruginous hawk, and kit fox.

Natural Values

- Approximately 82 percent, of the Adobe Badlands WSA is composed of the Badlands type Mancos shale formations. Topography of the area is characterized by abrupt sloping hills dissected by rugged serpentine canyons. The northern 18 percent of the WSA is characterized by the foothills of Grand Mesa, vegetated in pinyon-juniper.
- Approximately 6,780 acres in the southern two-thirds of the area is managed as an Outstanding Natural Area and ACEC to protect scenic values, threatened and endangered plants, and reduce active erosion.
- The WSA provides many opportunities for solitude in the maze-like badlands and upper elevation pinyon-juniper vegetation.
- The WSA offers yearlong opportunities for hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, photography, and sightseeing.
- Contains occupied habitat for the threatened Colorado hookless cactus, sensitive Adobe Hills beardtongue (*Penstemon retrorsus*), and other native plants. The white tail prairie dog and kit fox, which are sensitive animal species, inhabit the area.

Current Uses/Management

- The Adobe Badlands WSA is closed to motorized and mechanized travel.
- Approximately 1,930 acres in the northern portion is managed for deer and elk winter range.

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Valid Existing Rights

- There are approximately 75 placer mining claims scattered throughout the WSA. These claims were located in 1982 and 1984, and no activity has occurred on them to date.
- Three livestock grazing allotments are located within WSA. A total of approximately 878 AUMs of winter sheep use is authorized on these allotments. There are no range facilities.

Management Issues/Trends

- Lack of on-the-ground monitoring, patrol, and enforcement of recreational activities, particularly off-road vehicle use, which is environmentally damaging to the area's highly erodible, saline soils.

Needle Rock Wilderness Study Area

80 acres, Volcanic geological structure with high-value scientific, interpretive, and scenic characteristics. Needle Rock towers 800 feet above the floor of the Smith Fork of the Gunnison River valley. It originated as the throat of a large volcano about 28 million years ago (Miocene epoch) when molten rock intruded between existing sedimentary formations. As the surrounding country rocks eroded over millions of years, the resistant igneous core was exposed. The spectacular volcanic formation rises almost 1,000 feet above the Smith Fork River valley. This site consists mainly of a volcanic geological structure with high-value scientific, interpretive, and scenic characteristics. The spectacular volcanic formation rises almost 1,000 feet above the Smith Fork River valley.

Current Uses/Management

- Needle Rock is an Instant Study Area (ISA), defined as an area formally identified as natural or primitive areas prior to November 1, 1975.
- The WSA is closed to motorized and mechanized travel, except for on the county road.

Valid Existing Rights

- None

Management Issues/Trends

- None

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

An area on BLM-administered lands where special management attention is required to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources, or other natural systems or processes, or to protect life and ensure safety from natural hazards. The designation by itself does not automatically prohibit or restrict other uses in the area. The special management attention is designed specifically for the relevant and important values and, therefore, varies from area to area. Restrictions that arise from an ACEC designation are determined at the time the designation is made and are designed to protect the values or serve the purposes for which the designation was made.

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Adobe Badlands Outstanding Natural Area/ACEC – 6,370 Acres

Current Uses/Management

- Managed to protect its unique scenic qualities, improve threatened and endangered species habitat, provide for semi-primitive nonmotorized recreation opportunities and use, and reduce active erosion.
- There are a total of three sheep grazing allotments in the ACEC.
- Open to fluid mineral leasing with no surface occupancy stipulations.
- Closed to coal leasing.
- Closed to mineral materials disposal.
- Closed to off-road-vehicle use, managed for nonmotorized recreation opportunities.
- Managed as VRM Class I.
- Closed to major utility development.
- Erosion and salinity control measures are prohibited from using structures or land treatments that would alter scenic values.

Valid Existing Rights

- There are no valid existing rights in the ACEC.

Management Issues/Trends

- Lack of on-the-ground monitoring, patrol, and enforcement of regulations, particularly for recreational use.
- Lack of an effective information and education campaign promoting a sound land-use ethic.
- OHV incursions from adjacent North Delta OHV open travel area. OHV use may be impacting threatened species including Colorado hookless cactus, which has known populations in the ACEC boundary with the OHV open area.

Needle Rock Outstanding Natural Area/ACEC – 80 Acres

Current Uses/ Management

- Managed to protect the scientific, interpretive, and scenic qualities of the site.
- Open to fluid mineral leasing with no surface occupancy stipulations.
- Managed as unallotted for livestock grazing use.
- Travel is limited to designated roads and trails.
- Managed as VRM Class I
- Closed to development of major utility facilities.
- Closed to mineral materials disposal.
- Recreation opportunities include sightseeing, picnicking, and geological study in a roaded but natural environment. BLM has constructed a small parking lot, interpretive sign, shelter, and walking trail.

Valid Existing Rights

- A county road and utilities cross the southeast corner of the ACEC.

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Management Issues/ Trends

- Lack of public information regarding recreation opportunities.
- Lack of on-the-ground monitoring, patrol, and enforcement of regulations.
- Lack of an effective information and education campaign promoting a sound land-use ethic.

National forests

Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests

The Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests (GMUG) combines three National Forests covering 2,965,054 acres of land south of the Colorado River and west of the Continental Divide. Elevations vary between 5,800 to 14,309 within the GMUG.⁹

Watchable Wildlife Viewing Areas

The federal Watchable Wildlife Program is a cooperative nationwide effort among 13 organizations, including the BLM, to foster the conservation of wildlife and wildlife habitats by:

- Providing enhanced opportunities for the public to enjoy wildlife
- Promoting learning about wildlife and habitat needs
- Contributing to local economies
- Enhancing active public support for resource conservation

Uncompahgre Riverway – Potential WWVA

The Uncompahgre Riverway provides habitat for bald and golden eagles, ospreys (*Pandion haliaetus*), harriers (*Circus cyaneus*), great horned owls (*Bubo virginianus*), and several species of hawks. Over 140 species of birds have been identified in the neighboring Ridgway State Park.

National Historic Trails

The National Trails System includes National Historic Trails, National Scenic Trails, and National Recreation Trails, which are congressionally designated by the Secretary of Interior per the National Trails System Act of 1968 (Public Law 90-543). A National Historic Trail is a congressionally designated trail that is an extended, long-distance trail, not necessarily managed as continuous, that follows as closely as possible and practicable the original trails or routes of travel of national historic significance. The purpose of a National Historic Trail is the identification and protection of the historic route and the historic remnants and artifacts for public use and enjoyment. A National Historic Trail is managed in a manner to protect the nationally significant resources, qualities, values, and associated settings of the areas through which such trails may pass, including the primary use or uses of the trail.

Old Spanish National Historic Trail

The Old Spanish National Historic Trail was designated on December 4, 2002, by the Old Spanish Trail Recognition Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-325). The Old Spanish National Historic Trail passes through a portion of the planning area. Fifty-one miles of the Old Spanish National Historic Trail are within the

⁹ www.fs.usda.gov/gmug

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planning area. However, only nine miles of the trail are under BLM jurisdiction, as the remaining portions are on land with other surface ownership. The Old Spanish National Historic Trail was a 2,700-mile trade route linking Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Los Angeles, California, passing through New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, Arizona, Nevada, and California. The trail had brief but heavy use between 1829 and 1848. During that period, Mexican and American traders took woolen goods west over the trail by mule train and returned eastward with California mules and horses for the eastern US and Mexican markets. BLM and NPS jointly administer the Old Spanish National Historic Trail in collaboration with the Old Spanish Trail Association, which serves as the primary nonfederal partner. A Comprehensive Administrative Strategy has been completed in late 2017 and provides strategic direction and guidance for the future administration and management of the Old Spanish Trail. The plan includes identification of the nature and purposes, goals and objectives, high-potential sites and high-potential segments (historic trails), and the selection of the National Trail ROW. The trail passes through southwest Delta County, paralleling US HWY 50.

National Scenic Byways

The National Scenic Byways Program was established under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991, and reauthorized in 1998 under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century. The program recognizes certain roads as National Scenic Byways or All-American Roads based on their archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational, and scenic qualities. All-American Roads must exhibit multiple intrinsic qualities. To be considered for inclusion in the program, a highway must provide safe passage for passenger cars year-round, be designated a State Scenic Byway, and have a current corridor management plan in place. Installation of off-site outdoor advertising, such as billboards, is not allowed along byways. Within the UFO, there is one All American Road and one National Scenic and Historic Byway.

Grand Mesa Scenic and Historic Byway

In 1996, Colorado Highway 65 over Grand Mesa was designated as a National Scenic Byway. This 63-mile route begins in Cedaredge, heads north through Mesa, and ends at the junction with Interstate 70. A spur road on top of the mesa leads to Land's End.

Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways

The Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways program is a statewide partnership intended to provide recreational, educational, and economic benefits to Coloradans and visitors. This system of outstanding touring routes provides travelers with interpretation and identification of key points of interest and services, while protecting significant resources. Scenic and Historic Byways are nominated by local partnership groups and designated by the Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways Commission for their exceptional scenic, historic, cultural, recreational, and natural features.

West Elk Loop

The 205-mile West Elk Loop begins in Carbondale, Colorado, and travels south along Highway 133 through the towns of Redstone and Paonia. The route continues south and then east along Highway 92

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towards the town of Gunnison. At Gunnison, the loop heads north along Highway 135 through Crested Butte and meets up once again with Highway 133, where it continues north back to Carbondale.

State Wildlife Areas

State Wildlife Areas (SWAs) are state- or privately-owned lands that offer wildlife-related recreation to the public. While most activities focus on hunting and fishing, each SWA has different allowed activities, based on location and available resources. These parcels of SWA land are paid for by sportsmen and managed under state law by Colorado Parks and Wildlife employees for the benefit of wildlife. Colorado Parks and Wildlife manages about 350 SWA lands around the state.

Escalante State Wildlife Area

- Location
 - GMU: 62
 - From Delta, travel 2.2 miles west on 5th Street (G Road), then 2 miles northwest on G 50 Road, OR 5.5 miles northwest of Delta on US HWY 50.
- Elevation
 - Approx. 4,800 to 5,120
- Acreage
 - 410 acres
- Hunting
 - Deer, Rabbit, Pheasant, Quail, Dove, Waterfowl
- Fishing
 - Coldwater stream

McCluskey State Wildlife Area

- Location
 - GMU: 53
 - From Paonia's Onargar Ave, go south on Lamborn Mesa Rd (becomes 4100 Rd). At stop sign, turn right on Stewart Mesa Rd (turns south, becomes 4050 Rd). At south end, it forks; turn left on L30 Rd.
- Elevation
 - min. 5,871 ft - max 6,986 ft
- Acreage
 - 1,526 acres
- Hunting
 - Deer, Elk, Dusky (blue) grouse, Rabbit
- Restrictions
 - Camping is prohibited. Dogs are prohibited. Public access is prohibited except for hunting, fishing, or trapping. Public access is prohibited from the day after the regular big game season through April 30.
- Area is a hunting and fishing conservation easement. It provides big game winter range for deer and elk and provides access to Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service lands which sit

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at an elevation of 9,000 feet and above. This State Wildlife Area is adjacent to Roeber Easement State Wildlife Area.

Roeber State Wildlife Area

- Location
 - GMU: 53
 - From Paonia, go 1 mile south on 4100 road (Onarga Ave), turn left on N-80 Lane, go 2 miles to 4200 Drive, turn right, go 1 mile to parking lot. Or, from Onarga Ave. go south on Lamborn Mesa Rd to Minerich rd. Go 1 mile to parking lot.
- Elevation
 - min. 6,084 ft - max 7,527 ft
- Acreage
 - 1,057 acres
- Fishing
 - Coldwater lake
- Facilities
 - Parking
- Restrictions
 - Camping is prohibited. Dogs are prohibited. Fires are prohibited. Hunting is prohibited in the open space easement area. Public access is prohibited from the last day of the regular big game season through April 30. Public access is prohibited except for hunting and fishing. Bowfishing is prohibited.

State Parks

Sweitzer Lake State Park

Built solely for recreation, Sweitzer Lake includes a boat ramp for watersports, swimming, picnicking, fishing, and other day use amenities.

Crawford State Park

Crawford Reservoir is a popular fishery that provides angling opportunity for yellow perch, channel catfish, northern pike, rainbow trout, black crappie, and largemouth bass. This reservoir, located in Crawford State Park, covers 414 surface acres at full capacity and is open year round to angling. 2 miles south of the town of Crawford on Hwy 92. Built in 1963 by the US Bureau of Reclamation. Colorado Parks & Wildlife has administered the area since 1965. A current trails master plan guides the ongoing development of a system of trails around the perimeter of the reservoir and accessing a number of day use and developed camping amenities.

Cities and Towns

The information in this section has been adapted from the website of Delta County Economic Development, a non-profit created to support economic vitality in the County. For full text, see the DCED web site at: <http://www.deltacountyed.org/Communities>.

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The City of Delta

Elevation - 4953 ft.

Population - 8769

The City of Delta, the namesake and seat of Delta County, was originally set up as a trading post for Ute Indians and the new settlers from the east. It was incorporated on October 24, 1882, has a Council/Manager form of government, and is a home rule city. Delta is situated at the confluence of the Uncompahgre and Gunnison Rivers. The City of Delta is located on the western slope of Colorado and is approximately 40 miles south of Grand Junction and 20 miles north of the City of Montrose. Delta is the County seat and commercial center for Delta County. In January 2018 the City adopted a Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Master Plan.

Cedaredge

Elevation - 6,230 Feet

Population – 2253 (2010 Census)

Cedaredge is located south of Grand Mesa in Delta County. Cedaredge is located in the Upper Surface Creek Area in a prominent location on the south slope of Grand Mesa. Cedaredge has long been known as the gateway to Grand Mesa. The valleys on the south side have some of the mildest weather in Colorado. For nearly a century, fruit growers have found this climate, along with abundant irrigation water from Grand Mesa, ideal for apples, peaches, apricots, cherries and pears. More recently innovative growers in the Surface Creek area have discovered mild seasons perfect for wine grapes. Historically, the town has relied on an agriculturally based economy but has been shifting towards a tourism/service/retirement economy.

Tourist attractions include Cedaredge Golf Club, Historic Pioneer Town, and an art gallery and craft store housed in a renovated apple packing shed. Regional sporting activities include camping, trophy hunting, hiking and Gold Medal fishing at more than 250 lakes on the Grand Mesa. During the winter locals partake in snowmobiling and Nordic skiing on the Mesa's trails. Powderhorn Ski Resort is located 30 miles north of Cedaredge. Town recreation facilities include Cedaredge Town Park, Cedaredge Golf Club, Surface Creek Trail, Grand Mesa Gateway Trail, High Country Park and several pocket parks.

Cedaredge is designed around a compact inner core making it ideal for pedestrians however, many areas lack sidewalks creating barriers to pedestrian circulation.

Hotchkiss

Elevation 5,351 ft.

Population 944

The Town of Hotchkiss is found in the North Fork Valley, at the intersection of State Highway 92 and 133. Hotchkiss is a hub for winter and summer activities bounded by the North Fork of the Gunnison River and Hanson and Rogers Mesas. Historically the economy relied has relied on a robust fruit industry and on coal mines. Mining activity has decreased significantly but agriculture remains an important economic and cultural activity. Agro-tourism is a growing segment of the economy, boasting fresh fruits

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from local orchards, wines from local vineyards and fresh vegetables from local farmers. Retirees make up a growing portion of the population and their pensions and investments make up a large part of the personal incomes within the town. Many people of working age commute to work; driving an average of 20 minutes to work.

The town has one larger park and two pocket parks and is the home of the Delta County Fairgrounds. The North Fork Pool, Park and Recreation district is located near Hotchkiss High School as is The Nature Connection, a non-profit center for environmental education and outdoor activity advocacy.

Orchard City

Elevation - 5,040 ft.

Population - 2997

Orchard City is a unique agricultural, residential and recreational area nestled between the cities of Delta to the southwest, Cedaredge to the north, and Hotchkiss to the east. Despite being the largest municipality in terms of square miles in Delta County, Orchard City is primarily recognized by the names of three smaller and older areas within its boundaries – Austin, Eckert, and Cory.

Paonia

Elevation 5,645 ft.

Population 1650

Paonia is the easternmost municipality in Delta County and is located near the sites of active and dormant coal mines. It is a focal point of back roads and trails leading into the forest, attracting hunters, hikers bicyclists and cross-country skiers.

Crawford

Elevation - 6,520 ft.

Population - 409

The Town of Crawford has long been known as a cow town and for its cattle drives down main street, which is Hwy. 92, each spring and fall. Crawford is the gateway to the North Rim of the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park which provides numerous outdoor activities such as snowshoeing, snowmobiling and cross-country skiing in the winter and hiking, biking and photography in the summer. Many areas in Crawford Country are natural migratory routes for both elk and deer. C Hill (Youngs Peak), at the north edge of town, provides access to trails and public land within walking distance of the town core. Just over a mile south of town is Crawford State Park, offering camping, boating, fishing, swimming, and picnicking.

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OHV Vehicle Areas

North Delta OHV Area

This Open Area covers 8,560 acres of mostly Mancos shale approximately six miles northeast of the town of Delta and receives heavy use in spring, summer, and fall by local and regional OHV enthusiasts. Facilities are limited but include a concrete unloading ramp and kiosk. Use is expected to continue to increase due to the area's close proximity to Delta. The area is managed under the Uncompahgre BLM field office.

