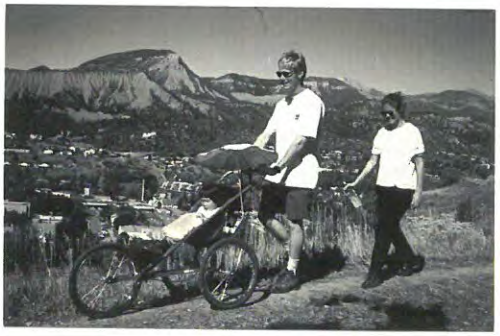
LA PLATA COUNTY TRAILS PLAN

2000



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Mission of the La Plata County Trails Plan

To promote the ongoing development and maintenance of a strategic, well-designed network of trails that provide safe, convenient and enjoyable recreation and transportation experiences for all trail users.

CHAPTER 1. BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

Trails in La Plata County: Past, Present and Future

Trails play a vital role in the life of La Plata County residents; many people use them for many purposes throughout the county. Trails help to make the county a safe and enjoyable place to live and visit. They connect neighborhoods, schools, businesses, and recreation areas and they provide access to the county's abundant public lands.

Trails in the county have undergone an interesting historical evolution. Many trails that we use today were established by pioneers, who began settling here more than 130 years ago. The driving force behind the early settlement was the search for precious metals; many miles of roads and trails were built to access mineral deposits in the mountains.

To support mining, lumber and food were needed. Therefore, loggers, ranchers and farmers followed the miners; they, too, built roads and trails.

Efficiency determined the road and trail designs of these settlers. Cattle were driven to summer pasture on the most direct route possible; their trails followed the stream bottoms, where there was water and grass. Loggers brought timber to the valleys as directly as possible, with little concern for erosion. Farmers drove their crops to market along narrow roads.

Now, 100 years later, these historic routes throughout the county still function as roads and trails. We have inherited a trails and transportation system that was created by many hard years of grubbing by our predecessors. Unfortunately, many of these routes were not designed with today's uses in mind. Trails in the mountains often follow steep grades or fragile river bottoms. Roads are often narrow with abrupt shoulders.

Today, much like the mining boom of years past, our County is in the midst of another transformation. The population has increased 73% in the past 30 years, growing from 19,000 in 1970 to 44,500 in the year 2000. Growth in the

unincorporated parts of the county has been particularly high, increasing 98% from 1970 to 1998.

The influx of new residents and new patterns of travel and recreation are evident throughout the county, and trail use by residents and visitors is steadily increasing.

Today's challenge is to incorporate trails into the fabric of our developing communities, preserve access to our public lands, maintain existing trails, and provide accommodations for pedestrians and cyclists along our roads and highways. This plan provides guidance for addressing this challenge.

The Trails Plan

Prepared following an evaluation of trails and trail needs in the county, the plan emphasizes strategic additions and improvements to the county's existing trail system in order to promote safety, reduce conflicts; and better connect schools, neighborhoods, business and recreation areas. The plan recognizes the need to respect the rights of private property owners while taking into account the legitimate public need for safe roads and trails, and reasonable access to public lands. The plan is an active, living document, identifying trail needs and opportunities with an eye to the future. Periodic updates to the plan should reflect changing conditions, thereby preserving its relevance.

Major Themes of the Plan

The following major themes emerged during the preparation of this plan. They should be promoted through trail planning and development, and management activities in the county.

Theme 1: Trails are vital to safe, livable neighborhoods and communities

- Trails should safely take people where they need to go; they can connect schools, neighborhoods, businesses, parks and public lands.
- Promoting safe shoulders along county roads and state highways is integral to an overall trails program.
- Identification of potential trail corridors prior to land development is key to integrated trails planning.
- Trails serve multiple purposes: promoting health, recreation and as realistic alternatives to automobiles.
- Trail proposals should consider all relevant users, including accessibility for people with disabilities.
- Good trails and facilities enhance the quality of our lives.

Theme 2: Thoughtful integration between public and private lands is central to meaningful trails planning in La Plata County

- While there are developed trails on public lands, access is limited in some areas.
- Respect for private property rights and reducing trespass problems on private property must be addressed.
- Strategic evaluation of potential access points is required.
- Upgrading existing trail heads, access points, parking and signage are important considerations.
- Sensible hunting, fishing and recreation access on public lands is needed.
- Respect for sensitive plant and animal habitats is vital to proper trails planning.
- Encourage public and private sectors to work together towards good trails.

Theme 3: Proper trail design is critical to a successful trails system

- Trails must accommodate a variety of users and be designed to minimize conflicts.
- Safety must be emphasized. This includes establishing appropriate grades, widths, sight distances and vertical clearance.
- Trails should minimize significant impacts to wildlife and ecosystems.
- Trail designs should minimize vegetation removal and erosion.

Theme 4: Trail maintenance is critical to a successful trails system

- Ongoing trail maintenance is essential to preserving trails. This includes:
  - Rerouting steep trails
  - Rerouting trails to minimize impacts to sensitive natural areas and critical wildlife habitat
  - Improving drainage and limiting erosion

Objectives of the Plan

- ✓ Identify general principles and issues relevant to trails and transportation planning in the county
- ✓ Describe who uses trails, how they are used, and, in general and specific terms, how they can be improved
- ✓ Identify and map major existing trails and routes in the county (primarily those on public lands and along county roads and state highways)
- ✓ Describe specific trail and access needs and opportunities throughout the county
- ✓ Propose the development/completion of four specific trail projects that are of countywide significance
- ✓ Discuss the various entities involved with trails in the county and present recommendations to improve the effectiveness of these entities
- ✓ List sources of information on relevant trail issues (planning, design, maintenance, etc.)
- ✓ Present recommendations and action steps to further the mission and guiding principles of the plan, increase coordination of trail planning efforts, and guide citizen action
- ✓ Provide a document which promotes planning and development of trails and related facilities in the county

The Purpose of the Plan

The Trails Plan is a guide for the planning, development and management of pathways, trails and roads in La Plata County. The plan is an information resource, a policy document, a vision statement and a guide for future action.

Information resource

The plan serves as an **information resource** by describing the patterns and needs of trail users in the county, and discussing the types of trails in the county and where they are located.

Policy document

As a **policy document**, the plan provides guidance to the numerous entities involved with trails and transportation in the county on issues such as: trail planning, design, development, maintenance, and management activities. The plan's guiding principles form the foundation of the plan by establishing broad goals, and specific trail management and planning objectives. Topics identified in the guiding principles are referred to and expanded upon throughout the plan.

Vision statement

As a **vision statement**, the plan presents generalized and specific discussions about the future of trails in La Plata County. Included in the plan are discussions on the role of trails in neighborhoods, and public lands, and their integration with the county's transportation system.

Guide for future action

As a **guide for future action**, the plan identifies more than 100 area-specific trail needs and opportunities, as well as four priority projects of countywide significance. Additionally, the plan contains specific recommendations for future action by the many parties involved in trail issues in the county. It also lists sources for trail assistance and information.

How the Plan Was Created

The plan was created through the combined efforts of: a 46 member stakeholders group; a 3 member steering committee; a team of planners, trail experts, and geographic information systems specialists; and a considerable number of county residents at public forums and working meetings. The La Plata County Board of County Commissioners and Planning Commission provided oversight for the preparation of the plan.

Stakeholders group

The stakeholders group met on a monthly basis for almost two years providing substantive guidance, review and hands-on participation. The stakeholders group consisted of representatives from various trail user groups including: cyclists; hikers; hunters; outfitters; private landowners; farmers and ranchers; snowmobilers; ATV riders; motorcyclists; equestrians; residents from various areas of the county; staff members from local governments, land and wildlife management agencies, trail and open space groups; and other dedicated citizens. The stakeholders group membership roster is contained in the acknowledgements section in the front of the plan.

Throughout the preparation of the plan, the stakeholders group gathered information regarding existing trails and made suggestions for improvements. The process was extensive and the stakeholders reached out well beyond their group to solicit input from trail users, landowners, agency specialists and many other county residents.

Steering committee

The steering committee was composed of representatives of the plan's two major sponsors: La Plata County and Trails 2000. The La Plata County Geographic Information Center provided technical assistance.

Public input

As a supplement to citizen guidance provided by the stakeholders group, there were many opportunities for the public to contribute its ideas and concerns. Public outreach was extensive; it included:

- ✓ Three well-publicized, countywide public meetings/open houses
- ✓ Fifteen local focus group meetings to identify trail needs and opportunities in various parts of the county
- ✓ Eleven public hearings or work sessions before the La Plata County Board of County Commissioners and Planning Commission, the Southern Ute Tribal Council, and the Bayfield Planning Commission
- ✓ Distribution of 300 copies of a draft plan

Major steps in the preparation of the plan

Following is a sequential listing of the major steps in the planning process:

- ✓ Convene stakeholders group in January, 1999
- ✓ Develop mission statement and guiding principles
- ✓ Data collection and analysis
- ✓ Evaluate existing trail system
- ✓ Identify, evaluate and research area specific needs and opportunities
- ✓ Prepare and circulate two draft versions of the plan and review for final adoption in June, 2000

Mission and Guiding Principles

The plan's mission statement and guiding principles establish a set of basic values and priorities that should be used to guide trail planning, development and management. Covering general and specific topics, they address basic values such as the creation of safe, livable communities and the respect for private property rights. At the same time, the guiding principles also identify factors to consider when actually designing, building and managing trails. The mission statement and guiding principles are listed below in their entirety. Individual guiding principles are inserted throughout the text to emphasize their role in shaping particular sections of the plan.

Mission

To promote the ongoing development and maintenance of a strategic, well-designed network of trails that provide safe, convenient and enjoyable recreation and transportation experiences for all trail users.

Guiding principles

1. Trail development efforts should be carried out in a manner that respects the rights of private property owners while also realizing the legitimate public benefit associated with trails and the provision of access to and from public lands, schools, businesses, neighborhoods, and other developed areas.

2. Trail development should be correlated to population density and trail demand; trail networks should be more extensive in developed areas and/or where there is greater demand for trail use.

3. Trails should be developed where they can legitimately play a role in reducing motor vehicle use, such as close to population centers and along busy roads.

4. Trails should be developed on a proactive basis. Ideally, trail corridors should be identified prior to land development. Trail easements and alignments should be secured and established in advance of, or concurrently with, development of an area.

5. The county's trail network should be strategically developed. Development efforts should concentrate on trails that perform essential functions. Trails should take people where they want and need to go - e.g. from one neighborhood to another; from homes to schools, parks, stores and employment centers; to and from public lands; and to high points and vistas.

6. Road rights-of-way throughout the county should be developed to accommodate non-motorized uses through shoulder widening and striping and/or separated paths. The County Road and Bridge Department should maintain a prioritized list of roadways most in need of such improvements.

7. Trails should accommodate a variety of users. Conflicts among users should be minimized through appropriate designs and the availability of alternate routes to separate severely conflicting uses as opposed to outright bans on certain uses.

8. Trails should be designed such that grades, widths, drainage systems, water crossings, sight distances and vertical clearance are appropriate for the types of uses anticipated.

9. Trails should be designed and managed to minimize significant impacts to wildlife and ecosystems.

10. In order to minimize the impact of new trails on the surrounding environment, removal of soil and vegetation should be limited to what is necessary to provide a safe and well-designed trail.

11. Trails should be adequately signed and routinely maintained.

12. Poorly placed or built trails should be redesigned, rerouted or closed and revegetated.

13. Trail building plans should be grounded in financial reality.

14. Accesses and trail heads should be established to connect public roads to public lands.

15. More trail connections should be established between the developed areas (front country) and undeveloped areas (back country).

16. Trails that connect public roads to public lands should have trail heads, access points and parking areas sufficient for all users, whenever possible.

17. When feasible, design trail systems as looped systems, offering users the opportunity to complete multiple loops of varying lengths and difficulty; e.g. Horse Gulch/Grandview Ridge trails.

CHAPTER 2. TRAIL USERS

Most trails in the county serve a variety of users. Understanding the needs of the numerous trail user groups helps to provide direction and guidance for trail planning efforts. The plan strives to identify and address the needs of as many different trail users as possible. Following are discussions about the county's primary trail user groups and some of their specific needs. Strategies for minimizing conflict among user groups as well as between humans and wildlife are included.