Existing User Groups

The 2013 Colorado Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) survey of Outdoor Recreation was used to characterize participation in Colorado regionally and statewide for residents of the state (SCORP, 2013). The survey included a set of 38 activities that were grouped into 5 larger categories. The survey results suggest that outdoor recreation is very popular among Colorado residents, with an estimated 3.4 million adults (90% of adult residents) having engaged in at least one of the 38 activities in 2012. Trail activities were the most popular, with nearly 83% of adults participating¹⁰.

Activity Group	Activities in Group
Trail/Road	Walking, Jogging/Running (outdoors), Hiking/Backpacking, Horseback riding, Road biking, Mountain biking, Off-road motorcycling, ATV riding or 4-wheel driving
Water-Based	Swimming (outdoors), Fishing, Power boating, Water skiing, Jet skiing, Sailing, Canoeing, Kayaking, Whitewater rafting, Stand up paddleboarding
Winter	Skiing or snowboarding at a ski area, Backcountry skiing, Sledding/tubing, Ice skating (outdoors), Snowmobiling, Snowshoeing or cross country skiing, Ice fishing
Wildlife-related	Big game hunting, Upland bird and small game hunting, Waterfowl hunting, Wildlife viewing (including birding)
Other	Developed/RV camping, Tent camping, Picnicking, Target or skeet shooting, Rock climbing, Team or individual sports (outdoors), Playground activities, Golf, Geocaching

¹⁰ The Economic Contributions of Outdoor recreation in Colorado: A regional and county-level analysis. Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Colorado Statewide Outdoor Recreation Plan. Southwick Associates, Fernandina Beach, FL. February 24, 2014.

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Demographic Profiles and Trends

Colorado is growing and population is predicted to continue to increase. The Western Slope in particular is anticipated to grow at a higher rate in the future. To attract new residents, employers, and jobs, Western Slope communities will be competing to provide desirable places to live with a high quality of life. Major factors playing into desirability and quality of life are ample opportunities for recreational and cultural activities and pedestrian and bicycle friendly environments.

Delta County strives to maintain its identity as a hub for agriculture and small town charm on the Western Slope. Looking towards the future and potential opportunities for growth and economic stability Delta Country recognizes the importance of planning for growth and providing a healthy and desirable environment for current and future residents.

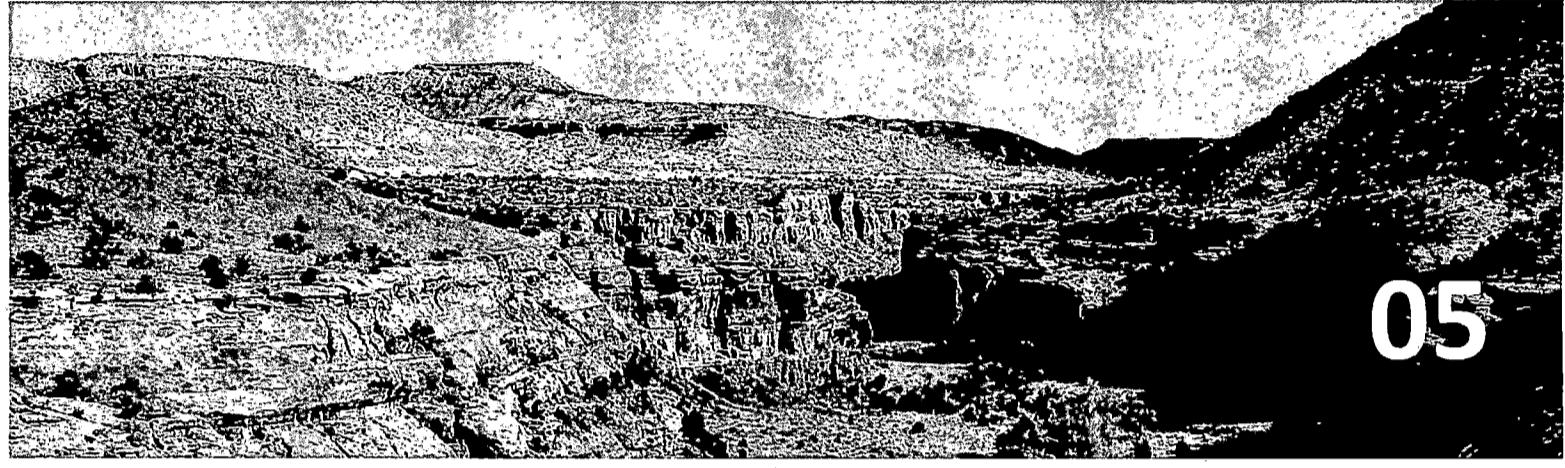
"The State Demographer's Office released its population estimates for 2050 in Colorado which estimated the number of people living on the Western Slope will reach 942,483 people or an increase of 67.2 percent over the 2015 population. A quarter of that growth will come from Mesa County which is projected to top 235,000 residents and supplant Pueblo County as the 10th-largest county in the state." - GJ Daily Sentinel, 12.07.17

https://demography.dola.colorado.gov/D3_Unemployment/

Population density in Delta County ranges from 15.58 – 14.99 persons per square mile and is all considered rural.

The following data is from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs
www.demography.dola.colorado.gov

See Appendix D for additional demographic data and tables, and the Delta County Comprehensive Plan for detailed demographic information and analysis.



05

TRAIL TYPOLIGIES

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05: TRAIL TYPOLOGIES

Trail Types and Components

Trails range in type and intended use. There are many types of trails and each type provides different experiences for different users. Trails may be used for a variety of reasons including exercise, transportation, recreation, or education. Trail users may include hikers, hunters, ranchers, OHV operators, cyclists, skaters, equestrians, snowmobilers, pedestrians, and others. This plan includes references to "trails" broadly, from sidewalks and bike lanes to backcountry single track. For individual projects, a clearer definition of terms is valuable.

There are numerous resources for trail design standards, with comprehensive information regarding various trail types by user, support facilities, trailhead standards, user experience, trail sustainability, and best management practices for trail development and maintenance. This document does not attempt to compile the available standards; instead basic nomenclature is defined to clarify intent in individual trail opportunities as identified in the "Potential Projects and Priorities" chapter. Furthermore, a majority of existing and proposed trails lie on state and federally managed lands or in county-owned rights-of-way; these agencies carry individual development standards which should be referenced in the consideration of any new or realigned trails or route designation. Soft-surface and primitive trails should always be designed and constructed by qualified personnel (either professional trail builders or individuals appropriately trained in sustainable trail design and construction).

Valuable resources in trails planning can be found at:

USDA Forest Service Standard Trail Plans and Specifications (www.fs.fed.us)

USDA Forest Service Trail Fundamentals and Trail Management Objectives (www.fs.fed.us)

USDA Forest Service Manuals on Accessible Trail and Facility Design (www.fs.fed.us)

BLM Guidelines for a Quality Trail Experience; in partnership with IMBA (www.blm.gov)

CDOT Roadway Design Guide, Chapter 14: Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities (www.codot.gov)

Three additional web sites with compiled resources and links:

USFS Trail Fundamentals and Trail Management Objectives

(<https://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/trail-management/trail-fundamentals/index.shtml>)

FHWA Manuals and Guides for Trail Design, Construction, Maintenance, and Operation

(https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/guidance/manuals.cfm)

American Trails Trail Design and Construction Resources Library

(<http://www.americantrails.org/resources/trailbuilding/>)

Signage and Wayfinding

Signage for public trails assets can be broken into three categories: Regulatory, wayfinding, and interpretive. In many cases within Delta County, signage is lacking to the level that the identification, location, and allowed use of existing trails is unclear. This leads to a broad public sense that access to

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public lands is lacking, contributes to misuse or dis-allowed use of existing trails, and limits the County's ability to market trails as a destination amenities to potential outside users.

Regulatory Signage provides users with information about the governing agency, management, fee-for-use requirements, allowed uses, seasonal use limitations and access restrictions (e.g. easements or adjoining private land) for a given trail or facility. This signage type is typically defined in detail by the managing agencies overarching standards.

Wayfinding Signage provides users with information about the trail system served by a specific trailhead, overall information about regional trails (often maps), and points of orientation at trail intersections or along a trail's route (valuable for user orientation and for life safety support such as search and rescue). This type of signage is designed to meet the standards of the applicable management agency; in the case of wayfinding signage not governed by a state or federal management agency, the County may determine the design, character, and content of wayfinding signage. For example, for regional cycling and OHV routes on county roads, a "family" of signs may be developed that are designed to be recognized as part of the larger system but also unique to the individual route. The CDOT Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices is likely an appropriate reference for the development of wayfinding signs within Delta County rights-of-way. Development of a standard family of signs is an important component of formally recognizing, identifying, and marketing regional routes within the County. Wayfinding signage is also a necessary element in the planning and implementation of new or formalized trail systems in general.

Interpretive Signage creates an opportunity to communicate with trail users about the culture and environment associated with a given trail or recreation amenity, and with appropriate behavior of trail users (trail etiquette). The use of interpretive signage to educate trail users about sensitive use and stewardship of the land, and of the cultural history of the area, is increasingly a priority in the mission of land management agencies and land advocacy groups nationwide. This priority is reflected in the mission of The Nature Connection and is consistent with public sentiment observed during the public process for this Plan. The inclusion and planning of interpretive signage in capital improvement projects is common as a method for meeting the priority of public education often important in grant funding; it also supports the programmatic use of public trails infrastructure, e.g. school groups, hobbyists, and tourism activities. As trail use grows in Delta County, and as user types expand within the existing and future infrastructure, public education of appropriate behavior and trail etiquette is an important role for interpretive signage. Trail etiquette signage should be implemented at heavily-used and multi-use trail facilities, and is often important at backcountry trailheads where non-recreational use of public lands is common. This plan recommends the inclusion of interpretive signage at trailheads, historic sites, environmentally sensitive areas, and important cultural landmarks. This type of signage should be prioritized where the general public is most likely to interact with it, such as heavily used trailheads or facilities improved in conjunction with other public facilities/amenities (e.g. near schools or parks). Land management agencies may have standards for interpretive signage at their own facilities; for County-owned lands – such as school grounds - a standard format for interpretive signage should be developed that can be applied consistently and be recognizable as specific to Delta County.

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Trailheads

The definition of a trailhead is simple in that it is 'any place a trail begins.' A formal trailhead, however, should be identifiable, visible, intuitive to navigate, adequately designed for its use, and appropriately signed. A trailhead can be as simple as a trail name/number identifier, or can include amenities such as campgrounds or day use areas (picnic shelters, benches, etc), sanitary facilities, directional signage, maps, regulatory information, interpretive information, and developed parking. Any trailhead on public lands must comply with the overriding management agency requirements and be responsive in design to the allowed trail use (type, class, managed use, design use). The USDA Forest Service Equestrian Design Guidebook for Trails, Trailheads, and Campgrounds is an excellent resource for planning of trailhead facilities that serve a broad variety of uses, including special accommodations for trailer circulation and ancillary support areas necessary at multi-use trailheads.

Any planning for development of new – or formal recognition of existing – trail systems should include trailhead parking and signage commensurate with the anticipated use. Potential conflicts with trail routing, public access, adjoining private lands, and user types should be considered and accommodated in trailhead planning. Wayfinding signage should be included that illustrates the trail system accessible from the specific trailhead as well as information about the broader network of trails available in the County. Regulatory signage is critical in identifying the allowed uses, seasonal limitations, and specific considerations affecting the trail system, such as non-recreation uses that may be encountered, personal responsibility for trash and refuse management ("pack it out") and sensitive private property adjacencies that need to be understood by the user. This plan also recommends the inclusion of interpretive signage (along with wayfinding and regulatory signage) that provides information about the ecosystem specific to a given trail and of personal responsibility in the stewardship and sustainable use of the area. The intent of this recommendation is to increase awareness of potential impacts related to misuse or abuse of public trails and to engender a sense of individual ownership in the trail systems within Delta County.

Sidewalks

Sidewalks are typically made of concrete and generally range in width from 3'-8'. The primary users are pedestrians and wheelchair users. Sidewalks differ from shared use paths in that bicycle or motorized use of sidewalks is often prohibited by local ordinance. Sidewalks provide local access to homes, commerce centers, businesses, and points of attraction. Sidewalks are generally separated from roadways by curbs or planting strips/buffer zone. Sidewalks typically contain sign posts, parking meters, hydrants, benches, trees and other fixed objects. For safety reasons, sidewalks should be considered for implementation on all urban arterials and collectors, especially locations that connect pedestrian origins and destinations (for instance, connecting neighborhoods with schools and shopping areas) and for roads with higher speeds and volumes, with priority for locations without shoulders¹.

The following design features should be included:

¹ Minnesota's Best Practices For Pedestrian/Bicycle Safety, September 2014

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- Curb ramps – to meet ADA requirements curb ramps at cross walks must be installed. A ramp should be provided for each crosswalk. These ramps help the visually impaired and assist pedestrians who use wheelchairs. Tactile warning such as a raised truncated dome-type warning should be placed at the base of crosswalks.
- Sidewalk widths - The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) recommend a minimum sidewalk width of 5 feet, which allows two people to walk comfortably side-by-side or two people to pass each other in the opposite direction. This plan recommends sidewalk widths of minimum 5'.
- Continuity - —Sidewalks should be continuous, installed on both sides of the roadway, and relatively free of obstacles that could cause a tripping hazard or impede travel by children, senior citizens, and people with visual or mobility impairments.
- Cross Slope - The cross slope of sidewalks should be less than 2 percent. Cross slopes greater than 2 percent can cause pedestrians in wheelchairs to counteract the force of the cross slope, which, depending on the direction of the slope, may direct the wheelchair towards the roadway.
- Buffer Zone - —A buffer zone of 4 to 6 feet is desirable to separate the sidewalk from the street and to improve the pedestrian's level of comfort. Landscaping strips, parked cars, and bicycle lanes can provide acceptable buffers.
- Shared Use Path Alternative - Consideration should be given for the need for a shared use path or trail. These differ from sidewalks in that they designate space on the path, separating bicycles and pedestrians, and are usually not adjacent to local streets.

On Street Bike Lanes

A bike lane is a portion of the roadway or shoulder designated for exclusive or preferential use by people using bicycles. A number of on-street bike lanes are described here. This plan recommends inclusion of bike lines or widened, paved shoulders (8' minimum) along state highways and primary county road routes. Wide shoulders are preferred where cyclists and OHV users are expected to share routes along county roads. Absent bike lanes and/or paved shoulders, shared lane OHV routes and bikeways are recommended as a cost-effective solution for formalizing routes.

Bike Lanes

Bike lanes are a portion of the roadway that delineates available roadway space for preferential use by bicyclists. Bicycle lanes are distinguished from the portion of the roadway or shoulder used for motor vehicle traffic by striping, marking, or other similar techniques. An important feature when designing a bike lane is the right turn lane at intersections. The current practice is to have dashed lines approaching the intersection and encouraging right-turning vehicles to cross the bike lane and get to the right side before the intersection.

The following factors should be considered when implementing on-road bike lanes²:

² Minnesota's Best Practices For Pedestrian/Bicycle Safety, September 2014

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- Traffic volumes, both peak hour and daily for both vehicular and bicycle traffic—Higher motor vehicle traffic volumes increase the risks for bicyclists; therefore, the bikeway requires increased width to separate bicyclists from motor vehicles.
- Traffic speeds—High motor vehicle speed has a negative impact on bicyclist risk and comfort unless mitigated by design treatments.
- On-street parking—The presence of on-street parking increases the width needed in an adjacent bike lane and also increases the risk of bicyclists being hit by opening car doors.
- Intersections and driveways—Most bicycle crashes with motor vehicles occur at intersections and driveways. Adding bike lanes without full consideration of travel throughout the corridor may increase conflicts with turning vehicles.
- Right-of-way constraints—The ability to accommodate bike lanes at their appropriate width is usually limited by the total available right-of-way.
- Vehicle turn lane configuration—Turn lanes require extra consideration and care as they relate to bike lanes.
- Topography, grades and sight distances—The topography of the roadway affects the width of the bike lane. Additional bikeway width or separation from the roadway may be needed on roads with hills or curves. Vehicles tend to encroach on the inside of curves, and inadequate sight distance may be due to restrictive roadway geometry in locations of rough terrain. Bicyclist speeds are greatly influenced by the grade; with faster speeds on steep downgrades, and with slower speeds on upgrades.
- Volume of large trucks—Where there is more than 10 percent of the daily volume, or over 250 heavy vehicles, during the peak hour, an increase in lane width, an off-road bikeway, or an increase in separation between the bike lane and the travel lane should be considered.
- Bus routes—Bus routes have both advantages (buses typically going similar speed as bicycles) and disadvantages (regular stopping of the bus requires more interaction between bicyclists and buses).
- Bicyclist characteristics—Bike lanes may be used in different ways by a range of bicyclists, from children with limited bicycling ability to advanced cyclists and commuters who prefer limited stops and detours from the road.

Cycle Track

A variation of the bike lane is the cycle track, a striped and signed lane for bicycle traffic with on street parking to the left of the bike lane with a buffered area between the bike lane and parking. Other variations in cycle tracks include raised cycle tracks that are vertically separated from motor vehicle traffic and two-way cycle tracks that include both directions of bike traffic on one side of a roadway.

Paved Shoulders

A paved shoulder that is continuous and on the same level as the regular travel lanes available for use bicycles and pedestrians. The width of paved shoulders for use by bicyclists should be based on the context and conditions of adjacent lanes on the roadway. Paved shoulders for bicycle usage typically range from 4 feet for uncurbed cross sections with no vertical obstructions immediately adjacent to the roadway to 5 or more feet for roadways with guardrail, curbs, or other roadside barriers. Consideration

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of increasing shoulder width should be given if any of the following situations is present on a specific roadway:

- High bicycle usage is expected.
- Motor vehicle speeds exceed 50 mph.
- There is higher than average heavy trucks, buses, or recreational vehicles.
- The right side of the roadway contains static obstructions.