Pedestrians and Hikers

In many cases, walkers and hikers are the primary user group for which trails are designed. People on foot are sometimes vulnerable to conflicts with other trail users such as cyclists and motorized users who travel at higher speeds. Many trail walkers are accompanied by their dogs. Conflicts can occur if dogs are not properly controlled. It is also an important courtesy for dog owners to assume responsibility for cleaning up after their dogs. Most neighborhood trails and trails to activity centers such as schools and businesses should be oriented toward pedestrians. Considerations for pedestrian and hikers include:

- Maintaining adequate separation from automobiles (5 feet minimum for separated paths)
- Maintain gentle grades and adequate width to accommodate anticipated volumes of users. (3 feet minimum width on soft surface trails and between 8 feet to 12 feet for heavily used, hard-surface trails)
- Provide adequate shoulders along roads and highways when feasible, per AASHTO standards

Guiding Principle:

Trails should accommodate a variety of users. Conflicts among users should be minimized through appropriate designs and the availability of alternate routes to separate severely conflicting uses as opposed to outright bans on certain uses.

Cyclists

The county's cycling community spans all age and ability levels. Significant numbers of cyclists reside in the county and many visitors come to this area to cycle. Large, organized rides pass through the county each year and the county is known among cyclists nationwide for its mountain biking opportunities. The two primary issues associated with planning for cyclists are safety and the creation of strategic routes to provide variety, utility, and challenge. Chapter 4 addresses on-road issues for cyclists and pedestrians. Appendix 1 contains a detailed analysis of the county's road network. It identifies the major routes in La Plata County used by bicyclists and pedestrians, and outlines recommendations for future actions to improve the safety of those routes and reduce interference with the flow of vehicular traffic. Considerations for cyclists include:

- Designing trails that have adequate sight distances around curves and at intersections
- Maintaining gentle grades and adequate clear zones
- Education programs to inform cyclists and motor vehicle drivers about the "Rules of the Road" and the unique responsibilities of cyclists and drivers

Commuters

Commuting trails and on-road routes should link neighborhoods, schools, businesses, and towns. Given the relatively low densities of development that exist in the county, most commuting is done on bicycle between the county's outlying neighborhoods and the business areas in and around Durango, Bayfield and Ignacio. As such, the primary need of commuters is for adequate shoulders along roads and highways. Chapter 4 and Appendix 1 discuss road design considerations for cyclists, and Chapter 5 identifies specific connections intended to improve linkages between the county's municipalities and outlying neighborhoods. Considerations for Commuters include:

- Adequate shoulders
- Bicycle lane striping through intersections and merge lanes
- Bicycle-responsive traffic signals
- Availability of separated trails in high-use areas

School Children

The goals of school children are similar to those of adult commuters - that of getting safely and efficiently to their destination. There needs to be a great awareness of safety when planning school trails. Ideally, trail routes should be separated from motor vehicles. Road and highway crossings must be carefully planned. Considerations for school trails include:

- Trails should be separated from motor vehicles
- At-grade crossings should be minimized and carefully planned
- School trails should be accessible to people with disabilities

People with Disabilities

Few "accessible" trail opportunities currently exist for disabled trail users in the county. Accessible recreational trails should provide a variety of challenge levels; they do not all have to be level and smoothly paved. Abandoned railroad lines often provide excellent accessible trail opportunities due to their gentle grades. Appendix 7 contains a description of accessibility standards for ensuring trail design compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Considerations for accessible trails design include:

- Gentle grades, necessary parking areas, and appropriate railings, surface, signage
- Providing a variety of challenge levels – not all accessible trails need to be smooth, flat, paved trails; a firm and stable natural surface may be adequate
- Trails should be designed to meet accepted accessibility standards

Horses: Equestrians, Ranchers and Outfitters

Many trails are heavily used by equestrians, particularly in rural areas and on public lands. Equestrian use of trails is mostly recreational; however, trails are also used by ranchers for stock drives and by backcountry outfitters to haul supplies and equipment. Appendix 2 contains a focused discussion of equestrian trail needs and concerns. Considerations when designing trails and facilities for equestrians include:

- Adequate parking and trailer turnaround areas at trail heads
- Hitching rails at trail heads, and at strategic locations along trails
- Signage describing trail destinations and rules, and warnings about motorized users
- Adequate trail width and vertical clearance

- ❖ Establishment of water troughs at springs and streams, and frost free hydrants at trail heads
- ❖ Education of other users regarding potential encounters with equestrians

Motorized Users: ATV, Motorcycle, Snowmobile

These uses normally take place on public lands. The public land agencies have on-going travel management programs for addressing motorized uses on trails and roads. The Trails Plan primarily defers to these agencies plans to address motorized uses and issues. Important motorized issues to consider include:

- ❖ Providing adequate parking at key trail heads
- ❖ Coordinating trail access restrictions with adjacent public lands trail restrictions
- ❖ Acknowledging that many roads on public lands function as a part of the motorized, off-road trail system.

Sportsmen: Hunters and Fishermen

Many hunting and fishing areas are accessed via trails on public lands. Meeting the needs of sportsmen is an important consideration in planning trails and public access points. Chapter 5 identifies opportunities to improve hunting and fishing access through the development of new trails or public lands access points.

A question that has been raised among members of the hunting community is whether hunting access on public lands can be managed in a manner that reduces the migration of game animals from higher elevation public lands onto lower elevation private lands and across roads and highways where they often damage crops and fences and cause traffic accidents. To date no conclusions have been reached concerning this question; however, it is recommended that the Division of Wildlife, land management agencies and the hunting community work together to develop ways to reduce game damage and mortality. Hunting access management may be a component of such a program. Considerations for Sportsmen include:

- ❖ Adequate parking and turnarounds for vehicles and trailers at trail heads
- ❖ Coordination of access and use restrictions on adjacent lands
- ❖ Buffering/separation from nearby residences at trail heads

CHAPTER 3. TRAIL TYPES IN LA PLATA COUNTY

This chapter describes the different types of trails in the county and outlines how they can be improved. Trail types in this chapter include:

- Public lands trails
- City and town connections
- School connections
- Neighborhood and commercial areas
- Outlying agricultural areas
- Mountain and resort communities
- Private trail systems
- Road routes

Public Lands Trails

The majority of trails in the county are located on public lands managed by a variety of federal and state agencies. More than 40 percent of the county is in public ownership, with 36 percent of land in the county managed by the United States Forest Service. Trail routing and maintenance issues are among the major issues associated with trails on public lands. Many of today's existing trails began as stock drive routes, and mining and logging roads. In some instances, they are steep, poorly routed and not suited for recreational uses that they now mostly serve.

Access is another important issue on public lands. There are many large expanses of public land that have little or no public access. Problems exist in these areas as people trespass across private land in order to access public lands. The plan identifies the need to manage forest access in a manner that reasonably meets public demands for access while also minimizing trespassing problems. Trespassing is not likely to decrease unless legitimate access alternatives are created. Chapter 5 identifies a number of areas currently experiencing access problems and/or lacking in public access including:

- Cherry Creek
- Mayday
- Lightner Creek
- HiddenValley/Falls Creek
- Animas River/Electra Lake
- 'Tween Lakes Area (CR 240)

- Middle Mountain
- Beaver Meadows
- Saul's Creek
- H-D Mountains
- Black Ridge

Guiding Principle:

Trail development should be correlated to population density and trail demand; trail networks should be more extensive in developed areas and/or where there is greater demand for trail use.

City and Town Connections

Areas in and around the county's three municipalities have the highest population densities and experience the greatest trail demands. Trail use in these areas is high and trails serve many purposes. For example, many existing routes in and around these communities offer real alternatives to motor vehicle travel, and use them to travel between home, school, work and recreation areas.

Following is a brief discussion of some of the trail issues near Durango, Bayfield and Ignacio. Separately from this plan, each of these municipalities have their own trail planning efforts. Accordingly, this plan focuses primarily on trail linkages between the municipalities and adjacent unincorporated areas.

Durango

Durango has a substantial network of trails and trail use in the city is proportionately high relative to many other parts of the County. The city's Animas River Trail (ART) functions as the spine of the city's trail system and many of the city's neighborhoods have sidewalks, trails, and on-street bicycle routes that connect with the ART. The city has plans to eventually complete the Animas River Trail, from CR 203 in the north, to Farmington Hill in the south. The city also has an impressive system of trails around its perimeter that connect to many of the public lands adjacent to the city.

The Trails Element of the City's 2000 Parks, Open Space, and Trails (POST) Plan is a comprehensive document that details the city's existing and proposed trail system. This plan includes many strategic links to unincorporated neighborhoods surrounding Durango. This plan also identifies a number of strategic opportunities to link trails identified in the POST Plan. These include:

- Colorado Trail extension to Durango
- Separated path paralleling Hwy 160 East connecting to the Animas River Trail
- Safety accommodations along CR 204 (Junction Creek Road)
- Separated path paralleling Hwy 55O N through Animas Valley
- Separated path along CR 237, if reopened and improved (Horse Gulch Road)
- Additional trail heads and linkages serving the Telegraph Trail and Grandview Ridge trail networks

Bayfield and Ignacio

The communities of Bayfield and Ignacio have recently begun to incorporate trails into their development and transportation plans. Bayfield adopted its Pedestrian and Bicyclist Connections Plan in December 1998, and the town is now emphasizing the planning and development of pedestrian and bicycle linkages, including connections to all of its schools.

Ignacio, together with La Plata County and the Southern Ute Tribe, recently completed its Transportation Nexus Plan 2020 that includes a layout for a non-motorized pathway system for Ignacio. The system consists of sidewalks, paths, trails, more visible street crosswalks connecting, schools, parks, activity centers and employment areas, and trails for leisure and recreational use. The town is also attempting to coordinate their trail-planning efforts with the Southern Ute Tribe because the tribe owns much of the land surrounding the town and is pursuing a number of nearby development projects. The connection of the town's Shoshone Park Riparian Natural Trail with trails along the Pine River on Tribal land is an example of cooperation between the two.

Chapter 5 of this plan identifies several trail opportunities in and between the Bayfield and Ignacio areas that will integrate with the trail plans of these towns. They include:

- Trail connection along Pine River between Bayfield and Ignacio
- Development of neighborhood trails in and around the town of Ignacio
- School trail connections between Bayfield schools and adjacent neighborhoods
- Separated path and other non-motorized accommodations along Highway 160
- Public land access and trails in the Saul's Creek area

School Connections

Developing and maintaining safe trail connections between schools and adjacent neighborhoods is one of the most pressing trail needs in the county. Many schools have adjacent subdivisions with no formal linking trails. In many instances, students must travel along busy roads and highways in order to reach their schools because little or no trail access exists. By way of example, there are four public elementary schools in unincorporated parts of the county. All four are located on or very close to a state highway.

The lack of school trails compromises the safety of students who walk or ride to school and creates a hardship on parents who are required to drive their children to school or escort them on foot. This, in turn, contributes to congestion on roads and highways. At most schools throughout the county, it appears a number of short trails to connect schools with adjacent subdivisions could vastly improve student access and safety. Schools located in unincorporated areas of the county that could benefit from better trail connections include:

- Animas Valley Elementary
- Florida Mesa Elementary
- Fort Lewis Mesa Elementary
- Sunnyside Elementary
- Escalante Middle School

Neighborhoods and Commercial Areas

Established neighborhoods and business areas in unincorporated parts of the county are experiencing the highest rates of development and possess some of the most urgent needs for trails. Many of these neighborhoods lack trail linkages between residences, schools and businesses. These areas include:

- Animas Valley
- Sunnyside
- Florida Mesa
- Forest Lakes Subdivision
- Florida Road
- Durango West Subdivisions
- Rafter J and Shenandoah Subdivisions
- Animas Air Park/Koshak Mesa
- La Plata County Airport
- Cascade Village/Purgatory/Needles/Tamarron
- Vallecito

> Guiding Principle:
>
> Trails should be developed on a proactive basis. Ideally, trail corridors should be identified prior to development. Trail easements and alignments should be secured and established prior to, or concurrently with, the development of an area.

These once rural areas now contain many established neighborhoods that continue to grow. Finding ways to proactively identify and develop viable trails and linkages in and around neighborhoods and subdivisions is a critical issue. Past failure to establish trails during the development of such areas have resulted in lost opportunities and a lack of connections between neighborhoods, schools, businesses and public lands.

Outlying Rural/Agricultural Areas

The rural portions of the county, such as the southwest and southeast, currently have fewer trail demands. In many ways, the network of unpaved county roads in these areas functions as a trail system. A running joke among the Trails Plan Stakeholders Group was that some of the county's unmaintained dirt roads were not so much "bad roads" as they were "good trails." Land ownership in rural parts of the county is predominantly private or tribal. Development pressures are generally lower in the rural areas, but they will likely continue to increase over time. County roads, abandoned railroad lines and irrigation canals may

provide future trail opportunities as discussed below. Recommendations for pedestrian and cyclist accommodations along county roads and state highways are addressed in Chapter 4.