Paved shoulders should be included on both sides of two-way roadway in rural areas, whenever possible.

Bicycle Boulevard

A bicycle boulevard is a local street or series of connected local street segments that has been designated for use by bicycles and modified to provide priority treatment for bicyclists, while discouraging the use of these facilities by through traffic. Bicycle boulevards are intended to create conditions favored by bicyclists by taking advantage of bicycle-friendly characteristics that are typically found on local/residential streets—low traffic volumes and low vehicle operating speeds. Because bicyclists riding on bicycle boulevards typically share the road with other traffic, the low volume and speed usually found on residential streets does not indicate the need to provide dedicated bicycle lanes.

Roadway Modifications

“Road diet” is a term used for the reallocation of roadway lanes and/or space to integrate additional modes, such as bike lanes, pedestrian crossing islands, or parking, or a combination of modes on existing roadways. A common roadway reconfiguration involves converting an undivided four-lane (two-way) roadway into a three-lane roadway made up of two through lanes, a center two-way left turn lane, and a shoulder/bike lane, as shown below. Road diets refer to the conversion of roadways from four travel lanes to two and provide a number of safety benefits for pedestrians and bicycles. The reduction in the number of lanes regularly results in a decrease in travel speeds. In addition, the likelihood of multiple (vehicle) threats for pedestrians crossing the roadway is virtually eliminated and a space is created in the road that can be converted to a bicycle lane. Minor arterials and collectors with traffic volumes under 18,000 vehicles per day are considered candidates for conversion.

Shared Lane OHV Route or Bikeway

A shared lane is a typical roadway lane (generally 11-12' in width) on which a bicycle may be operated concurrently with motor vehicles. This type of trail facility is appropriate on low volume and rural roads, and consists of bikeway and wayfinding signage. Pavement markings may also be used to identify bikeways and individual routes. Additionally, OHV's are allowed on county road rights-of way; OHV routes should consist of similar signage. OHV and bikeway routes may share alignments, but for quality of experience, safety, and practical reasons – including connections and destinations – these routes should generally be considered on separate alignments.

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Shared Use Paths

Trails that are designed to provide bicycle transportation function while supporting multiple users are called shared-use paths. A shared-use path is typically located on exclusive right of-way, with no fixed objects in the pathway and minimal cross flow by motor vehicles. Portions of a shared-use path may be within the road right-of-way but physically separated from the roadway by a barrier or landscaping. Users typically include bicyclists, in-line skaters, wheelchair users (both non-motorized and motorized) and pedestrians, including walkers, runners, and people with baby strollers or dogs with people. Shared-use paths serve a variety of important purposes, such as providing an alternative to a busy thoroughfare or controlled-access corridor. They serve an important transportation function by providing a through-route for bicycle commuters where existing street and road configurations make longer distance biking difficult. Shared-use paths can provide an enjoyable non-motorized travel opportunity for individuals and families or a place to exercise, recreate, or rehabilitate from injury. Shared-use paths play an important role in providing continuity for the overall bicycle network by creating connections where there are missing links, or creating a route through a neighborhood to a nearby destination. A shared-use path can be located on exclusive right-of-way, or within the road right-of-way but physically separated from the road³. This plan recommends shared-use paths be paved in concrete or asphalt; if budget constraints require soft surfacing, compacted roadbase is recommended as it meets requirements for ADA accessibility. Shared use paths should be 10' wide minimum.

Trails

The US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Parks Service, and Fish & Wildlife Service collectively define a trail as "a linear route managed for human-powered, stock, or OHV forms of transportation or for historic or heritage values" which "provide(s) public access for opportunities of outdoor recreation as well as access to many significant prehistoric and historic sites."⁴ While the definition is broad, for the purposes of this document a trail is any linear route that meets the above definition and is not a sidewalk, shared use path, or roadway improvement. The USFS provides guidance on the categorization of a trail by its intended use (hiker/pedestrian, pack and saddle, bicycle, motorcycle, all-terrain vehicle, four-wheel drive vehicle >50 inches in width, cross country ski, snowshoe, snowmobile, motorized watercraft, nonmotorized watercraft) and by its level of improvement across five "classes" from minimally developed to fully developed. Trails may be managed for multiple uses but are designed for a specific Managed Use (the "design driver"); the Forest Service provides design parameters for tread width, surface, grade, cross slope, clearing, and turns.⁵ Trails should be constructed to modern standards to emphasize enjoyment and reduced environmental impact and maintenance intervals.

Crosswalks and Crosswalk Enhancements

A marked crosswalk is a type of pavement marking that indicates to pedestrians the recommended location to cross the roadway and also alerts approaching motorists as to where pedestrians may be

³ Mn/DOT Bikeway Facility Design Manual March 2007

⁴ Interagency Trail Data Standards Team July 2002

⁵ USDA Forest Service Trail Fundamentals September 2016

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crossing the street. Marked crosswalks are often installed at signalized intersections, at a school zone crossing and at un-signalized locations where planners determine that there are enough pedestrians to justify a marked crossing. Crosswalks may be marked at midblock crossing locations as well as at intersections. At all signalized intersections where an engineering study finds the presence of pedestrian activity, crosswalks should be considered because of the benefits, which include making it clear to vehicles where they should stop and delineating a path for pedestrians. Crosswalks at uncontrolled intersections should be limited and include other features, such as medians and curb extensions, when possible. A curb extension is an extension of the sidewalk into the roadway that reduces the crossing distance of a roadway for pedestrians and their exposure to vehicular traffic. Curb extensions are appropriate where there is an on-street parking lane. The curb extension moves the parked vehicles farther back from the intersection, improving sight lines and improving visibility of pedestrians near parked vehicles.

Medians and Crossing Islands

Medians and crossing islands (also known as refuge islands or center islands) are raised areas that are constructed in the center portion of a roadway that can serve as a place of refuge for pedestrians who cross the road mid-block or at an intersection. After crossing to the center island, pedestrians wait for motorists to stop or for an adequate gap in traffic before crossing the second half of the street. Medians provide a simplified crossing maneuver by allowing pedestrians to concentrate on only one direction of traffic at a time, creating the equivalent of two narrower one-way streets instead of one wide two-way street. Medians also provide space for landscaping that can be used to change the visual cues of the roadway and reduce driver speeds. Medians that are only painted do not provide the same safety benefits as raised ones. Raised medians are most applicable on multilane arterial roadways, and particularly those with high traffic volumes.

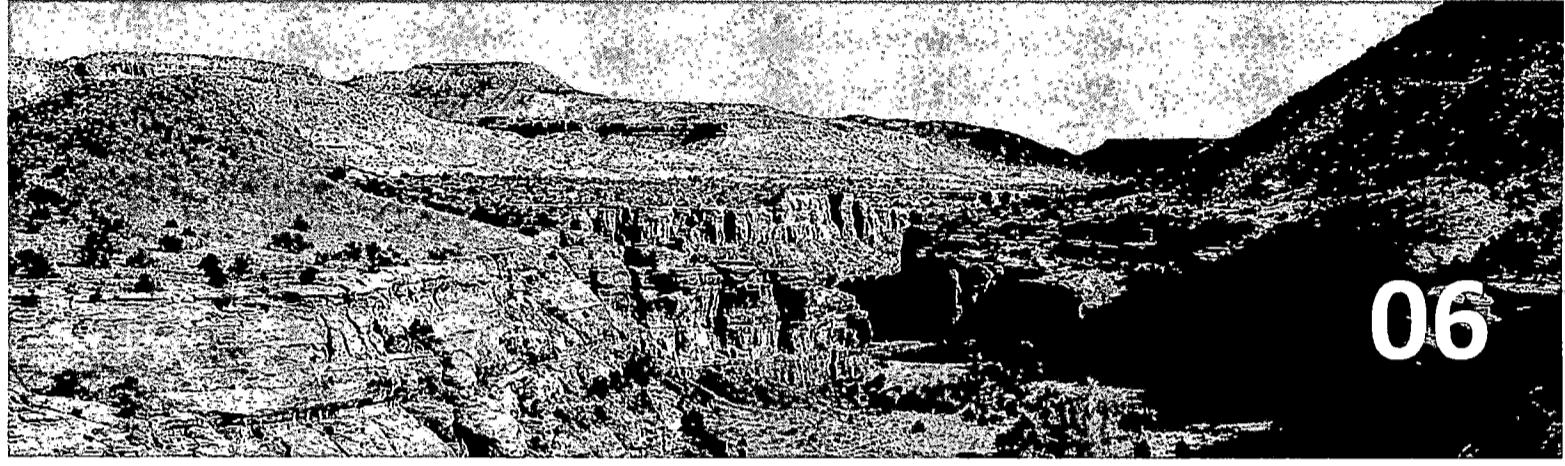
Greenways

A greenway is a linear space established along a corridor, such as a riverfront, stream valley, or other natural or landscaped system. Greenways may connect open spaces, parks, nature reserves, cultural features, or historic sites with populated areas and with one another. Greenways may or may not include a bikeway, shared-use path or multi-use trail.

Signage and Wayfinding

Signage and wayfinding includes trailhead direction and regulatory information, on-trail route information, roadway regulatory and wayfinding signs. All signs should be designed and installed according to the overlying jurisdiction. This plan recommends the development of a county route wayfinding signage design that is recognizable and unique to the Delta County system.

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MAP NARRATIVES, POTENTIAL PROJECTS, AND PRIORITIES

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06: MAP NARRATIVES, POTENTIAL PROJECTS, AND PRIORITIES

Overview

The public and stakeholder outreach process identified several areas of focus for potential trail improvement, or evaluation of future recreation development, within the county. These "Study Areas" are illustrated with individual enlargement maps. Additionally, a number of route and trail improvements cover larger areas of the county or extend beyond the reach of the individual enlargement maps; these routes are illustrated in a county-wide map. The maps are numbered and progress, generally, from west-to-east within the county. Individual projects and their relative priority within a Study Area are detailed below. The maps, included in Appendix A, are:

- Existing Conditions
- Wildlife
- Future:
- County-wide
- 1: Delta Area
- 2: Orchard City and Cedaredge (Fruitgrowers Reservoir to Ute Trail Road)
- 2a: Cedaredge Enlargement
- 3: Smith Mountain (North Gunnison Gorge NCA)
- 4: Hotchkiss Area
- 4a: Hotchkiss Enlargement
- 5: Crawford and Crawford State Park
- 6: McDonald Mesa
- 7: Paonia, Jumbo Mountain, Elephant Hill
- 7a: Paonia Enlargement

The narratives in this chapter describe the area depicted in the accompanying map, special features or notable conditions in the covered area, and potential route/trail alignments. For readability, existing routes are de-emphasized in this map series; please refer to the existing conditions maps for additional detail on existing routes, trails, and facilities. Each section concludes with a list of potential projects, organized by priority routes and trails, followed by future improvements. A summary of potential projects, organized into three categories (Priorities 1-3) is included at the conclusion of this chapter. *It is important to note that proposed trail alignments as identified in the narratives and maps are indicated for planning purposes only. Final number of trails, alignments, permissible uses, and management is to be developed under the specific planning processes of the land management agency holding purview over a specific area. These planning processes typically include public scoping/comment and assessment of environmental impacts associated with a given trail proposal.*

The maps include several references to "Area(s) of Interest." This nomenclature refers to public lands, managed by the BLM, that have attributes favorable to study for recreation development and/or should be considered for specific management planning activities. The Area of Interest nomenclature is used as, at the time of writing of this document, the Uncompahgre Field Office of the BLM is in the process of completing the revised Resource Management Plan for lands under that office's purview. Any special designation for these Areas of Interest will be codified in the RMP and will not necessarily include

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specific management planning for these individual areas. Should any of these areas be prioritized for recreation planning in the future, the BLM process will be required. Individual Areas of Interest are referenced in the map narratives; broadly speaking several of the Areas of Interest include important wildlife habitat, migration corridors, adjacency to State Wildlife Areas, livestock permits, livestock trails, and active hunting use. This plan recognizes the importance of these existing uses and natural resource assets; planning to minimize impacts and conflicts of user groups is critical. Management planning tools such as limiting trail density, limiting development to existing routes, prioritizing maintenance of existing routes, seasonal closures, and avoidance of key areas should be considered if these areas are identified for future development of recreational trails or amenities not currently contemplated by this plan.

Prioritization and Time Horizons:

For this Plan, a quantitative scoring system was not used to develop project priorities. Attempting to implement a scoring methodology for the wide variety of opportunities, particularly without a specific target outcome against an identified budget or other specific metric, would likely have yielded imbalance in the recommendations when considering user groups, use types, and location of improvements. Instead, an initial list of opportunities and priorities was developed during stakeholder and public outreach and then tested and refined in subsequent coordination, outreach, and open houses. Additionally, the broad scope of the project, user types, and potential funding sources lent the Plan to prioritization of potential projects by Study Area. The “potential projects” for each study area were then aggregated into a single list of first-, second-, and third-priority projects. This list is arranged sequentially in the numerical order of the presentation of the maps; within each category projects will likely be implemented opportunistically. For example, within the first-priority list, a project may be first to be implemented based on access to funds, stakeholder initiative, and user-group support. The improvements outlined in this Plan include relatively small projects – such as soft surface trail connections along a town block – to very ambitious projects – such as a regional, shared-use trail. An objective review of the achievability of a given project opportunity was also considered in the prioritization of projects; this included an understanding of potential partners in a given project. Lastly, projects that serve the most user types (by discipline and by skill level) or provide the greatest public benefit in a given Study Area were given higher priority.

Summary of Potential Project Prioritization qualities:

- *Number and type of users served*
- *Distribution of priorities amongst individual communities*
- *Concentration of public feedback*
- *Achievability of proposed project*

This Plan recognizes that a number of the projects described herein will require significant support beyond county staff and budget. Leveraging the resources of grassroots user groups, public agencies, and outside funding will be critical in developing capital and maintenance funding to allow many of these projects to move forward. A number of the projects identified by this Plan have been previously contemplated as a part of The Nature Connection’s GOCO Inspire Grant, which was awarded funding in early 2018. Projects that align with the community priorities per this Plan, that received (at least partial) funding with the GOCO Inspire award, and are identified in The Nature Connection’s 2018-2020 budget remain included in this Plan and are identified individually in each map area.

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The Plan is intended to be a “living document” in that it includes policy statements and considerations for future actions that may not be clearly defined at the time of Plan adoption. For example, use pressures or user type conflicts in a given trail system may indicate that the findings of this document merit re-evaluation. This format is intentional and creates flexibility for the county and communities to be responsive to new opportunities and evolving priorities. Broadly, any new proposal or deviation from the plan recommendations and priorities should always be evaluated against the Grounding Principles as defined by this Plan.

The time horizons for projects are not hard and fast targets, as there is not a specific county budget that will be directly applied to the projects list. The Plan considers a 15-20 year life span for the document and should be reviewed for consistency with current values after a maximum of 10 years. Generally, “Priority 1” projects should be targeted for completion within a 5-year time horizon; “Priority 2” projects within a 10-year time horizon, and “future projects” should be considered 15-20 year projects; this is presumed to exceed the practical life of the Master Plan and any projects not completed within 15 years should be re-evaluated for alignment with the current community values at that time.

Maps Narratives by Study Area:

Overall County Map – Existing Trails Inventory

This map shows the overall existing county trails infrastructure, including hiking/walking, biking, equestrian, OHV, ATV/UTV, snowmobiling, and Nordic skiing. The Recreation Trails Master Plan supports ongoing access to existing, legal trails and routes. Note that some existing and popular routes utilize a variety of trail types (for example, an OHV route traversing a USFS road and a motorized-access trail); because these trail segments are graphically depicted to differentiate specific trail designations, these existing trails may appear discontinuous.

County-wide:

This map serves as a key for the enlargement areas as well as covering areas that fall outside of the enlargements. In general and in the county-at-large the focus is on maintaining access to existing trail infrastructure and identifying/formalizing routes over county rights-of-way as regional connectors for OHVs and cyclists. In the near term these routes should be signed and recognized in trail mapping and literature. The value of these on-road routes is in creating a known network of connections that can also be used in orienting and enhancing visitor experience. The network of routes could be expanded or appended to develop destination-based touring (e.g. agriculture or winery tours). Additionally, providing recognized access routes in connection to popular destination areas may limit the need for trailering and staging (particularly for OHVs), enhancing opportunities to ride from home/home base, or from one recreation area to another. Additionally, this map includes the Nordic trail systems on Grand Mesa as maintained by the Grand Mesa Nordic Council. These trails span the boundary between Mesa County and Delta County. This Plan is supportive of the proposed Nordic trail improvements currently contemplated at Ward Reservoir, County Line, and Skyway Trails; this recreational amenity directly serves residents and guests of Delta County and provides the greatest concentration of Nordic trails in the County. The improvements include trail mileage for various levels of skill, specific areas where dogs are/will be allowed, and access/parking improvements. The Grand Mesa Nordic Council is currently working with the USFS in the planning of these improvements.

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Short-term improvements

Formalize bike and OHV routes via county roads (e.g. regulatory and wayfinding signage) (County ROW). Routes noted below are indicated on the County-wide map.