Rails to Trails

Several abandoned railroad lines exist in rural parts of the county. Historically, railroads connected Durango with Dolores, Chama, and Farmington. Spur lines existed in places such as Perins Peak and Grandview Ridge. While it may be difficult to re-establish public access to old railroad rights-of-way, several of these abandoned routes have been identified as potential trail alignments. Railroad grades usually provide excellent accessible trail opportunities for disabled trail users due to their consistent width and gentle grades. Considerable research will be required to gain a better idea of the feasibility of which abandoned railroad lines may serve as potential trail alignments include:

- Montezuma County Line to Mayday, Hesperus and West Durango
- South Durango to Grand View, Florida Mesa and Ignacio
- South Durango toward Bondad, Aztec and Farmington

Irrigation canals

In some instances, irrigation canal alignments may present an opportunity to double as trail corridors. Irrigation canals traverse many rural parts of the county where few trails exist. Generally, canals are safely separate from roadways, contributing to their attractiveness as trail corridors. Some of the larger canals have dirt service roads that parallel the canals, and the potential may exist to accommodate trail users along these service roads. Canal trails have been successfully developed across the United States and there are several examples in Colorado. Notably, the Highline Canal in Denver and its surrounding suburbs has popular multi-use trails paralleling it. Issues to be addressed when researching trail potential along irrigation canals include:

- User safety
- Landowner liability along canals
- Trespass and conflicts with agricultural operations and adjoining landowners

Addressing landowner and canal management concerns is particularly critical when studying trail feasibility along irrigation canals. Traditionally the custom and culture of water providers and landowners is resistant to providing access to canal roads. Nevertheless, as the county's agricultural areas continue to develop, the potential to utilize canal roads for trails should not be overlooked.

Mountain Areas and Resort Communities

Trails in the mountain and resort areas in the northwest (Purgatory/ Highway 550 North) and northeast (Vallecito/Lemon Reservoir areas) are heavily used by residents and visitors. Issues in these areas include neighborhood links and connections as well as a strong emphasis on public lands access and trail head parking and signage. Another suggestion heard from residents in these communities was the need for gentle grade routes and loops in the more rugged areas. Examples of recommended trail enhancements in these areas include:

- Completing the Vallecito Reservoir loop trail
- Neighborhood trail connectors along the east and west sides of Highway 550 N
- Public access, trail and trail head improvements at:
  - Purgatory Flats
  - Elbert Creek
  - Mitchell Lakes
  - Animas River – Rockwood and Electra Lake
  - Middle Mountain

> Guiding Principle:
>
> Trail systems should have trail heads, access points and parking areas sufficient to provide for the access and parking needs of all users, whenever possible.

Private Trail Systems

Some residential subdivisions and private resorts possess private trail systems for their residents and guests. Examples include Durango West II and Edgemont Ranch. These systems supplement the county's trail system but are not considered part of it. Subdivision trail systems should provide links between subdivisions and adjacent schools, neighborhoods and businesses. Trail systems in and between subdivisions should be accessible to the public.

Road Routes

County roads and state highways in the county function as routes for cyclists, pedestrians and even equestrians often because no other options exist. Demands for safe and usable alternatives to motor vehicle travel are growing, and it will become increasingly important to address safety issues along roads in the county. Of paramount consideration is the provision of adequate shoulders along all roads as well as the striping and cleaning of shoulders on paved roads. Developing separate bicycle and pedestrian paths along some major roads and highways is another important consideration. Chapter 4 contains a more detailed discussion of roads and highways in the county and strategies for accommodating non-motorized users.

CHAPTER 4. ROAD SAFETY

The word "trails" generally brings to mind backcountry paths. However, it is clear that in La Plata County "trails" encompass a wider definition. This chapter takes into account that roads play a major role for non-motorized travel in the county. Two major U.S. highways provide the only true east-west (U.S. 160) and north-south (U.S. 550) transportation corridors through the county. The development of a more balanced transportation system can improve safety on roads as well as reducing automobile dependency. This is consistent with county, state, and federal highway transportation plans, all of which address the need for a balanced multi-modal system that includes bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

This chapter identifies some general improvements that should be applied to roads and highways as they are constructed, improved and maintained. Specific recommendations for improvements to U.S. Highway 160 from Durango to Bayfield are also detailed in this Chapter.

As traffic levels on roads in the county continue to rise, roads and highways become increasingly difficult and dangerous to travel for pedestrians and cyclists and the potential for conflict between motorized and non-motorized users increases. This conflict can be lessened by common sense, courtesy among users and an understanding of the "rules of the road". Given the importance of these factors in improving safety on paved roads in the county, a brief section at the end of this chapter reviews some of the basic "rules of the road."

Chapter 5 identifies various needs and opportunities relative to the county. Appendix 1 contains an inventory of major routes in La Plata County used by bicyclists and pedestrians. It is intended to assist the county and state in planning road improvements. The objective of this assessment is to provide a list of road needs that, if met, could markedly improve the safety of bicycle riders and pedestrians, while reducing interference with the flow of traffic and the safe operation of motor vehicles.

Objectives for Roads as Trails

- To allow pedestrians and cyclists to safely travel along major roadways throughout La Plata County particularly along routes that link residential areas to population centers, jobs, schools, shopping centers, parks, trail systems and other destinations.

- To ensure that pedestrian and bicycle facilities are fully integrated in the planning, design, and engineering phases of all road projects in La Plata County.

General Design Concepts for Roads and Highways

Non-motorized travel tends to receive limited attention during road maintenance and reconstruction activity. The following design and maintenance recommendations are intended to improve the safety of roads and highways in the county:

- Paved shoulders should be at least 4 feet wide in order to accommodate non-motorized users and provide clear zones for motorized users.

- Rumble strips should only be installed in places that will not significantly impede bicycle travel.

- Intersections should be designed to safely accommodate non-motorized users; design considerations may include:
  - Widened curb lanes (12 to 14 feet), if a bicycle lane is impractical or unnecessary due to low traffic volumes
  - Striped bicycle lanes, with appropriate signage and pavement markings
  - Bicycle safe drainage grate inlets
  - Traffic signals that are responsive to bicycles
  - Safe railroad crossings
  - Merge lanes allowing unimpeded motor vehicle merging from one roadway to another should be marked so motorists are aware of the potential for approaching bicycle traffic

- Shoulders should be regularly cleaned and maintained
  - A sweeping program should be initiated
  - Pavement overlay should maintain a smooth surface across the entire shoulder

- "Share the Road" signage should be installed in areas of heavy interaction between motorized and non-motorized traffic.

Design Considerations for the Highway 160 East Corridor

In 1999 and early 2000 the Colorado Department of Transportation was planning major improvements for the Highway 160 corridor between Durango and Bayfield. The Trails Plan Stakeholders Group took particular interest in this project because it is the only major east-west highway though the county and there are no viable alternatives for travel between Durango and Bayfield. Development along the corridor continues at a rapid pace, and there is a significant need to plan for non-motorized uses along this corridor. The following design considerations should be incorporated into the highway's reconstruction:

- A hard-surfaced, separated, multi-use path should be constructed between Durango and Bayfield. The inclusion of such a facility should not result in the closure of the highway shoulders to non-motorized users. In areas where significant development has already occurred and frontage roads are proposed, a separate path may be physically impractical. As such, frontage road shoulders, striped as bike lanes, may serve as an alternative to a separate path.

- Underpasses should be provided at several locations along the highway corridor. At a minimum, an underpass should be located near the existing Farmington Hill alignment to link the Animas River Trail to properties on the north side of Highway 160. Ideally, underpasses should also be located in areas of higher-density development.

- All intersections and underpasses should be designed, constructed and marked in a manner that will not discourage non-motorized use. Major intersections that include merging, turning and/or through-traffic lanes should also be designed and controlled in a fashion that maintains continuous, safe and convenient access for non-motorized users.

Guiding Principle:

Road rights-of-way throughout the County should be developed to accommodate non-motorized uses through shoulder widening and striping and/or separated paths. The County's Road and Bridge Department should maintain a prioritized list of roadways most in need of such improvements.

Specific planning areas

Dominquez Drive to Highway 172:
The Highway 160 corridor from Dominquez Drive to Highway 172 is an important link between the Florida Mesa community and the expanding commercial and public-use areas near Wal-Mart as well as points north and the City's Animas River Trail. This area includes a significant amount of residential and commercial development, two schools (Escalante Middle School and Florida Mesa Elementary School) and access points to a large and highly utilized recreation area (Grandview Ridge and Horse Gulch).

A linkage should be established between the proposed terminus of the Animas River Trail near the bend of Highway 550/160 with the proposed separated path heading east along Highway 160. This linkage would allow for safe, non-motorized travel off the mainline of Highway 160, stretching from Durango and Bayfield. This linkage would also provide safe and convenient access between the residential areas on the Mesa, and the middle school and commercial areas near Wal-Mart.

It is envisioned that the multi-use path would run east from its connection with the Animas River Trail along the southern side of Highway 550/160, then passing under the highway near the existing alignment of the intersection at Farmington Hill. It would then follow the north side of the highway, eventually connecting with the frontage road system in Grandview; and continue on the north side of the highway to the intersection of Highway 160 with CR 234 and Hwy 172.

Additionally, on the north side of Highway 550/160 between Dominquez Drive (Wal-Mart intersection) and High Llama Lane (Grandview) is a segment of abandoned railroad line. Segments of this old rail line could serve as a northern route of the multi-use path connecting homes, businesses, and Bureau of Land Management trail heads located on the north side of the highway corridor.

An underpass near the existing alignment of Farmington Hill will link all sides of the Highway 550/160 corridor, allowing non-motorized users to avoid at-grade crossings at this very difficult point. It will also provide a functional connection of the Highway 160 multi-use path with the existing Farmington Hill (Highway 550) roadway, which should be converted to a multi-use path if it is abandoned.

County Road 234 / Hwy 172 to Bayfield:
Currently, this is the most rural section of highway along Highway 160 East. This area is expected to experience significant development pressure in the future. It is envisioned that once the proposed frontage road system terminates east of Grandview, the multi-use path would continue to Bayfield. As long as there are safe access points at mile intervals, the location of the path can be dictated by highway design considerations, geography and other constraints. No specific locations were identified for underpasses. However, given the amount of residential development occurring on both sides of the highway along County Roads 222/223 and the Florida River, this area may warrant consideration for an underpass. The town of Bayfield's Trails Plan also envisions a pedestrian underpass at the Pine River.

County Transportation Plan Policies

The La Plata County Transportation Plan contains a set of non-motorized policies that are intended to help the county successfully address such uses on County roads. The polices are as follows:

- The county will promote the planning and construction of bicycle and pedestrian accommodations that function as an integral part of the transportation system. Such accommodations will be provided in new developments to promote safety and reduce motor vehicle use. Bikeways and walkways should be designed to link residential areas and employment areas, commercial centers, recreational areas and schools, and provide circulation within a development. In some rural areas it may be prudent to develop trails that can accommodate equestrians and ATVs in addition to bicycles and pedestrians.

> Guiding Principle:
>
> Trails should be developed where they can legitimately play a role in reducing motor vehicle use, such as close to population centers and along busy roads.

- When possible, road rights-of-way throughout the county should be developed to accommodate non-motorized uses via shoulder widening, striping and/or separated paths. The county should maintain a prioritized list of the roadways most in need of such improvements.

- Caution must be taken to accommodate non-motorized users, such as the careful use of rumble strips and adequate cleaning of special lanes or shoulders.

- Specific high use bicycle routes have been identified. These are listed in the inventory in Appendix 1. These corridors may deserve special consideration for the development of accommodations for cyclists.

- Specific funding sources for bicycle lanes and pedestrian and equestrian accommodations should be identified and pursued.

- In rural areas, non-maintained County Roads may be allowed to function as trails for bicycles, pedestrians and equestrians.

- Design standards for collector and arterial roads should incorporate sufficient shoulders to accommodate bicycle traffic.

Rules of the Road

Common Sense + Courtesy = Less Conflict

The vast majority of motor vehicle operators and cyclists operate in a manner that is safe and courteous toward other users. Unfortunately, a very small minority of each can create an environment that endangers lives and increases the already stressful road experience. On-going education of cyclists and drivers, and continued self-policing by major road cycling groups can help defuse potentially dangerous situations. Some of the basic "rules of the road" are provided here as reminders of proper conduct. Sections below are cited from The *Colorado Bicycling Manual* produced by the Colorado Department of Transportation (7th edition, 1999), which includes a detailed discussion of the rules of the road for both cyclists and drivers. Overall, "in Colorado, motorists and cyclists share the road. Both have equal rights and responsibilities to obey all traffic laws. All users should show respect and consideration when sharing the road."