- **OHV Priority 1:** Signage of a continuous route over existing county roads from Delta to existing roads/routes in Dominguez/Escalante NCA and routes beyond. Formalizes connection from City of Delta to significant OHV resources west and south of the city. 6.3 miles.
- **Cycling Priority 1:** Signage of a continuous route over existing county roads from Delta, north to Orchard City and Cedaredge, southeast to Hotchkiss, and northeast to Paonia. Formalizes a safe, scenic route connecting county communities east to west. This route has one crossing of Highway 92 at 3100 Road; improved crossing infrastructure (signage, striping) should be considered at this location. 50 miles.
- **OHV Priority 2:** Signage of a continuous route over existing county roads from North Delta OHV Area to Peach Valley OHV Area. Though a long route this would formalize a connection between the two popular OHV areas near the City of Delta, and may reduce trailering and staging for day users. The route travels (from North Delta OHV): J25 Drive, Fairview Road, Austin Road, 2200 Road, and Peach Valley Road. 21.2 miles.
- **Cycling Priority 2:** Signage of a continuous route from Back River Road to Crawford. This route is a spur to the east-west regional route and completes the county-wide connection of communities via formalized cycling routes. 14.1 miles.
- **Cycling Priority 3:** Signage of looping/laddering routes over existing county roads on Rogers Mesa and Cedar Mesa. Ties into east-west regional route to create variety in mileage and experience. 20 miles.

Future Improvements

- 1) River crossing over Gunnison River, open to OHVs, and signage of a continuous route from Delta to North Delta Open OHV Area. Although the North Delta OHV area is very close to town, there is currently no direct and legal river crossing for OHVs between 2200 Road and the City of Delta.
- 2) East-west regional trail (CDOT ROW, Railroad ROW). Future highway improvements should accommodate bike lanes or a separated, multi-use path. This plan recognizes that the cost to plan, implement, and maintain such a trail exceeds the county's capacity at this time, but recognizes the desirability of an inter-community regional trail. The Union Pacific rail spur is currently active through the North Fork Valley and to Delta. Should rail operations be abandoned in the future, the county is advised to explore the possibility of a regional shared-use path through that right-of-way.
- 3) North-south regional trail, Delta to Montrose (Canal easements, CDOT ROW, County ROW). This connection would extend from the proposed Canal Trail south terminus at Sweitzer Lake State Park and continue to the Delta/Montrose County line using primarily county roads; canal easements should be considered where possible but may not be feasible due to legal limitations of easement use on private lands.

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1: Delta Area:

This map includes the City of Delta, North Delta "Area of Interest" (which includes N Delta OHV area and the Devil's Thumb trailhead), Austin/Orchard City area, Escalante State Wildlife Area, and the Escalante Triangle RMZ (within the Dominguez-Escalante NCA). Although partially shown on this map, Cedaredge and Smith Mountain are covered in other Study Area maps. This plan references the City of Delta Recreation Master Plan, adopted in January 2018; that document should be referenced for detail of routes and priorities within the City. Several trail improvements recommended by the City of Delta plan extend into the county and those routes are indicated in the County Plan maps and noted below. **The North Delta Area of Interest** likely includes: formalization of motorized trails within the OHV area, formalization of hiking trails into the Adobe Badlands area, an OHV route from Delta through to the Grand Mesa, and a future alignment of the Delta Drop mountain bike trail. The BLM resource planning process has not been formally imitated for this area. The **Escalante Triangle RMZ** includes a series of looped mountain biking trails; this planning process is underway with the BLM and is led by IMBA/DAMB and is not depicted in detail here. Additionally, this map indicates regional routes, primarily identified for road bike and OHV travel over existing county rights-of-way; and a future regional connection between Delta and Olathe (route to be determined).

- 1) Confluence to Cottonwood Trail, per City of Delta Recreation Master Plan (City of Delta)
- 2) Mountain View to Sweitzer State Park Trail, per City of Delta Recreation Master Plan (City/county partnership)
- 3) Formalization of OHV route from Delta to Dominguez-Escalante as described in the County-wide project priorities.
- 4) Escalante Triangle Trails – The trail system at Escalante Triangle, within the Dominguez-Escalante NCA, is under design and review in coordination at the time of drafting of this Plan. It has been designated a Recreation Management Zone with a priority on developing non-motorized trails designed for mountain biking and hiking. This Plan also references the BLM DENCA Resource Management Plan in supporting the planning and development of trails in Escalante Triangle consistent with BLM management objectives for this area. Capital and Maintenance funding: grants via COBMOBA, in-kind services of BLM staff, user group fundraising.
- 5) Formalization of OHV route from North Delta OHV Area to Peach Valley OHV area as described in the County-wide projects and priorities.
- 6) Devil's Thumb Trailhead (BLM) – Parking, regulatory and wayfinding signage improvements at the existing trailhead near the Delta Reservoir; formalize access point(s), manage motorized incursion into the Adobe Badlands WSA, improve visibility of this unique resource in close proximity to the City of Delta. This would effort should be included in any travel management planning that the BLM may initiate for the North Delta OHV Area.
- 7) Sweitzer Lake Story Walk (GOCO Inspire, included in TNC 2018-2020 implementation budget) – Short section of new trail near the boat ramp at beach at Sweitzer Lake; improve educational and interpretive opportunities for school and recreational visitors.
- 8) OHV Access from Delta to Grand Mesa Via Pipeline Road (BLM and USFS) – This existing route provides OHV access to Grand Mesa from the north side of the Gunnison River and should be evaluated for condition and maintenance/route refinement needs. Should an OHV route be constructed across the Gunnison River in Delta, this route would become a valuable resource, allowing access to Grand Mesa without trailering/staging of OHVs.

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Future Improvements

- 1) Confluence Park to Escalante SWA, per City of Delta Recreation Master Plan (ditch easements and SWA)
- 2) Delta Drop Mountain Bike Trail (BLM and USFS) – planning and implementation of a mountain bike and hiking route over public lands from Grand Mesa into Delta would create a “marquis” or destination trail similar to the Palisade Plunge (under planning at the time of writing of this document). This trail would begin at the existing trails in Flowing Park and be a continuation of the existing Drop Off Trail (USFS #726). Planning process and implementation of this trail would require significant financial resources and dedication; as such, this plan categorizes this trail as a “future improvement”. Note: the alignment shown on the maps approximates the East Pipeline road/trail for much of the route and is for illustrative purposes only – the actual route is to be determined and should be separate from the motorized access route.
- 3) Delta to Whitewater OHV route – This route has been contemplated for several years, with a number of existing but discontinuous segments. The route would likely begin at the intersection of Sawmill Mesa Road and Escalante Rim Road, traversing Escalante Rim Road into The Hunting Grounds. From there the route would travel between the river and Highway 50 to the county line and beyond. This is an opportunity to create a “marquis,” extra-regional trail that is also supported in concept by Mesa County, and could ultimately create a significant touring loop for OHV users as a destination trail.
- 4) Black Bridge Boat Ramp Improvements (SWA) – This is an existing boat ramp within the Escalante State Wildlife Area. It represents a valuable take-out and put-in point and is relatively unimproved. This facility should be monitored for use and impacts and may require improvements in access, circulation, and at the river’s edge.
- 5) Hwy 65 Boat Ramp Improvements (County ROW) – This is an existing boat ramp within the CDOT ROW just north of Highway 92. It is bounded by private property. This facility should be monitored for use and impacts and may require improvements in access, circulation, and at the river’s edge.

2: Orchard City and Cedaredge

This map focuses on Cedaredge and immediate surroundings. The town is relatively unique in the county in that access points to public lands are relatively distant, and most public lands access are by car/truck/trailer. The recommendations of this Plan are consistent with the Town of Cedaredge Master Trail Plan (2008) and GOCO Inspire Grant application (The Nature Connection, 2017). Priorities within the Town include improving and completing connections to the school campuses, which in turn will enhance overall community trail connections within the Cedaredge. Opportunities exist to formalize an OHV route from Town to the Round Corral on Surface Creek Road and at the USFS boundary to enhance access to Grand Mesa. An existing OHV route to Grand Mesa on 2225 Road, to Old Grand Mesa Road, includes parking/staging in public ROW on 2225 Road; this area is bounded by private property, should be monitored for use/impacts, and may require active management in the future.

- 1) Deer Trail to Main Street (Town of Cedaredge, Cedaredge Master Trails Plan and GOCO Inspire) – Connect over existing, unimproved ROW between MS/HS campus and east Main Street.
- 2) HS/MS campus trail loop (DCSD, Cedaredge Master Trails Plan, and GOCO Inspire) – Improve overall connectivity of campus to other trail amenities, create looping trails for public and student use.

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- 9) Pump Track (DCSD, GOCO Inspire, included in TNC 2018-2020 implementation budget) – Located on Elementary School Campus; creates recreational and programming opportunity in town.
- 3) Hwy 65 from Main Street to Elementary School Campus (CDOT ROW, Town of Cedaredge, Cedaredge Master Trails Plan, GOCO Inspire) – Increase safety for pedestrians along Hwy 65, complete connection of Grand Mesa Trail from Main Street to elementary school campus.
- 4) Bike lane improvements East Main to Cedar Mesa – Provide safe route for cyclists along steep grade between valley floor and Cedar Mesa; this route is also a part of the east-west regional bike route. This Plan assumes that the existing ROW width and grade is sufficient to allow for the addition of an uphill bike lane.

Future Improvements

- 1) Hwy 65 to Surface Creek via High Country Ave (Cedaredge ROW) – Connection of south terminus of Grand Mesa Trail, through skate park area, to Surface Creek (full connection requires pedestrian bridge, below).
- 2) Ped Bridge Surface Creek to Stonebridge Drive at High Country Ave – Connection across Surface Creek to existing Surface Creek Story Trail, through easement on private property (to be negotiated/granted), to high school/middle school campus.
- 3) Looping of Surface Creek Trail via 3rd Street – Looping of southern 2/3 of Surface Creek Story Trail via on-street trail or shared-use path via 3rd Street.

3: Smith Mountain:

The Smith Mountain Area lies in the northern end of the Gunnison Gorge NCA, and currently managed under the Gunnison Gorge NCA Resource Management Plan (RMP), which identifies Smith Mountain as a SRMA with “important values, resources, or land uses” listed as “protect and enhance riparian and recreation resources (Gunnison and North Fork Rivers Special Recreation Management Area)”¹. The RMP indicates that management planning is needed for the higher-elevation areas of the SRMA, which would include travel management planning for trails and recreation improvements. A series of alignments are indicated on this plan that serve as a starting point for recreation/trail development on Smith Mountain in coordination with the BLM. Numerous multi-use routes exist in this planning area, and two large parking lots (one with maps and restrooms) are in place. This Plan recommends planning and development of trails via the BLM process, including a combination of multi-use and non-motorized trails. Existing, multi-use routes should remain or be replaced with new multi-use routes. The overall design focus of new trail development should be for mountain biking/hiking, with an understanding that some or all trails will be managed for multi-use access. This complements the Peach Valley OHV area, where non-motorized uses are permitted but the facility design focus is on motorized users. Additionally, the plan identifies a potential location for a campground on H75 Road near the saddle of Smith Mountain. This campground would serve recreational users of all types and provide all-weather access to camping on the south side of the Gunnison River – the existing campground (Cottonwood Grove) can be difficult to access during inclement weather.

- 1) New trail planning and implementation via BLM process. Cost: TBD pending total trail alignments. Funding: Grants, BLM budget allocations, user group fundraising and volunteer work.

¹ Gunnison Gorge NCA Approved Resource Management Plan, 2004

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Future Improvements

- 1) Primitive campground on H75 Road. Accommodate tent and pull-through camp trailer sites, vault toilets, and trail information signage.
- 2) Parking, shade/shelter, and signage improvements: as trail facilities and use increases, trailhead area improvements may be necessary; use levels and impacts should be monitored.

4: Hotchkiss:

Hotchkiss is a hub in the recreation and trails infrastructure for a variety of reasons: regional cycling routes pass through town; the high school campus area holds a number of community amenities such as the North Fork Pool, pump track, The Nature Connection (with numerous outdoor activity improvements funded via GOCO at the time of the writing of this plan); Delta County Fairgrounds; public river access; and access to public lands. Many of these active uses are/will be sited at the high school campus and currently there is no safe, non-motorized access between town and the campus. As such, the priority project for this area is to make that connection. Although relatively costly, this will provide significant value to the greater Delta County community by linking these public assets to town, and by creating a safe connection between Back River Road and downtown Hotchkiss as a part of the east-west regional cycling route.

- 1) Main Street to High School/Recreation District Campus (County Fairgrounds and CDOT ROW), including pedestrian bridge over North Fork River: Separated, shared-use (non-motorized) path extending from the east entry of the fairgrounds to Bulldog Street with pedestrian safety barriers as warranted. This will require CDOT permitting and wetlands evaluation, and potentially mitigation. Additionally, a pedestrian bridge will be required over the North Fork River as the existing Hwy 92 vehicle bridge is not of sufficient width to add a bike/pedestrian lane.
- 2) Pedestrian Crossing, Hwy 92 and Back River Road (CDOT ROW) – An improved crossing of Highway 92 to allow access between Back River Road (regional bike route) and proposed shared-use path along Hwy 92. Signage, pavement marking. Other signage and warning systems should be considered at this location the increase visibility of pedestrians to motorists, and reduction of the speed limit at the intersection may be appropriate. All proposed improvements will need to be to CDOT standards and approved via CDOTs process.
- 3) Trailhead/trail improvements south of High School (DSD, BLM, private; GOCO Inspire, at least partially included in TNC 2018-2020 implementation budget) – This proposed trailhead and trail improvements project would open up easy-to-access multi-use trails to a broad spectrum of users, from the High School mountain biking team to recreational and destination users of all skill levels. Public land access, parking, and complementing amenities enhance the value of this trail system. Existing routes and uses should be considered in the overall trail planning; this project will require BLM management planning process (likely travel management) as the area and existing routes are currently unmanaged. Future opportunities to obtain easements from a willing landowner, or to acquire land adjoining the BLM parcel would significantly increase the close-to-trailhead recreation potential of the area.
- 4) Improved Crossing, Hwy 92 and 3100 Road – This is the location of one of two crossings of Highway 92 of the 50-mile east-west regional bike route between Paonia and Delta. Crossing infrastructure may be similar to the Back River Road proposed crossing, and will need to meet CDOT standards and be approved by CDOT.

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- 5) Boat ramp at Fairgrounds (County Fairgrounds; GOCO Inspire, included in TNC 2018-2020 implementation budget) – The public access to the North Fork River is a high priority to the community and will be a valuable asset in river access and recreation. At the time of the writing of this document the project is allocated funding from the GOCO Inspire Grant award and is planned for implementation.
- 6) Fairgrounds Story Walk (County Fairgrounds; GOCO Inspire, included in TNC 2018-2020 implementation budget).

5: Crawford and Crawford State Park:

The Crawford map identifies the proposed improvements to the C Hill trailhead and trail, and identifies the Youngs Peak/C Hill area as a proposed Area of Interest for recreation and travel management planning. This public land north of town provides an opportunity for improved human-powered recreation convenient to Crawford. Motorized use should be limited to existing routes, and trail improvements should, initially, be limited to maintenance and modification of existing/Previously developed routes. Travel and trail planning in this Area of Interest has not been formally initiated and requires the BLM planning process. Additionally, Crawford Road is identified as a regional route connecting to Paonia and Hotchkiss over existing County ROW. A separated, shared-use path along Hwy 92 and connecting the Town of Crawford to Crawford State Park has been identified as a desirable trail connection by CPW and is reflected in these plans. The map includes Crawford State Park; the CPW master plan for trails improvements along the perimeter of the reservoir is reflected, with the East Shore/Viaduct Trail as the next priority for development.

- 1) C Hill Trailhead and Trail (BLM, GOCO Inspire, included in TNC 2018-2020 implementation budget)
- 2) East Shore/Viaduct Trail (CPW, Crawford State Park). Capital and Maintenance Funding: CPW.
- 3) Separated, shared-use trail from Town of Crawford to Crawford State Park (CDOT, CPW, Delta County). Capital and Maintenance Funding: grants (CPW, CDOT, GOCO, others).

6: McDonald Mesa

The McDonald Mesa map identifies an Area of Interest for potential future recreation and travel management planning on BLM land. A proposed trail system (for any user type) is not yet developed and will need to undergo the BLM scoping and management process. Attributes favorable to trail development include existing access, existing routes throughout the proposed area, scenic quality, and proximity to Crawford, Paonia, and Hotchkiss. Recreational use of the area exists, but there is not active management or guiding documentation. Important considerations for any future planning of trails in this area include the proximity to two State Wildlife Areas (McCluskey and Roeber), direct habitat value of the BLM lands and historic grazing permits and cattle trails. Strategies that may be appropriate for this study area include: seasonal closures, routing trails around edges of high quality habitat, reducing trail density near high quality habitat, maintaining large/unbroken areas of habitat, avoiding small areas of habitat ("stepping-stone patches") when selecting trail routes.² CPW recommendations include limiting trail development to maintenance and modification of existing routes. Currently no specific trails planning is contemplated in this area; the lower (western) half of the area may be most appropriate for any future trails improvements.

² *Planning Trails with Wildlife in Mind, a Handbook for Trail Planners, Colorado State Parks 1998.*

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7: Paonia:

Jumbo Mountain Trails have been developed; this master plan supports the formalization of a multi-use trail system via the BLM process. Future trails that may extend east towards the county line will need to be evaluated through the BLM scoping and planning process. If additional trails are proposed, the density of trail development should decrease significantly to the east, plans should include multiple user types, and impacts to wildlife habitat and historic uses (such as hunting and grazing) should be evaluated and given high priority. The BLM land extends into Gunnison County, with the easternmost property line coincident with USFS lands. Future plans may consider connectivity to existing trail infrastructure via this route. Jumbo mountain trailhead and access are noted in greater detail with Map 7a comments, below. CPW recommends limiting trail development to existing trails, with consideration for seasonal closures in critical wildlife habitat areas; this is consistent with the majority of public comment received for the Jumbo Mountain Area of Interest.

Elephant Hill/Lone Cabin BLM lands carry favorable attributes to trail development, including proximity to Paonia, potential through-access to other public lands south/southeast, and scenic value. Access via public ROW is possible via Minnesota Creek Road and Lone Cabin Road. Challenges include significant wildlife habitat, including critical winter range, limited access and trailhead/parking opportunities, and an overlay of uses that require careful consideration (e.g., hunting/horse packing, grazing permits and cattle drive trails). The proximity of the two State Wildlife Areas to the southwest is also an important consideration in the evaluation of the continuity of wildlife habitat/range of the area (in aggregate). Additionally, frontage along Minnesota creek road is less than 1/4 mile, with private lands flanking to the east and west, and a private residence immediately west of the potential trail head. The topography of the public frontage on Minnesota Creek Road is steep; a feasibility study of access, parking, and trailhead design would be necessary for any new trail system on Elephant Hill should this be considered in the future. Future trails planning will require the BLM scoping and planning process, and should include multiple uses, limits on trail density, seasonal closures, trails aligned to limit private property trespass. CPW recommends limiting trail development to existing trails, with consideration for seasonal closures in critical wildlife habitat areas; this is consistent with the majority of public comment received for the Elephant Hill/Lone Cabin Area of Interest.

Map 7a: Paonia Detail Area

The proposed improvements in the immediate vicinity of the Town of Paonia focus on creating a shared-use loop system, connecting downtown, the River Park, the Middle/High School campus and the library. This is as envisioned in (and consistent with) prior plans and the GOCO Inspire grant. The library connection serves as the jumping-off point for a regional connection (primarily road cycling, over existing ROW) to Hotchkiss and points west via Back River Road. This map highlights the parking and signage at Apple Valley Park, the trail connection from Apple Valley Park to the Jumbo Mountain Trailhead via the Hawk's Haven easement and via Pan American. Currently, access through Apple Valley Park south and east requires crossing a corner of private property; the legal access to the Jumbo Mountain trails is via Pan American and this Plan recommends seeking an easement for trail access if the current landowner is amenable.

- 1) Middle/High School loop (DCSD, Town of Paonia, GOCO Inspire)
- 2) Grand Avenue Crossing at Paonia River Park (County ROW)
- 3) Pedestrian bridge and library connection (Town of Paonia, GOCO Inspire)

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- 4) Jumbo Mountain Trailhead and directional signage at Hawk's Haven easement; Apple Valley Park (Town of Paonia)

Future Improvements

- 1) Parking, signage, wayfinding, restroom upgrades at Apple Valley Park
- 2) Pedestrian improvements between Apple Valley Park and Jumbo Mountain Trailhead

Policy-level Support

The statements below identify a number of topics that relate broadly to the development of trails, and should be considered on an ongoing basis. These statements generally do not relate to a specific trail or route, but instead consider future opportunities and ideas brought forth by members of the Delta County community. Through this plan, Delta County is supportive of:

- 1) Seasonal closures, as deemed necessary via appropriate the planning process, to protect wildlife and accommodate cattle/sheep grazing permits and drive trails as necessary – *Specifically related to trail proposals, on public lands, which require public scoping and planning processes.*
- 2) Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in public works projects. E.g., expanded shoulders, bike lanes, and separated trails commensurate with CDOT renovations (CDOT ROW), county, and municipal road corridor improvements.
- 3) Securing easements or acquiring properties from willing landowners to create/complete trail connections (e.g. river corridor trails, isolated public recreation amenities).
- 4) Future planning and development of dedicated regional, shared-use paths.
- 5) The Nature Connection/DCSD outdoor recreation, education programs, and facility improvements.
- 6) Grand Mesa Nordic Council and trails.
- 7) North Fork Valley Recreation District facilities and programs.
- 8) Travel management planning on BLM land for multi-use and selective limited-use trails, where active management does not yet exist.
- 9) Maintaining access to existing, legal trails (BLM and USFS).
- 10) Looping/laddering of existing OHV trails (BLM and USFS).
- 11) Development of recreation trails at Escalante Triangle – per the Escalante Triangle RMZ designation (BLM).
- 12) Access for OHVs from City of Delta to existing routes on Grand Mesa/Delta County line (City, BLM, USFS).
- 13) Access for OHVs from City of Delta to existing routes on Dominguez-Escalante NCA (BLM).
- 14) Formal identification and recognition of extra-regional OHV routes, connecting to points outside of Delta County (e.g. the Rimrocker Trail).
- 15) Inclusion of trails in Delta County in regional trail network mapping and marketing.
- 16) Regional connection between Delta County and Gunnison County using existing routes and short connectors where needed (USFS, GPLI).
- 17) Improvement to trail heads (parking, mapping, and signage) and access as user numbers grow and individual trail popularity increases.

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Summary of Priorities

The project priorities are provided in three groups, from highest to lowest priority. The priorities consider: value to a broad range of users, safe connection to public amenities, relative cost, community support, and distribution of priorities across communities. Each list is organized by map panel number. Each project may have a variety of partners and agencies with diverse funding sources for design and implementation. Order-of-magnitude costs for Priority 1 improvements are included in Chapter 07.

Priority 1

- Overall Map, Unincorporated: Signage and wayfinding for county regional route: Paonia to Hotchkiss across Rogers, Redlands, and Cedar Mesas, through Cedaredge, past Orchard City, into Delta.
- Overall Map, Unincorporated: Winter plowing of Stevens Gulch Road to existing USFS parking/staging area to provide access to motorized and non-motorized uses.
- Map 1, Delta: in-city connections (per city plan); Confluence Park to Cottonwood Park and Mountain View Park to Sweitzer Lake.
- Map 1, Delta: Escalante Triangle Trails.
- Map 1, Delta: Signage and wayfinding for OHV route from Delta to DENCA.
- Map 2, Cedaredge: Complete connection between H/MS campus and elementary school via Deer Trail to Main Street path, HS/MS campus trail loop, and continuous sidewalk along Grand Mesa Drive from Main Street to elementary school.
- Map 3, Smith Mountain: Smith Mountain new trails.
- Map 4, Hotchkiss: separated, shared-use trail from fairgrounds to Bulldog along Hwy 92 (requires pedestrian bridge at North Fork River).
- Map 4, Hotchkiss: Improved crossing at 92 and Back River Road.
- Map 4, Hotchkiss: Trailhead and trail improvements S of HS and at the 'Dobes.
- Map 5, Crawford: C Hill trail and trailhead improvements.
- Map 5, Crawford: East Shore/Viaduct Trail at Crawford State Park.
- Map 7, Paonia: Connection from River Park, across Grand, through M/HS campus.
- Map 7, Paonia: Formalize trails; wayfinding/signage/trailhead/access improvements for Jumbo Mtn.

Priority 2

- Overall Map, Unincorporated: Signage and wayfinding for county regional route: Paonia (Back River Road) to Crawford.
- Overall Map, Unincorporated: Improvement and formalization of OHV route from North Delta OHV Area to Grand Mesa.
- Map 1, Delta: regional OHV route from Sawmill Mesa Road to the Mesa County line.
- Map 1, Delta: Devil's Thumb Trailhead.
- Map 1, Delta: Sweitzer Lake Story Walk.
- Map 1, Delta: OHV route from North Delta OHV Area to Peach Valley OHV Area.
- Map 2, Cedaredge: Bike lane on Cedar Mesa Road to Main and 65.
- Map 2, Cedaredge: Pump track at elementary school campus.
- Map 4, Hotchkiss: Boat ramp at fairgrounds.
- Map 4, Hotchkiss: Fairgrounds Story Walk.
- Map 4, Hotchkiss: Improved crossing at Hwy 92 and 3100 Road (Rogers Mesa).
- Map 5, Crawford: Separated, shared-use path from Crawford to Crawford State Park.

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Priority 3

- Overall Map, Unincorporated: Signage of looping/laddering routes, connecting to east-west regional route, on Rogers and Cedar Mesas.
- Overall Map, Unincorporated: East-west, regional, shared-use trail.
- Map 1, Delta: Shared-use path connecting Confluence Park to Escalante SWA.
- Map 1, Delta: OHV crossing of Gunnison River to provide access from Delta to North Delta OHV area and public lands beyond.
- Map1, Delta: Delta Drop mountain bike trail.
- Map 1, Delta: Black Bridge boat ramp access, signage, parking improvements.
- Map 1, Delta: Hwy 65 boat ramp access, signage, parking improvements.
- Map 1, Delta: Shared-use path connecting Delta to Montrose.
- Map 2, Cedaredge: Shared-use path from Grand Mesa Drive to Surface Creek via High Country Ave.
- Map 2, Cedaredge: Pedestrian bridge over Surface Creek at High Country Ave (requires private land easement).
- Map 2, Cedaredge: Surface Creek Trail loop via 3rd Street.
- Map 3, Smith Mountain: Primitive campground on H75 Road.
- Map 3, Smith Mountain: Parking, shade/shelter, signage improvements at Smith Mountain.
- Map 7, Paonia: Pedestrian bridge M/HS campus to library.
- Map 7, Paonia: Parking, signage, wayfinding, and restroom upgrades at Apple Valley Park.
- Map 7, Paonia: Pedestrian improvements between Apple Valley Park and Jumbo Mountain Trailhead.



07

IMPLEMENTATION COSTS AND FUNDING SOURCES

Delta County Recreation and Trails Master Plan

07: IMPLEMENTATION COSTS AND FUNDING SOURCES

Project Costs

The tables below summarize the Priority 1 projects as identified by the public and stakeholder process. Potential projects are identified by map area.

Improvement	Est Cost	Potential Funding / Partners	Route Notes
Overall Map: Signage of regional route Paonia to Delta	\$10,000-15,000	Delta County, grants*	Connects Paonia, Hotchkiss, Cedaredge, Orchard City, and Delta via existing county roads. Approx. 50 miles.
Overall Map: Winter plowing Stevens Gulch Road to USFS Parking	\$900-3,000 annually	Delta County	Approx 2.3 miles of additional plowing. Crosses USFS boundary. Integrated into Stevens Gulch typical plow route. Assumes \$300/event, 3-10 events per year.
Map 1: City of Delta Trail Connections	Per City Plan	Per City of Delta	See City of Delta PROST Master Plan, 2018.
Map 1: Escalante Triangle Trails	Up to \$785,000	Grants, BLM in-kind, volunteer**	Per Escalante Triangle RMZ. Including primitive trailhead and trail improvements
Map 1: OHV Route, Delta-Dominguez/Escalante	\$3,500	Delta County, OHV user groups, grants	G Road/Sawmill Mesa Road to Escalante Rim Road. 10 directional signs at \$200/ea and one info kiosk at SW end of route at \$1,500
Map 2: Cedaredge in-town connections	\$60,000 (funded)	Town of Cedaredge, The Nature Connection GOCO Inspire Funds, additional grants	\$60k included in Nature Connection 2018-2020 Inspire Grant budget
Map 3: Smith Mountain Trails	TBD	Grants, BLM in-kind, volunteer	Management planning required prior to final trail use and design
Map 4: Hotchkiss town-high school	\$1,500,000	Grants, Delta County, Town of Hotchkiss, CDOT	Separated, shared-use path along Hwy 92. Assumes \$500k for bridge and remainder for 10' wide concrete trail. Soft surface would significantly reduce total cost.
Map 4: Hotchkiss Hwy 92 crossing at Back River Road	\$10,000	Grants, Delta County, Town of Hotchkiss, CDOT	Reliant on shared-use path, above, for continuity of connection. Assumes CDOT compliant signage and striping.
Map 4: Hotchkiss High School trail/trailhead improvements	\$85,000 (funded)	Grants, The Nature Connection GOCO Inspire funds, volunteer	\$85k included in Nature Connection 2018-2020 Inspire Grant budget
Map 5: Crawford C Hill Trail and trailhead	\$50,500 (funded)	The Nature Connection GOCO Inspire funds, volunteer	\$50.5k included in Nature Connection 2018-2020 Inspire Grant budget
Map 5: Crawford State Park east shore viaduct trail	\$415,000 Per CPW	CPW	Planned for implementation as a part of the Crawford State Park trails master plan
Map 7: Paonia connection from Paonia River Park across Grand	\$25,000	Town of Paonia, grants***	Allowance for soft-surface trail connection, striped road crossing, signage
Map 7: Paonia Jumbo Mountain trails	\$15,000	Grants, volunteer, BLM in-kind****	Allowance for regulatory and wayfinding signage/kiosk, initial trailhead improvements.

* Assumes average of one sign per mile @ \$150/sign with 25% of signs applied to existing fixtures. Includes allowance for design of custom signage.

** High end of cost range assumes full build-out of 30 miles of trails at \$25,000/mile, which equates to a professionally built trail over moderate terrain. Volunteer work and/or phasing would reduce the initial

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implementation costs for this project. Includes \$35k allowance for planning/design. Final trail design is TBD.
***Current grant pursuits include application for additional trail improvements west of Grand on MS/HS campus; not included in this allowance value.

****Numerous trails already constructed. Immediate need for regulatory and wayfinding signage, as well as management planning process to determine future use/management. Planning process not included in this allowance value.

Costs provided in the table above are order-of-magnitude estimates based on assumptions regarding the type of improvement, design/permitting required, and difficulty in implementation. Recent, regional cost data has been used for unit price assumptions.

Additional reference information is provided below to assist in future planning and benchmarking of costs for individual projects.

From the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Statewide Strategic Trails Plan (2016):

Estimated Trail Construction Costs	General trail construction characteristics	Estimated Per Mile Costs
Natural surface/Natural tread trail – 18” – 60” trail tread	Trail designed consistent with agency specific trail standards, acceptable grade, erosion mitigation, etc.	\$25,000 \$40,000
Crusher Fines	Trail designed consistent with agency specific trail standards as above.	\$500,000 - \$600,000
Concrete Trail	10 foot wide, 6-inch thick, reinforced, mesh, sufficient gravel base subgrade.	\$1,000,000
Canyon trail with significant elevation change, aspect and geological issues	Example from Jefferson County “Peaks to Plains” Trail	\$5,000,000

Potential Funding Sources, Suggested Grants/Foundations

There are several potential funding sources typically considered for recreation and trails projects.

These include:

- Grants
- Local Appropriations - Town and County revenues/budgets.
- Creation of a Designated Fund - special taxes, typically a sales tax increment at the County level, dedicated to open space, trails, parks and other similar community investments.
- Local Development – community benefits negotiated as a part of a subdivision or land development process.
- Conservation Set-Aside Tax Benefits - Under Colorado Law, landowners who agree to set aside developable lands for conservation purposes can reap substantial tax benefits directly, or cash benefits, by re-marketing the tax benefits to others in need of a state tax deduction.
- Individual, Corporate and Philanthropic Giving - gifts, grants, bequests, fund-raising events and other forms of giving.
- In-Kind Volunteerism - public agencies or private participants both in land donations and possibly use of equipment, labor or materials.

Currently, Delta County does not have a dedicated budget for capital or maintenance funding of trail, trailhead, or access improvements, although the partnership with the Delta County School District in funding The Nature Connection does provide financial support of recreation and trails programming and physical assets. Additionally, there is precedent of allocation of Road and Bridge equipment,

Delta County Recreation and Trails Master Plan

materials, and staff in improving existing routes. To date, public lands trails improvement and maintenance has largely been provided by the governing land management agency, outside funding such as grants and registration fee disbursements, and/or user group support. Leveraging County funds to support the implementation and upkeep of recreation and trails assets would benefit the public in several ways. (1) The most apparent benefit is in providing dollars that directly support publicly accessible trail amenities. (2) Allocation of funds illustrates a high level of support for trails projects, an important consideration in leveraging outside funding sources, such as grants. (3) Budgeting that results in increased or improved recreation assets in the County will advance the implementation of priority projects, increasing the marketability and attractiveness of the County's recreation infrastructure and indirectly benefiting local communities and businesses. Additionally, the County should consider in-kind financial support of trail improvement and maintenance, such as waiving tipping fees at the landfill for trail/trailhead clean-up days.

This plan recommends that the County consider budgeting for trail asset planning, capital and maintenance efforts. The likely allocation of such funds early in the development of the priority projects as identified in this plan is in making budget available for fund-matching in support of planning and implementation grant applications.

The following tables illustrate a number of grant funding agencies and programs that may provide access to funding for planning and/or implementation of specific recreation and trails projects. This list should not be considered exhaustive; the most effective method for choosing and pursuing grant funding is to engage the expertise of a grant writing professional or an individual with direct experience in winning grant funding to evaluate funding opportunities and assemble grant applications.

Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO)

Local Park and Outdoor Recreation Grants to help build or improve community parks, outdoor recreation amenities, outdoor athletic facilities, and environmental education facilities. Funding is also available for land acquisitions.

The Connect Initiative, funds projects that help connect regional and local trail networks and provide more bikeable and walkable access to outdoor recreation.

The Inspire Initiative is the third prong of our strategic plan and was developed to address the growing disconnect between youth and the outdoors. This grant program is no longer accepting applications.