For bicyclists

- Bicyclists have all the rights and duties applicable to the driver of any other vehicle and can be penalized for violating traffic laws.

- Ride on the right; never ride against traffic. Ride in the right lane, except when passing another vehicle, preparing for a left turn, or avoiding hazards. Always ride with the flow of traffic. Ride on the paved shoulder whenever a paved shoulder suitable for bicycle riding is present.

- Ride single file. You may ride two abreast only when no motor vehicle traffic is approaching within 300 feet (front or rear) or when all cyclists are on the shoulder. On curving canyon roads, play it safe and ride single file.

- Obey traffic laws, signs and signals. Use hand signals to indicate left or right turns, slowing or stopping.

- Use a headlight, taillight, and reflectors at night; make eye contact with drivers. Never assume motorists see you or that you have the right-of-way. Expect the unexpected; your first responsibility is to avoid a crash.

- Always wear a helmet.

For motor vehicle drivers

Motorists also have a responsibility to act in ways to make the roads safer for all users. They should consider the following points when they encounter pedestrians and bicyclists:

- Scanning for pedestrian and bicyclists should be a normal part of your driving routine as is scanning for other cars and trucks.
- Extra care should be taken when exiting alleys and driveways since pedestrians and bicyclists may be using the sidewalk and approaching from the left and right.
- Allow at least three feet between your vehicle and the bicyclist.
- Be patient and wait until it is safe to pass, as you would any other slow-moving vehicle.
- If it is necessary to sound your horn in advance of passing, please do so from a friendly distance (several hundred feet).

Implementation

This chapter provides recommendations and guidance regarding the provision of safe and accessible non-motorized facilities along the roads and highways throughout La Plata County. The recommendations are based upon the understanding that a significant portion of the road and highway network in the county will receive either major safety improvements or reconstruction in the coming years. Major reconstruction projects provide prime opportunity to address non-motorized facilities.

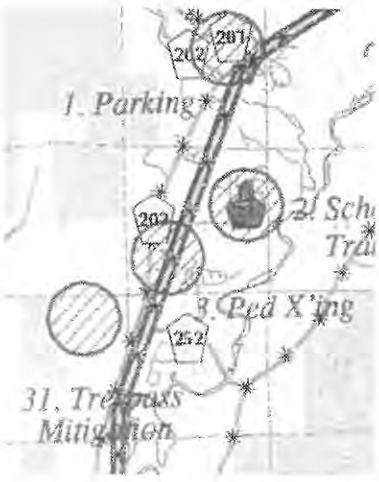
CHAPTER 5. TRAIL NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

This chapter presents more than 100 area-specific trail needs and opportunities that were identified through an extensive public outreach and research program. Existing needs such as upgrading facilities at trail heads and rerouting steep trails are categorized; and potential opportunities such as improved public lands access, roadway safety improvements, and neighborhood trail connections are identified.

Care was taken to make the analysis as realistic as possible. However, detailed feasibility studies were not performed for each need or opportunity. Subsequent analysis will be required before any of the plan's needs and opportunities are implemented. The Trails Plan Map and accompanying Needs and Opportunities Analysis Tables catalog each specific need and opportunity.

Trails Plan Map

The Trails Plan Map identifies land ownership categories, major existing trails and over 100 area-specific needs and opportunities. The map is reproduced herein as one composite map of the entire county and as seven 11 x 17- inch map panels excerpted from the countywide map. The seven panels contain the same information as the countywide map, but are printed at a larger scale. Following is a description of the trail and route classifications shown on the Trails Plan Map:



Trails

Solid lines on the map delineate existing formally established trails. These trails are primarily located on public lands. On Forest Service lands, only designated "system" trails are depicted. System trails are those that the Forest Service regularly maintains. Many other "non-system" trails exist, some of which are regularly used. However, the Forest Service does not maintain them so they are not outlined on the map.

Routes

Some non-maintained trails and some dirt roads on Forest Service lands are depicted as "routes". This designation distinguishes them from "trails" in that they function as trails, but may not be officially recognized as such or they may technically be roads that also receive "trail-like" use. For example, a Forest Service road used by cross-country skiers and snowmobilers in the winter, or ATVs, mountain bikers and hikers in the summer may be designated on the map as a route.

On-road cycling routes

Outlined on the Trails Plan Map with a string of stars, these routes consist of county roads and highways regularly used by cyclists. Of course, other roads are used by cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians; however, they were not identified as preferred or heavily used routes.

Needs and opportunities

The generalized location of each specific need or opportunity is identified on the map with a hatched circle or polygon that is numbered and titled. In some cases several hatched circles may be used to identify a single need or opportunity. This infers that the need to be addressed may exist in several nearby areas, such as a public land holding that may have several potential access points.

Needs and Opportunities Identification

An extensive series of focus group meetings were conducted with trail users and landowners throughout the county to identify specific trail needs and opportunities. Guiding principles were used to focus attention on specific types of trail needs and opportunities. For instance, guiding principle 4 discusses the need to be proactive and identify potential trail corridors before an area develops extensively. This principle helped to identify needs and opportunities that address trail potential in developing areas such as the North County District, Koshak Mesa and La Plata County Airport. The needs and opportunities fall into one of the following nine general categories:

> Guiding Principle:
>
> The County's trail network should be strategically developed. Development efforts should concentrate on trails that perform essential functions. Trails should take people where they want and need to go - e.g. from one neighborhood to another; from homes to schools, parks, stores, and employment centers; to and from public lands; and to high points and vistas.

- Public lands access
- Neighborhood trail connections
- School trails
- Rails to trails
- Parking / trail heads
- Roadway improvements - bicycle/pedestrian accommodations
- Trails
- Trail work/reroutes
- Trespass mitigation

Due to the varied nature of trail issues in the county and the various options available to address them, nearly every need and opportunity involves a unique set of circumstances, calling for an equally unique solution. The needs and opportunities analysis describes the various issues associated with a particular need or opportunity. However, detailed solutions for each need and opportunity were not developed during this effort and specific trail alignments or exact locations for public land access points have not been proposed.