Address:	1900 Grants St., Ste 725 Denver, CO 80203
Phone:	(303) 226-4500
Fax:	(303) 863-7517
Email:	info@goco.org
Website:	http://www.goco.org/grants
Purpose:	Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) invests a portion of Colorado Lottery proceeds to help preserve and enhance the state's parks, trails, wildlife, rivers, and open spaces. GOCO's independent board awards competitive grants to local governments and land trusts, and makes investments through Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Created when voters approved a Constitutional Amendment in 1992, GOCO has since funded more than 4,800 projects in urban and rural areas in all 64 counties. Grant programs include annual Local Park and Outdoor Recreation (LPOR) grants, planning grants, School Yard Initiative (SYI) grants, and Youth Corps grants, as well as Open Space grants, Conservation Easement Transaction Costs grants, Conservation Excellence grants, and Habitat Restoration grants. Grants are also awarded through GOCO's Special Initiatives: Protect (for large land conservation projects), Connect (for trail networks and improved access to the outdoors), and Inspire (addressing the growing disconnect between youth and the outdoors).

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Grant Types:	Capital Improvement/Purchase; Challenge/Matching
Primary Areas:	Environment/Conservation; Recreation/Sports
Details:	Has specific grant guidelines; Has specific reporting requirements; Always call before applying; Issues Requests for Proposals; Check annual report for details; Check website for details
How to Apply:	Complete information is available at GOCO.org/grants regarding grant cycle dates, types of projects funded, amounts allocated to different funding categories, when applications will be available, and application deadlines and guidelines. Each GOCO grant program has its own application and forms, instructions, criteria, and deadlines. New applications are developed for each grant cycle.
Restrictions:	Each program has its own restrictions; view the website or contact the funder for information for each.
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	\$200,000 - \$500,000

Colorado Parks and Wildlife Division (CPW)

The Recreational (non-motorized) Trails Program

Address:	Colorado Parks and Wildlife Division - Trails Program 13787 U.S. Hwy 85 N. Littleton, CO 80125
Phone:	
Fax:	
Email:	dnr_trails@state.co.us.
Website:	http://cpw.state.co.us/aboutus/Pages/TrailsGrantsNM.aspx
Purpose:	The Recreational (non-motorized) Trails Program assists local governments, clubs, nonprofit partners and federal land managers through grants and expertise for non-motorized trails in Colorado. Every year the program awards \$2 to \$3 million in non-motorized trails grants. The Colorado State Recreational Trails Grant Program funds projects for large recreational trail grants, small recreational trail grants, trail planning, and trail support grants. This program is a partnership among: Colorado Parks and Wildlife; Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO); The Colorado Lottery; The federal Recreational Trails Program (RTP); The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)
Grant Types:	Capital improvements
Primary Areas:	New Trail or Trailhead Construction – New trail or trailhead where none currently exist, environmental restoration, and trail signage. Maintenance, Re-route or Reconstruction of Existing Trails – Enhance or improve current trails. Enhancements or upgrades to Existing Trailheads – Improve current trailhead facilities. This project type includes the installation or creation of new facilities at an existing trailhead. Land Acquisition or Easement – Acquire land, through fee title or easements, intended for future trail development. Planning – Trail layout, design, engineering, feasibility studies, inventory, use studies, analysis of existing and proposed trails and master plans. Support – Build and enhance volunteer organizations, increase capacity and trail training
Details:	
How to Apply:	Trail grant requests must be submitted in one of four categories: Small Construction/Maintenance, Large Construction/Maintenance, Planning or Support.
Restrictions:	Local, county, state governments, federal agencies, recreation and metro districts and non-profit organizations are eligible. Applicants must have management

Delta County Recreation and Trails Master Plan

	<p>responsibilities over public lands or authorization from the land manager for the project work</p> <p>proposed. Applicants may submit two applications for a State Trails grant per year: one can be for Construction or Maintenance work and the other must be for Planning or Support. Organizations or entities that submit an application for maintenance, construction or planning</p> <p>cannot appear as the primary partner or principle subcontractor on any additional maintenance, construction or planning applications submitted in the same grant cycle. All projects are required to have match funding. A minimum of 30% of the total grant award must be secured as match, and at least 10% of those funds must be cash. All properties on which State Trails' funded projects take place must be under the control of the applicant or authorized agent and open to the public for at least 25 years. A deed, easement, license, long term lease or other documentation may be requested as proof of ownership or public access rights. It is mandatory for applicants of new construction and maintenance reroute projects to contact and inform the district wildlife manager for that area prior to application submission.</p>
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Co:	

Colorado's State Trails Program

State Snowmobile Program, Snowmobile Capital/Construction Project Grant

Address:	Ms. Gabrielle Smiley OHV and Snowmobile Program Assistant Colorado State Parks 6060 Broadway Denver, CO 80216
Phone:	303-791-957 ext. 4132 (303) 791-1920
Fax:	(303) 470-0782
Email:	Thomas.mesta@state.co.us gabrielle.smiley@state.co.us
Website:	http://cpw.state.co.us/aboutus/Pages/SnowmobileGrants.aspx
Purpose:	The Snowmobile Program provides funding for trail grooming, trail improvements, the Snowmobile Safety Certification Program as well as enforcement and signing. The Colorado Snowmobile Capital Grants Program has allocated thousands of dollars to successful applicants to purchase new groomers, repair existing groomers, for trailhead improvements, construction of permanent groomer and maintenance facilities and for the purchase of signs and trail marking materials.
Grant Types:	Capital Improvement/Purchase; Project/Program Support
Primary Areas:	Recreation/Sports
Details:	Has specific grant guidelines; Has specific reporting requirements; Check website for details
How to Apply:	Application forms can be downloaded from the website. Both a signed hard copy and an electronic copy of the application are required.
Restrictions:	All projects are subject to environmental reviews to identify any potential resource impacts resulting from the project. All concerns are passed onto project sponsors and land managers. All land managers must provide documentation that required environmental reviews are completed. Funding is allocated for projects that: Prioritizes the need as related to the grooming program of the club and the state snowmobile grooming program. - Demonstrate the ability to maintain the equipment/project being proposed - Justify the real need for the equipment - Quality of the grant proposal, neat, well-organized information

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Provides for or supports safe, quality winter opportunities to the general public- Provides or supports quality snowmobile trail systems- Provides for winter trail related facilities that enhance the snowmobiling experience- Provides for the connection of winter trail systems into a statewide network
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	

Colorado's State Trails Program

Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) Grant Program, Programmatic (competitive) OHV Project Grants

Address:	Mr. Tom Metsa OHV Program Manager Colorado State Parks and Trails Program 13787 S. Highway 85 Littleton, CO 80125
Phone:	(303) 791-1954
Fax:	(303) 470-0782
Email:	Thomas.metsa@state.co.us
Website:	http://cpw.state.co.us/aboutus/Pages/TrailsGrants.aspx
Purpose:	The mission of CPW's Trails Program is to be the major facilitator in accomplishing the following visions for trails in Colorado through promoting understanding and stewardship of Colorado's outdoors by providing opportunities for the public use and support of Colorado's diverse system of trails. Colorado's trail system will allow Coloradans to experience the state's diverse landscapes in a range of ways. Trails are developed with sensitivity to the environment and in ways they complement other lands (e.g., people can use trails to commute to work or school or get other places they want to go). Trails are well maintained. Conflict among trail users and impacts to trail settings are minimized through design, management, and education. The public has access to maps and other information they need to find the trail experiences they seek. The system is a collaborative effort among public and private entities, with the State Trails Program providing leadership in accomplishing this vision.
Grant Types:	Capital Improvement/Purchase; Challenge/Matching
Primary Areas:	Environment/Conservation; Recreation/Sports
Details:	Has specific grant guidelines; Always call before applying; Check Website for Details
How to Apply:	Application packets (motorized and non-motorized) are available on the Trails Homepage. Staff can review the project scope in advance to provide advice as to whether an application fits well with funding goals and clarify what is required in the application. Applicants may be invited to present their project in a meeting with reviewers. Trails Program staff provide training sessions on the grant application process and grant writing techniques throughout the state.
Restrictions:	Eligible applicants include: local, county, and state governments; federal agencies; recreation and metro districts; nonprofit organizations. Applicants must have management responsibilities over public lands or authorization from the land manager for the project work proposed. Applicants may submit two applications for a State Trails grant per year: one can be for Construction or Maintenance work and the other must be for Planning or Support trail projects. Organizations or entities that submit an application for maintenance, construction or planning, as the principle applicant, cannot appear as the primary partner or principle subcontractor on any additional maintenance, construction or planning applications submitted in the same grant cycle. Full list of eligibility criteria and restrictions can be found under the Application Information sections of each grant type's web page.
Average Range	N/A

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of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	
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Wetland Wildlife Conservation Program

Address:	Mr. Brian Sullivan Wetlands Program Coordinator Colorado Parks and Wildlife 317 W. Prospect Rd. Fort Collins, CO 80526
Phone:	970-472-4306
Fax:	
Email:	brian.sullivan@state.co.us
Website:	http://cpw.state.co.us/aboutus/Pages/Wetlands.aspx
Purpose:	The Wetland Wildlife Conservation Program is a voluntary, incentive-based program to protect wetlands and wetland-dependent wildlife on public and private land.
Grant Types:	Challenge/Matching; Project/Program Support
Primary Areas:	Funding for all phases of wetland and riparian creation, restoration and enhancement; Funding for conservation easements and fee-title purchase through the Wildlife Habitat Program; Wildlife and aquatic resource inventories; Education and outreach; Project monitoring and evaluation
Details:	Has specific grant guidelines; Has specific reporting requirements; Always call before applying; Issues Requests for Proposals; Check website for details
How to Apply:	Notices will be posted on the website when future wetland/riparian funding opportunities are available.
Restrictions:	Funds are allocated annually to the program - and projects are recommended for funding by a Parks and Wildlife committee with final approval by the Director.
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	\$15,000 - \$50,000

Fishing is Fun in Colorado

Address:	Mr. Jim Guthrie Program Coordinator 1313 Sherman St., Fl. 6 Denver, CO 80203
Phone:	303-866-3203 x4689 (303) 297-1192
Fax:	
Email:	jim.guthrie@state.co.us
Website:	http://cpw.state.co.us/aboutus/Pages/FishingIsFunProgram.aspx
Purpose:	The Fishing Is Fun program provides up to \$400,000 in matching grants annually to local and county governments, park and recreation departments, water districts, angling organizations and others for projects to improve angling opportunities in Colorado.
Grant Types:	Capital Improvement/Purchase; Challenge/Matching
Primary Areas:	Environment/Conservation; Recreation/Sports. Stream and river habitat improvements, access improvements, perpetual easements for public access, pond and lake habitat improvements, fish retention structures, development of new fishing ponds, and amenity improvements such as shade shelters, benches and restrooms.
Details:	Has specific grant guidelines; Has specific reporting requirements; Check website for

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	details
How to Apply:	Applications due to local Regional or Area offices by 5:00 p.m on March 3, 2018. Planning with the local district wildlife manager (regional contact information available on the website) is recommended prior to application submission. Applications available November 2016 on the Colorado Parks and Wildlife website, or from the Fishing is Fun Program Coordinator at jim.guthrie@state.co.us . More information may be found at http://cpw.state.co.us/Documents/Fishing/FishingIsFun/FIF2016Calendar.pdf
Restrictions:	Applicants may not participate in more than two projects annually. Separate chapters or units of statewide organizations are considered as separate applicants; however eligible applicants are: local governments; park and recreation departments; water districts; individuals; conservation groups; other non-profit organizations. Handicapped accessibility is generally required (a condition of federal funds). Projects are ranked and based on how they help Colorado Parks and Wildlife achieve long-range goals of increased fishery recreation, local match, access, and habitat improvement. Funding is not provided for: research; planning; overhead; promotion or advertising; contingency funds. Grants will not be made for any project not available to the general public for fishing purposes or for ventures with commercial overtones. Seed money or general operating funds are not available. BBQ pits, RV hookups and non-fishing related amenities are not eligible for reimbursement or for use as part of the match. Project must be maintained for 20 years. Qualified projects are eligible for reimbursement of up to 75 percent of project costs; however, the average match for approved projects is 40 percent. Federal money cannot be used by applicant as match. In-kind matching funds are acceptable. Please see the Guidelines for more information about eligible matches and other restrictions.
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	\$50,000 - \$80,000

Colorado Department of transportation

Colorado Scenic & Historic Byways Program

Address:	Ms. Lenore Bates Program Manager Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) 4201 E. Arkansas Ave., Shumate Bldg. Denver, CO 80222
Phone:	(303) 757-9786
Fax:	(303) 757-9727
Email:	Lenore.Bates@dot.state.co.us
Website:	https://www.codot.gov/travel/scenic-byways
Purpose:	The Program is a statewide partnership intended to provide recreational, educational, and economic benefits to Coloradans and visitors. The system of outstanding touring routes in Colorado affords the traveler interpretation and identification of key points of interest and services while providing for the protection of significant resources.
Grant Types:	Capital Improvement/Purchase; Challenge/Matching; General Operating Support; Project/Program Support; Technical Assistance
Primary Areas:	Arts/Culture/Humanities; Arts:Historic Preservation; Education; Environment/Conservation
Details:	Has specific grant guidelines; Always call before applying; Check website for details
How to Apply:	Projects are prepared by the local byways organization and submitted to the Scenic and Historic Byways Commission for review, evaluation, and prioritization. A single grant application from the State of Colorado is prepared and submitted to the Federal Highway Administration in Washington, DC for final review and approval. The Secretary of Transportation makes the grant awards.

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Restrictions:	Funding is limited to eligible projects submitted by local byway organizations of designated Scenic and Historic Byways. Only one project per byway is generally accepted for each grant cycle. Funding is 80 percent federal (maximum) with a required 20 percent (minimum) local match. In-kind services and federal cash are allowed as part of the 20 percent match requirement. Federal in-kind match and state or local government in-kind matches are not allowed. Grant proposals must be sponsored by one of the 25 designated scenic byways. Eligible grant project types and priorities are set by the Federal Highway Administration. Visit the website for more information.
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	\$30,000 - \$150,000

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Conservation Trust Fund, funding can be used for the acquisition, development, and maintenance of new conservation sites or for capital improvements or maintenance for recreational purposes on any public site.

Address	
Phone:	(303) 864-7735
Fax:	
Email:	leslie.jones@state.co.us
Website:	
Purpose:	The Department of Local Affairs distributes CTF dollars quarterly, on a per capita basis, to over 470 eligible local governments: counties, cities, towns, and Title 32 special districts that provide park and recreation services in their service plans.
Grant Types:	Conservation Trust Funds are the portion of Lottery proceeds constitutionally mandated to be distributed directly to local governments, based on population, for acquiring and maintaining parks, open space and recreational facilities.
Primary Areas:	CTF can be used for the acquisition, development, and maintenance of new conservation sites or for capital improvements or maintenance for recreational purposes on any public site.
Details:	
How to Apply:	
Restrictions:	Any county, municipality, or special district which has created a conservation trust fund pursuant to this section and which has certified to the department of local affairs that it has created such fund.
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	

Energy/Mineral Impact Assistance Program, promote sustainable community development, increase livability and resilience of communities through strategic investments in asset-building activities.

Address	Ms. Stacy Romero Program Manager Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) 1313 Sherman St., Rm. 521 Denver, CO 80203
Phone:	(303) 864-7756
Fax:	(303) 864-7759

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Email:	stacy.romero@state.co.us
Website:	https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/dola/energymineral-impact-assistance-fund-eiaf
Purpose:	The purpose of the EIAF Program is to assist political subdivisions that are socially and/or economically impacted by the development, processing, or energy conversion of minerals and mineral fuels. Funds come from the state severance tax on energy and mineral production and from a portion of the state's share of royalties paid to the federal government for mining and drilling of minerals and mineral fuels on federally-owned land.
Grant Types:	Capital Improvement/Purchase; Emergency Loans
Primary Areas:	Economic Development; Neighborhood Development; Public Safety/Emergency Relief
Details:	Has specific grant guidelines; Has specific reporting requirements; Always call before applying; Check annual report for details; Check website for details
How to Apply:	Comprehensive guidelines and the electronic application are available on the website. Before applying, please review the High Performance Certification notice on the website. For questions, contact the appropriate regional DOLA Field Staff based in Grand Junction, Fort Morgan, Alamosa, Pueblo, Loveland, and Durango, Frisco, and Golden; contact information is available on the website. Tier I applications will be accepted for grant requests up to \$200,000. Tier II applications will be accepted for grant requests up to \$1 million.
Restrictions:	Any county, municipality, or special district which has created a conservation trust fund pursuant to this section and which has certified to the department of local affairs that it has created such fund.
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	\$40,000 - \$200,000

Department of the Interior - Bureau of Land Management

L18AS00005

BLM-CO Expanding Recreational Opportunities on Colorado's Public Lands

Address	
Phone:	(303) 239-3908
Fax:	
Email:	esarris@blm.gov
Website:	
Purpose:	The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Colorado's 8.3 million acres of public lands, along with 27 million acres of mineral estate, are concentrated primarily in the western portion of the State. The lands range from alpine tundra, colorful canyons, and mesas in the southwest, to rolling sage-covered hills in the northwest. These public lands play a vital role in providing open space and contribute to Colorado's quality of life. The public lands and resources administered by the BLM are among Colorado's greatest assets, benefitting local communities and our nation. Every year, BLM-managed public lands support thousands of jobs in Colorado and draw millions of visitors. Colorado's public lands support diverse lifestyles and livelihoods on healthy and working landscapes in Colorado's backyard. BLM Colorado's National Conservation Lands encompass approximately one million acres, or one-eighth of all BLM land in the state. In addition, BLM Colorado manages the following: 1) 3 national conservation areas; 2) 53 wilderness study areas; 3) 5 wilderness areas; 4) 1 national historic trail; 5) 1 national scenic trail, and; 6) 2 national monuments. BLM Colorado's recreation program benefits from the vibrant network of volunteers and partners. In particular, our recreation program is bolstered by the strength of the BLM's partnerships with national, regional, and local organizations that share our goals of providing sustainable recreation opportunities and economic benefits to communities. Recreation-related activities contribute more than \$543 million to Colorado's economy and supports

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	more than 4,625 jobs. BLM Colorado offers a variety of motorized recreation opportunities from the OHV play areas in Flat Top-Peach Valley and Grand Valley, to extreme rock crawling at Wolford Mountain Recreation Area or Independence Trail in the Gold Belt Recreation Area. BLM Colorado's Recreation program benefits the vibrant network of recreationists and partners. The vision of this strategy is to build on the strength of the BLM's partnerships with national, regional, and local organizations who share our goals of providing sustainable recreation opportunities and lasting economic benefits to communities. BLM Colorado is seeking recreation partnerships to enhance visitors' experiences and provide quality recreation opportunities. To that end, the BLM is looking for a cooperator/partner who will work to help promote BLM's multiple use mission and responsible use of motorized vehicles through shared conservation of public lands.
Grant Types:	
Primary Areas:	Natural Resources
Details:	
How to Apply:	For more information on this funding opportunity, including the full announcement, instructions, and application package, please visit www.grants.gov to view Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) No. L18AS00005.
Restrictions:	
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	\$5,000

Advocacy Advance

Advocacy Advance grants, a dynamic partnership of the League of American Bicyclists and the Alliance for Biking & Walking -- aims to boost local and state bicycle and pedestrian advocacy efforts. With support from SRAM Cycling Fund, the Everybody Walk Collaborative, REI and New Belgium Brewing, Advocacy Advance provides targeted trainings, reports, grants and assistance to equip advocates with the specific tools they need to increase biking and walking in their communities.

Address	Ms. Brighid O'Keane Advocacy Director Alliance for Biking and Walking 1612 K. St. N.W., Ste. 802 Washington, DC 20006
Phone:	(202) 621-5442
Fax:	
Email:	brighid@advocacyadvance.org
Website:	http://www.advocacyadvance.org/grants
Purpose:	Advocacy Advance is a partnership of the Alliance for Biking and Walking and the League of American Bicyclists to boost local and state bicycle and pedestrian advocacy efforts. It offers two types of grants. Rapid Response Grants enable state and local bicycle and pedestrian advocacy organizations to win, increase, and preserve public funding in their communities. Big Idea grants are awarded to organizations that are pushing forward on some of the most important areas of bicycling and walking advocacy in the areas of equity; safety/vision zero; health/walking; innovative local or state funding campaigns.
Grant Types:	Project/Program Support; Technical Assistance
Primary Areas:	Environment/Conservation; Health; Public Policy/Society Benefit
Details:	Has specific grant guidelines; Has specific reporting requirements; Check annual report for details; Check website for details
How to Apply:	Complete the proposal form located on the website and submit via email. Applicants are encouraged to contact the Advocacy Director with any questions, for help with the

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	application, or for feedback.
Restrictions:	The organization will not fund: organizations whose primary purpose is not advocacy; general or ongoing organizational support; events, rides, or education activities, campaigns for political candidates; long-term campaigns or campaigns that are not directed to winning public funds for biking and walking projects. Applicants must: be members of the Alliance for Biking and Walking and the League of American Bicyclists (unless the applicant is a walking-only organization); be incorporated as a U.S.-based 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4) organization; be facing an opportunity that is immediate and has a specific time frame; propose a campaign to raise additional federal, state, or local funding for biking and walking infrastructure and/or programs; propose a replicable campaign that is winnable with measurable results.
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	\$2,000

American Alpine Club

Cornerstone Conservation Grant, powered by REI creates healthy climbing landscapes, promotes respect for the places we climb, and empowers local climbing communities.

Address:	The American Alpine Club 710 10th Street Suite 100 Golden, CO, 80401
Phone:	303-384-0110
Fax:	
Email:	info@Americanalpineclub.Org
Website:	https://americanalpineclub.org/grants/
Purpose:	Funds essential infrastructure at climbing areas. Previously, the Club has funded projects like fixed anchor improvement, new trails, human waste management solutions, parking, and signage.
Grant Types:	
Primary Areas:	Climbing, Conservation
Details:	
How to Apply:	
Restrictions:	Have measurable, high impact yet achievable goals Incorporate best practices for sustainability Improve land conservation and/or climber practices Demonstrate reduced impact from climber practices Demonstrate a plan for long term success Engage members of the local climbing community Have local land manager endorsement Have local AAC Section endorsement Have a realistic budget Utilize matching agency, local funds or Access Fund grant money
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	\$1,000 to \$8,000

People for Bikes

Community Grants, provide funding for important and influential projects that leverage federal funding and build momentum for bicycling in communities across the US. These projects include bike

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paths and rail trails, as well as mountain bike trails, bike parks, BMX facilities, and large-scale bicycle advocacy initiatives.

Address:	Ms. Zoe Kircos Director, Grants and Partnerships PO Box 2359 Boulder, CO 80306
Phone:	303-449-4893 x106
Fax:	(303) 442-2936
Email:	zoe@peopleforbikes.org
Website:	http://peopleforbikes.org/our-work/community-grants/
Purpose:	The Foundation provides funding for important and influential projects that leverage federal funding and build momentum for bicycling in communities across the U.S. These projects include bike paths and rail trails, as well as mountain bike trails, bike parks, BMX facilities, and large-scale bicycle advocacy initiatives.
Grant Types:	Project and infrastructure funding,
Primary Areas:	bicycle infrastructure projects, Public Policy/Society Benefit; Recreation/Sports
Details:	Does not accept unsolicited proposals; Accepts Letters of Intent; Has specific grant guidelines; Has specific reporting requirements; Check website for details
How to Apply:	The Foundation accepts requests for funding of up to \$10,000 and will not consider grant requests in which its funding would amount to 50% or more of the project. Interested applicants should submit an online Letter of Interest (LOI) through the website. LOIs will include basic information about the applying organization and contact person, as well as an overview of the project proposed for funding. All invited applicants must utilize the online grant application system.
Restrictions:	The Foundation will not consider facility applications that request funding for: feasibility studies, master plans, policy documents, or litigation; signs, maps, and travel; trailheads, information kiosks, benches, and restroom facilities; bicycles, helmets, tools, and other accessories or equipment; education; events, races, clinics/classes, or bicycle rodeos; bike recycling, repair, or earn-a-bike programs; bike-share programs; projects in which it is the sole or primary funder; projects outside the US. It will not consider advocacy project applications that request funding for: general operating costs; staff salaries, unless directly related to program implementation; rides and event sponsorships; planning and retreats; bicycles, helmets, tools, and accessories or equipment; bike-share programs; organizations whose primary mission is not expressly related to bicycle advocacy. The Foundation does not accept emailed, mailed, or faxed applications.
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	\$10,000 - \$915,000

America Walks

Community Change Micro Grants

Address	
Phone:	
Fax:	
Email:	hsimon@americawalks.org
Website:	http://americawalks.org/2017-community-change-micro-grants-open/
Purpose:	Individuals and communities interested in improving the public sphere for walking or otherwise helping to make walking more commonplace. This program awards up to \$1,500 to fund or help to catalyze smaller-scale, low-cost projects and programs that increase the prevalence of walking, expand the diversity of people and organizations working to advance

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	walkability, and help to make walking safer, easier, and more fun for all community members.
Grant Types:	
Primary Areas:	
Details:	
How to Apply:	
Restrictions:	
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	

The Environment Foundation

Address:	Matthew Hamilton PO Box 1248 Aspen, CO 81612
Phone:	970-300-7153
Fax:	
Email:	mhamilton@aspensnowmass.com
Website:	https://www.aspensnowmass.com/we-are-different/the-environment-foundation
Purpose:	We have a collective responsibility to ensure that our company is a rewarding place to work and our community a desirable place to live. We respect and nurture the delicate balance between "resort" and "community" that makes us unique. The combination of our values-based company with unparalleled mountain sports, community, history, culture and environment gives us a unique market niche. We are successful because we live the values and principles expressed here.
Grant Types:	
Primary Areas:	Community/Public Affairs; Economic Development; Environment/Conservation; Recreation/Sports
Details:	Accepts Common Grant Report (CGR); Check website for details
How to Apply:	Eligible recipients may be private or nonprofit organizations, government agencies or individuals. The board of directors evaluates all grant applications first on compliance with the eligibility requirements, then on set selection criteria. The board suggests that maximum grant requests not exceed \$15,000. Grant requests for less than \$8,000 are more likely to be funded.
Restrictions:	
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	\$5,000 - \$15,000

Safe Routes to Schools: Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT)

Colorado Safe Routes to School Projects,

Address:	Leslie Feuerborn Colorado Safe Routes to School 4201 E. Arkansas Ave. Shumate Building Denver, CO 80222
Phone:	303-757-9088
Fax:	
Email:	dot_srts@state.co.us Leslie.Feuerborn@state.co.us

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Website:	https://www.codot.gov/programs/bikeped/safe-routes/funding-evaluation/funded-projects.html#srtsapps
Purpose:	Safe Routes to School (SRTS) was established in 2005 through Federal legislation to enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school; to make walking and bicycling to school safe and more appealing; and to facilitate the planning, development and implementation of projects that will improve safety, and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools.
Grant Types:	Capital Improvement/Purchase
Primary Areas:	Children & Youth Services; Community/Public Affairs; Education:K-12; Environment/Conservation; Recreation/Sports
Details:	
How to Apply:	https://www.codot.gov/programs/bikeped/safe-routes/assets/fiscal-year-2017-documents/fy-2017-18-srts-non-infrastructure-projects-instructions-and-application-ver-072817.pdf
Restrictions:	To apply for a CSRTS grant, applicants must be either; a local government; a school district, local education agency or school; a regional transportation authority; a transit agency; a natural resource or public land agency; a tribal government; or any other local or regional governmental entity with responsibility for or oversight of transportation or recreational trails that the State determines to be eligible, consistent with the goals of this grant application. Funds are available for Safe Routes to School programs that benefit elementary and middle school children in Kindergarten through 8th grade; most typically elementary and middle schools but any school that has students in K-8 grades is also eligible.
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	Minimum \$5,000

Gates Family Foundation

Address:	Ms. Lisa Rucker Program Officer / Grants Manager 1390 Lawrence St., Ste. 400 Denver, CO 80204
Phone:	(303) 722-1881
Fax:	(303) 316-3038
Email:	info@gatesfamilyfoundation.org
Website:	http://www.gatesfamilyfoundation.org/how-to-apply
Purpose:	The mission of the Gates Family Foundation is to invest in projects and organizations which have meaningful impact in Colorado primarily through capital grants and Foundation initiatives that enhance the quality of life for those living in, working in and visiting the state. The Foundation seeks to promote excellence, innovation and self-sufficiency in education, healthy lifestyles, community enrichment, connection to nature and stewardship of the state's natural inheritance.
Grant Types:	Capital Improvement/Purchase; Challenge/Matching
Primary Areas:	Arts/Culture/Humanities; Children & Youth Services; Community/Public Affairs; Education:K-12; Environment/Conservation; Recreation/Sports
Details:	Accepts Letters of Intent; Accepts Common Grant Report (CGR); Accepts Capital Common Grant Application (CCGA); Has specific reporting requirements; Check website for details
How to Apply:	Applicants may find it helpful to call a program officer to review the substance of a proposed project. Alternatively, applicants may submit an initial inquiry by completing the Narrative in Section III of the Capital Common Grant Application. If the information in the narrative

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	dovetails with the Foundation's funding priorities for capital grants, staff will request a completed Capital Common Grant Application. After reviewing guidelines and requirements on website, applicant should contact a program officer to discuss potential eligibility for an initiated grant.
Restrictions:	The Foundation does not consider support for: general operating or program expenses unless initiated by the Foundation; loans, grants, scholarships, or camperships to individuals; projects that have been substantially completed prior to the next trustees' meeting; conferences, meetings, or studies that are not initiated by the Foundation; more than one proposal from an organization in a calendar year unless initiated by the Foundation, and does not reconsider previously denied proposals; other private foundations or organizations engaged in grant making; retire operating or construction debt; purchase of vehicles; purchase office or computer equipment unless they are part of a comprehensive capital campaign; directly to individual public schools or public school districts unless initiated by the Foundation; medical research or the construction of major medical facilities; tickets for fundraising dinners, parties, benefits, balls, or other social fundraising events; religious organizations or activities; political or lobbying activities; supporting organizations described in section 509(a)(3), other than a Type I, Type II or functionally-integrated Type III supporting organization of which is not (and the supported organization of which is not) directly or indirectly controlled by a disqualified person of either the Foundation or a family fund; foreign organizations.
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	\$25,000 - \$75,000

USDA - Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program

Address:	USDA, Rural Development Denver Federal Center Building 56, Room E-2300 Denver, CO 80225
Phone:	David Carter – Delta – 970-874-5735 x 4
Fax:	
Email:	Dave.Carter@co.usda.gov
Website:	https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities-direct-loan-grant-program
Purpose:	This program provides affordable funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas. An essential community facility is defined as a facility that provides an essential service to the local community for the orderly development of the community in a primarily rural area, and does not include private, commercial or business undertakings.
Grant Types:	Funds can be used to purchase, construct, and / or improve essential community facilities, purchase equipment and pay related project expenses.
Primary Areas:	Priority point system based on population, median household income Small communities with a population of 5,500 or less Low-income communities having a median household income below 80% of the state nonmetropolitan median household income.
Details:	
How to Apply:	Contact your local office to discuss your specific project Applications for this program are accepted year round Program resources are available online (includes forms needed, guidance, certifications) Request a Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number if your organization doesn't already have one. It should not take more than a few business days to get your number. Register your organization with the System for Award Management (SAM) if you aren't already registered. The registration is free, but you need to complete several steps

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Restrictions:	Applicants must have legal authority to borrow money, obtain security, repay loans, construct, operate, and maintain the proposed facilities Applicants must be unable to finance the project from their own resources and/or through commercial credit at reasonable rates and terms Facilities must serve rural area where they are/will be located Project must demonstrate substantial community support Environmental review must be completed/acceptable
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	

Daniels Fund

The Daniels Fund focuses on supporting highly effective and ethical nonprofit organizations that achieve significant results in the community.

Address:	Ms. Kristin Todd Senior Vice President, Grants Program 101 Monroe St. Denver, CO 80206
Phone:	(303) 393-7220 or (877) 791-4726
Fax:	(720) 941-4210
Email:	GrantsInfo@DanielsFund.org
Website:	http://www.danielsfund.org/Grants/index.asp
Purpose:	The Fund is committed to fulfilling the intent and direction of its founder, Bill Daniels. Its goal is to reflect his compassion, ethics, and integrity in all that it does. The Fund provides grants to nonprofit organizations and college scholarships to deserving students in Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming.
Grant Types:	Capital Improvement/Purchase; General Operating Support; Project/Program Support
Primary Areas:	Disabled Persons; Education; Education:Early Childhood; Education:K-12; Emergency Assistance; Health:Alcohol/Drug/Substance Abuse; Housing/Homeless Shelters; Recreation/Sports; Senior Citizens/Aging; Youth Development Activities
Details:	Has specific grant guidelines; Has specific reporting requirements; Always call before applying; Check website for details
How to Apply:	Before applying, applicants should read the eligibility requirements on the website. The application process includes an inquiry call that can be scheduled via the Fund's website at www.DanielsFund.org/Grants . Once eligibility is determined through this call, organizations will receive an invitation to apply through the online process.
Restrictions:	Applicants must have 501(c)(3) status or a government equivalent. The Fund does not consider proposals outside its designated funding areas. Additionally, support is not provided for: medical or scientific research; arts, cultural, and museum programs (including those teaching and serving youth); environmental stewardship programs; historic preservation projects; candidates for political office; sponsorships, tables, or tickets for special events or fundraising events; debt retirement; endowments; fiscal sponsorships. If a grant request is denied, applicants must wait one year before reapplying.
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	\$20,000 - \$100,000

Bacon Family Foundation

Address	Ms. Denise Cook
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	Wells Fargo P.O. Box 4570 Grand Junction, CO 81502-4570
Phone:	(970) 257-4883
Fax:	
Email:	
Website:	
Purpose:	The Foundation operates for religious, charitable, scientific, public safety testing, literary, and educational purposes, as well as for the prevention of cruelty to children or animals.
Grant Types:	Capital Improvement/Purchase; Challenge/Matching; General Operating Support; Project/Program Support
Primary Areas:	Abuse & Neglect Prevention; Animal Protection & Welfare; Arts/Culture/Humanities; Arts:Historic Preservation; Disabled Persons; Economic Development; Education; Education:Adult Continuing (Literacy/ESL); Environment/Conservation; Food/Agriculture/Nutrition; Health; Housing/Homeless Shelters; Human Services; Philanthropy/Volunteerism/Grantmaking; Recreation/Sports; Religion/Spirituality; Youth Development Activities
Details:	Has specific grant guidelines
How to Apply:	Meetings are conducted on a quarterly basis each year. The following should be included: legal name and address of applicant organization; contact person and telephone number; most recent copy of IRS letter of tax-exemption 501(c)(3); date of establishment, brief history, and mission statement; unique aspects of program and relationships to other similar programs; purpose and amount of grant requested; project budget; substantiation of need and anticipated results; a W-9 showing organization's tax ID number; funding sources and amounts; names, addresses and occupations of board of directors and officers; financial statement for most recent year (and preferably a copy of audit); current and/or proposed income and expense budget; documentation verifying State of Colorado Charitable Solicitations registration. Submit only one copy via mail.
Restrictions:	No grants to individuals. Applicants must be within the US and have 501(c)(3) status. Branch, affiliates, and multiple divisions of the same organization must be coordinated in a single application. If approved, organizations may apply again after a lapse of three years. If not approved, organizations may apply again after a lapse of one year.
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	\$5,000 - \$50,000

Fred & Elli Iselin Foundation

Address:	Mr. James Daggs President 715 W. Main St., Ste. 101 Aspen, CO 81611
Phone:	(970) 925-4290
Fax:	
Email:	jim@jamesdaggsassociates.com
Website:	
Purpose:	The Foundation is multipurpose with areas of interest that include: arts and culture; children and youth; education; health; the environment.
Grant Types:	Capital Improvement/Purchase; General Operating Support; Project/Program Support
Primary Areas:	Arts/Culture/Humanities; Children & Youth Services; Education:Higher; Education:K-12; Environment/Conservation; Health

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Details:	Accepts Letters of Intent; Accepts Common Grant Application (CGA)
How to Apply:	Applications should be submitted in writing and include proof of tax exempt status and precise use of proceeds.
Restrictions:	
Average Range of Grants	\$2,000 - \$5,000
Awarded in Colorado:	

Accessibility and Alternative Transportation

Federal Transit Administration

Paul S. Sarbanes Transit in Parks Program (5320)

Address:	Office of Program Management Federal Transit Administration 1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E. Washington, DC 20590 United States
Phone:	202-366-2053
Fax:	202-366-7951
Email:	
Website:	https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/grant-programs/paul-s-sarbanes-transit-parks-program-5320
Purpose:	The Paul S. Sarbanes Transit in Parks Program was established to address the challenge of increasing vehicle congestion in and around our national parks and other federal lands. America's national parks, wildlife refuges, and national forests were created to protect unique environmental and cultural treasures, but are now facing traffic, pollution and crowding that diminishes the visitor experience and threatens the environment. To address these concerns, this program provides funding for alternative transportation systems, such as shuttle buses, rail connections and even bicycle trails. The program seeks to conserve natural, historical, and cultural resources; reduce congestion and pollution; improve visitor mobility and accessibility; enhance visitor experience; and ensure access to all, including persons with disabilities. The program is administered by the U.S. Department of Transportation, together with the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Forest Service.
Grant Types:	Capital Improvements
Primary Areas:	Program funds may support capital and planning expenses for new or existing alternative transportation systems in the vicinity of an eligible area. Alternative transportation includes transportation by bus, rail, or any other publicly available means of transportation and includes sightseeing service. It also includes non-motorized transportation systems such as pedestrian and bicycle trails. Operating costs, such as fuel and drivers' salaries, are not eligible expenses.
Details:	
How to Apply:	FTA awards funds to transit systems in competitive grants and as formula grants. These funding sources each have specific requirements, funding cycles, and awards processes that should be carefully reviewed.
Restrictions:	Eligible funding recipients include federal land management agencies (FLMAs) that manage eligible areas, including, but not limited to: Bureau of Land Management (BLM); Bureau of Reclamation (BR); National Park Service (NPS); U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS); U.S. Forest Service (USFS); Eligible recipients also include state, tribal, or local governmental authorities with jurisdiction over land in the vicinity of an eligible area acting with the consent of the FLMA.

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Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	
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Colorado Department of Transportation Transportation Alternatives Program

Address:	CDOT REGION 3 Mark Rogers 222 S. 6th Street, Room 317 Grand Junction, CO 81501
Phone:	(970) 683-6252
Fax:	
Email:	mark.rogers@state.co.us
Website:	https://www.codot.gov/programs/planning/tap-cfp
Purpose:	The FAST Act is a five year (FY 2016 – FY 2020) \$300 billion highway, transit, highway safety and rail bill. The legislation provides the framework for investments to guide the growth and development of the country's vital transportation infrastructure. The FAST Act maintains the eligibility requirements for TAP, and provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation; recreational trail program projects; and projects for planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways.
Grant Types:	Capital Improvements
Primary Areas:	Transportation Alternatives
Details:	
How to Apply:	https://www.codot.gov/programs/planning/documents/resources/tap/TAP-guidelines.pdf
Restrictions:	Applicants for Transportation Alternatives program funds must provide at least 20% of the total project costs in matching funds. Minimum request for federal dollars is \$50,000.
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	

NADTC Grants invests in community solutions focused on increasing accessible transportation options as the critical link to employment, health care and other needed community services for older adults and people with disabilities. Community grants will target areas with high need and limited resources. Selected projects will strengthen connections between transit and human services transportation programs, build bridges between transportation and community programs that support community living, and identify strategies for better utilization of Section 5310 and other Federal, state and local funding opportunities to improve transportation access.

Economic Development

US Dept. of Commerce, Economic Development Administration

USDOC: Economic Development Assistance Programs

Address:	Mr. Trent Thompson 1244 Speer Blvd., Ste. 431
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	Denver, CO 80204
Phone:	(303) 844-5452
Fax:	(303) 844-3968
Email:	tthompson@eda.gov
Website:	https://www.eda.gov/funding-opportunities/
Purpose:	EDA solicits applications from rural and urban areas to provide investments that support construction, non-construction, technical assistance, and revolving loan fund projects under EDA's Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance programs. These programs are designed to leverage existing regional assets and support the implementation of economic development strategies that advance new ideas and creative approaches to advance economic prosperity in distressed communities. EDA provides strategic investments on a competitive-merit-basis to support economic development, foster job creation, and attract private investment in economically distressed areas of the United States.
Grant Types:	Challenge/Matching
Primary Areas:	Economic Development; Technology/Telecommunications
Details:	Accepts Letters of Intent; Has specific grant guidelines; Has specific reporting requirements; Check website for details
How to Apply:	Instead of quarterly application deadlines, EDA will now accept applications at any point and will work closely with applicants to provide feedback on funding decision in a timely manner. In addition, EDA will now accept project proposals before requiring full applications. Register with Grants.gov and download the application package from the opportunity listing (www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=248297). The preferred electronic file format for attachments is Adobe portable document format (PDF); however, electronic files in Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, or Microsoft Excel will also be accepted. Alternatively, an applicant eligible for assistance under this announcement may request a paper application package by contacting the applicable EDA regional office.
Restrictions:	Applicants may be: a state; a political subdivision of a state; an Indian tribe; a special purpose unit of government; an institution of higher education; a public or private nonprofit organization or association. The project must be located within an area experiencing significant economic distress. High unemployment, low per capita income or other special needs can trigger eligibility. Proof from third-party data required. Applications submitted via fax or email will not be considered.
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	\$25,000 - \$500,000

Community Health

Colorado Department of Public Health

The Health Disparities Grant Program (HDGP), is a competitive grant program for prevention, early detection and treatment of cancer, cardiovascular disease and chronic pulmonary disease in underrepresented populations in Colorado.

Address	Jami Hiyakumoto Health Disparities Grant Program Manager CDPHE, Office of Health Equity 4300 Cherry Creek Dr. S., C-1 Denver, CO 80246-1530
Phone:	303-692-2089
Fax:	303-691-7746
Email:	Jami.Hiyakumoto@state.co.us

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Website:	https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/health-disparities-grant-program
Purpose:	The Program dedicated to eliminating racial and ethnic health disparities in Colorado by fostering systems change and capacity building through multi-sector collaboration. The Program provides financial support for statewide initiatives that address prevention, early detection, and treatment of cancer and cardiovascular disease, including diabetes or other precursors.
Grant Types:	Project/Program Support; Technical Assistance
Primary Areas:	Health; Minorities
Details:	Does not accept unsolicited proposals; Has specific grant guidelines; Has specific reporting requirements; Issues Requests for Proposals; Check website for details
How to Apply:	Request for Application posted on website describes specific application steps. Projects should demonstrate the implementation of strategies to overcome health disparities in prevention and early detection. In addition, projects shall include community-based strategies. Cross-cutting (cancer, cardiovascular, and pulmonary) projects are encouraged.
Restrictions:	Funds cannot be used for lobbying or to directly subsidize individuals for the cost of health care. Any person or organization, whether nonprofit or for-profit, private, public, or governmental, representing healthcare, workplace, or community settings, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, local health departments, and other groups or entities effectively serving racial and ethnic minorities and underserved and underrepresented groups is eligible to apply.
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	\$400,000 - \$600,000

Rocky Mountain Health Foundation

Address:	Mrs. Kim Lewis Grants Manager P.O. Box 400 Grand Junction, CO 81502
Phone:	(970) 697-1038
Fax:	(970) 445-3028
Email:	kim@rmhealth.org
Website:	http://rmhealth.org/
Purpose:	The Rocky Mountain Health Foundation aims to improve the health of Coloradans living on the Western Slope by investing in existing community assets and by acting as a catalyst for new approaches. The Foundation promotes the health and well-being of residents on the Western Slope through physical, behavioral health, and social determinants of health.
Grant Types:	General Operating Support; Project/Program Support
Primary Areas:	Health; Health: Mental Health Treatment
Details:	Accepts Letters of Intent; Has specific grant guidelines; Has specific reporting requirements; Check website for details
How to Apply:	See the website for a link to the on-line application and follow instructions.
Restrictions:	Must be a 501(c)(3) organization serving a Western Slope community located in one of the following counties: Archuleta, Delta, Dolores, Eagle, Garfield, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Jackson, La Plata, Lake, Mesa, Moffat, Montezuma, Montrose, Ouray, Pitkin, Rio Blanco, Routt, San Juan, San Miguel, or Summit Counties.
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	

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Community Education and Involvement

Environmental Protection Agency

Environmental Education Grants

Address:	Wendy Dew U.S. EPA, Region 8 1595 Wynkoop Street Mail Code 80C Denver, CO 80202-1129
Phone:	
Fax:	
Email:	dew.wendy@epa.gov
Website:	
Purpose:	Under the Environmental Education Grants Program, EPA seeks grant proposals from eligible applicants to support environmental education projects that promote environmental awareness and stewardship and help provide people with the skills to take responsible actions to protect the environment. This grant program provides financial support for projects that design, demonstrate, and/or disseminate environmental education practices, methods, or techniques.
Grant Types:	
Primary Areas:	Education, Environment
Details:	
How to Apply:	<p>Determine Eligibility - Applicants must represent one of the following types of organizations to be eligible for an environmental education grant: local education agency, state education or environmental agency, college or university, non-profit organization as described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, noncommercial educational broadcasting entity tribal education agency (which includes schools and community colleges controlled by an Indian tribe, band, or nation).</p> <p>Applicant organizations must be located in the United States or territories and the majority of the educational activities must take place in the United States; or in the United States and Canada or Mexico; or in the U.S. Territories.</p> <p>Complete the Application and Budget Forms, according to the directions in the RFP. Each RFP contains complete instructions for submitting a proposal, including all required information and limitations on format. A summary of the required information is below.</p> <p>Read the RFP thoroughly for application procedures, including those for applying through www.grants.gov.</p> <p>Find the forms on the "Application Forms" tab. Materials should be submitted in the following order: Two Federal forms: Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424) and Budget (SF 424-A)</p> <p>Work Plan (up to 8 pages): Project Summary (recommended 1 page), Detailed Project Description, Project Evaluation Plan, Detailed Budget Showing Match and Sub-grants (not included in the page limit), Appendices (not included in the page limit), (Timeline, Logic Model Showing Outputs and Outcomes, Programmatic Capabilities and Past Performance Letters Stating Responsibilities of Partners, if applicable), Submit the Proposal Materials - Applications must be submitted electronically. Submit to www.grants.gov by following the instructions in Appendix IV of the RFP.</p>
Restrictions:	
Average Range of Grants	

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Awarded in Colorado:	
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National Environmental Education Foundation

Address	
Phone:	
Fax:	
Email:	
Website:	
Purpose:	
Grant Types:	
Primary Areas:	
Details:	
How to Apply:	
Restrictions:	
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	

Peggy and Steve Fossett Foundation

Address:	- Mr. David Maier Secretary/Treasurer 401 S. Lasalle St., Ste. 200 Chicago, IL 60605-2999
Phone:	(312) 786-5054
Fax:	
Email:	lakotadwm@aol.com
Website:	
Purpose:	The Foundation is multipurpose, giving to a broad spectrum of organizations.
Grant Types:	General Operating Support; Project/Program Support
Primary Areas:	Arts/Culture/Humanities; Arts:Education; Community/Public Affairs; Education:Higher; Recreation/Sports; Religion/Spirituality; Technology/Telecommunications; Youth Development Activities
Details:	Accepts Letters of Intent; Accepts Common Grant Application (CGA)
How to Apply:	There are no specific application guidelines. Send a written request.
Restrictions:	
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	\$5,000 - \$30,000

Natural Resource Conservation

Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service

USDA-NRCS-NHQ-RCPP-18-01 Regional Conservation Partnership Program

Address	
Phone:	202-720-2307
Fax:	
Email:	angella.greaves@wdc.usda.gov

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Website:	https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/farmbill/rcpp/
Purpose:	NRCS is the Department of Agriculture's (USDA) conservation agency working with farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners nationwide to identify and address natural resource objectives in balance with operational goals in order to benefit soil, water, wildlife, and related natural resources locally, regionally, and nationally. NRCS works in partnership with other entities to accelerate getting conservation on the ground. Through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), NRCS seeks to co-invest with partners in innovative, workable and cost-effective approaches to benefit farming, ranching, and forest operations, local economies, and the communities and resources in a watershed or other geographic area. RCPP partners develop project applications, as described in this notice, to address specific natural resource objectives in a proposed area or region. Partnering organizations design, promote, implement, and evaluate the project outcomes.
Grant Types:	
Primary Areas:	Agriculture, Environment, Natural Resources
Details:	
How to Apply:	NRCS will select final RCPP projects following a two-phase application process that includes: (1) a pre-proposal application; and (2) a full proposal application. NRCS will assess and evaluate RCPP project applications against four criteria—solutions, contributions, innovation, and participation. The full proposal process is only open to applicants whose pre-proposal applications are selected by the agency to go forward from the pre-proposal stage.
Restrictions:	There is a Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	

Water Quality

Colorado Water Conservation Water Board *Water Supply Reserve Account Grant & Loan Program*

Address:	Mr. Craig Godbout Colorado Water Conservation Board, Water Supply Planning Section 1313 Sherman Street, Room 718 Denver, CO 80203
Phone:	(303) 866-3441
Fax:	(303) 866-4272
Email:	craig.godbout@state.co.us
Website:	http://cwcb.state.co.us/LoansGrants/water-supply-reserve-account-grants/Pages/main.aspx
Purpose:	The Program provides grants and loans to assist Colorado water users in addressing their critical water supply issues and interests. The funds help eligible entities complete water activities, which may include competitive grants for: technical assistance regarding permitting, feasibility studies and environmental compliance; -studies or analysis of structural, nonstructural, consumptive and non-consumptive water needs, projects or activities; and -structural and nonstructural water projects or activities.
Grant Types:	Capital Improvement/Purchase; Challenge/Matching; Project/Program Support; Technical Assistance
Primary Areas:	Environment/Conservation
Details:	Has specific grant guidelines; Has specific reporting requirements; Check annual report for details; Check website for details
How to Apply:	Prior to applying to the Colorado Water Conservation Board, the applicant must have the

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	approval of the Basin Roundtable in which the activity will occur. Two types of Water Supply Reserve Account Grants are available: Basin Account and Statewide Account grants. Applicants should review the guidelines and criteria on the website before submitting an application. Application forms are available on the website and should be submitted in an electronic format (via email or a mailed disc). In addition to the provided form, applications must include a detailed scope of work including a budget and schedule and the letter of support from the appropriate Basin Roundtable.
Restrictions:	Applicants must: coordinate plan development with CWCB's staff and technical team; meet all the WSRA eligibility criteria detailed in the criteria and guidelines; be able to use the standard contract; address any TABOR issues; provide a W-9 form; and provide proof of required insurance. Eligible entities include: public (government) municipalities, enterprises, counties, and State of Colorado agencies; public district authorities and Title 32/special districts; privately incorporated mutual ditch companies, homeowners associations, and non-profit corporations. Individuals, partnerships, and sole proprietors are eligible for Basin Funds but are not eligible for Statewide Funds. See the website for eligibility information for Federal Agencies and Covered Entities.
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	\$50,000 - \$200,000

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Address:	Mr. Chris West Director, Rocky Mountain Regional Office 1875 Lawrence St, Suite 320 Denver, CO 80202
Phone:	(303) 222-6482
Fax:	(202) 857-0162
Email:	info@nfwf.org
Website:	http://www.nfwf.org/whatwedo/grants/Pages/home.aspx
Purpose:	The Foundation provides funding on a competitive basis to projects that sustain, restore, and enhance the Nation's fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats.
Grant Types:	Challenge/Matching; Project/Program Support
Primary Areas:	Animal Protection & Welfare; Environment/Conservation
Details:	Does not accept unsolicited proposals; Has specific reporting requirements; Always call before applying; Issues Requests for Proposals; Check website for details
How to Apply:	The Foundation invites organizations that best serve its interests to submit a grant application through the website. Guidelines and deadlines vary among a variety of programs; complete details are available on the website.
Restrictions:	No support is considered for: political advocacy or litigation; basic research (including graduate level); administrative overhead; multi-year funding; shortfalls in government agency budgets.
Average Range of Grants Awarded in Colorado:	\$6,000 - \$60,000

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Loans

CDOT: Colorado State Infrastructure Bank Loan (CO SIB)

USDA: *Community Facility Loan & Grant Program*

Rural Community Assistance Corporation Loan Program (RCAC) – Green Lending

Other Resources

Federal government grants website and search portal:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html>

NPS Land and Water Conservation Fund – Lobby for funds allocated to the state to go to Delta County through SCORP planning and implementation.