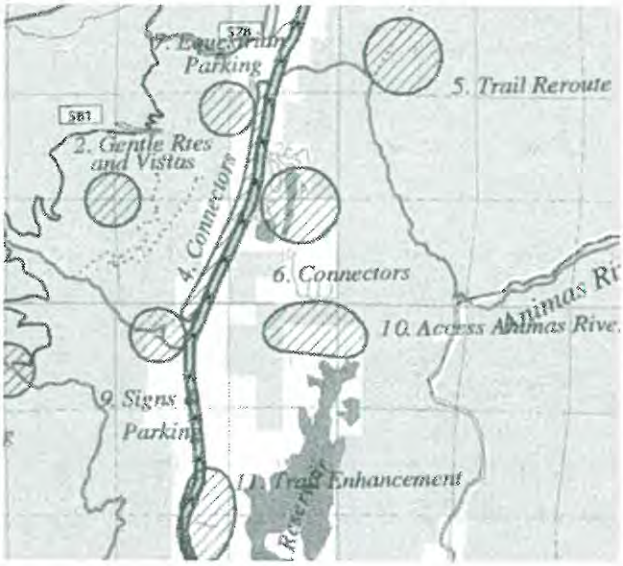
How several needs and opportunities were developed:

A route called the Elbert Creek Trail exists near Purgatory Resort in the north county District. Most of the trail is in the San Juan National Forest, with only the trail head on private land, and possibly, within CDOT right of way. In a neighborhood meeting, a resident identified the Elbert Creek Trail as a popular and much-appreciated route; it leads into the forest and to other trails, and offers solitude and views.

However, the neighbor suggested there were problems at the trail head: signage is poor and parking is insufficient, creating conflicts with businesses in the immediate area. Another neighbor suggested that a short, new connector trail could be built, linking the Elbert Creek Trail to a much larger parking area with room for proper signage and horse trailers. Furthermore, the connector may also be used to connect local neighborhoods, an idea that has been discussed for years.

The following "needs and opportunities" were identified in connection with the issues described above. Their generalized location is depicted on Map 1 and they are discussed in the Map's accompanying analysis table.

1-4. Connectors, West Side of Highway 550
1-7. Equestrian Parking
1-9. Signs and Parking, Elbert Creek Trail head



Map 1. Excerpt (north county- Purgatory/Needles)

Analysis tables

The generalized location of each need and opportunity is depicted on the Trails Plan Map. Analysis tables accompanying the seven map panels describe each need or opportunity in detail. Each description includes:

- Numerical identifier and descriptive title from Trails Plan Map
- Location
- Narrative description of project and issues to consider
- Likely partners and likely "lead partner"

The plan's needs and opportunities analysis is intended to be an evolving list that will grow or shrink as new issues arise and others are resolved. Over time, the plan should be amended to reflect such changes. Four specific needs and opportunities are identified as priority projects of countywide significance, but otherwise the needs and opportunities are not prioritized. Each one generally represents an independent issue that may involve a unique solution that is unrelated to the other needs and opportunities. The pursuit of one project is not meant to impede or diminish the importance of another need or opportunity that may be equally important, yet entirely unrelated.

Countywide Priority Projects

Among the Stakeholders Group there was strong, nearly unanimous support for the four specific projects listed below:

- School Trail Connections
- Highway 160 East - Pedestrian/Bicycle Accommodations.
- Vallecito Reservoir Loop
- Colorado Trail Extension

These projects fill particularly important needs and they will play valuable roles in promoting public safety, building livable communities, quality recreational experiences and providing realistic transportation alternatives.

School trail connections

Schools are the main activity centers in many parts of the county. Safe, usable trail connections between schools and nearby businesses and residential areas are key to the creation of safe, livable communities. Trail connections to schools are important because children are particularly vulnerable to conflicts with motor vehicles and have limited transportation options for getting to and from school. Children, their families and the entire community benefits if students who live near schools can safely walk or ride their bicycles to get to them. School trails should also be designed and maintained in a manner that makes them accessible to disabled users.

There are 19 public schools in the county and most of them lack adequate trail linkages to surrounding neighborhoods and commercial areas. The few schools that do have trail connections, such as Riverview Elementary, have found that students and neighborhood residents heavily use the trails. Developing school trails should become a countywide priority.

A variety of initiatives and partnerships will be necessary to improve school trail connections. As a first step toward planning school trails, a prioritized needs assessment and action plan should be prepared. The study should include:

- Analysis of the geography, ownership, development and student travel patterns at each school.
- Survey of existing trails, including existing deficiencies and constraints
- Potential new trail connections and:
  - What purposes they will serve
  - What will be required to establish them
- Prioritization of trail needs at and among different schools, including:
  - Where the most significant problems exist
  - What improvements will be most useful/cost effective
- Strategies for establishing new trails and improving existing ones
- Role of following entities in developing trails:
  - County and municipal governments review of methods for developing trails in conjunction with new land development
  - School District, parent/teacher organizations
  - Area Landowners and Residents
- Potential funding sources

Highway 160 East, pedestrian/bicycle accommodations

Highway 160 between Durango and Bayfield traverses the fastest growing area of the county. The Colorado Department of Transportation is developing plans to expand the highway into a 4-lane divided expressway with limited access throughout the corridor and frontage roads in developed areas such as Grandview and Gem Village. Without accommodations for bicyclists and pedestrians, it will be extremely difficult and potentially hazardous for them to move along or across this corridor once the highway is improved. Chapter 4 outlines recommended design consideration for non-motorized users along this corridor.

As of May 2000, a partnership was developing among the Colorado Department of Transportation, La Plata County, the City of Durango, trail and cycling groups, and area residents and landowners to pursue the cooperative development of this project. These groups should continue to pursue this project as a countywide priority due to the important role that it will play in improving safety and providing an essential transportation link for non-motorized users.

The primary issues to be resolved are:

- Cooperative arrangements for maintenance and cleaning of separated path sections and bicycle lanes
- Routing and design features of separated path alignments and frontage road shoulders
- Funding and acquisition of easements or right-of-way for separated path sections that are outside the highway right-of-way

Vallecito Reservoir loop

The Vallecito Service League, in cooperation with the Pine River Irrigation District, has completed four independent trail sections around different parts of the reservoir's shoreline. The trail is located primarily on lands managed by the Pine River Irrigation District and the U.S. Forest Service. It is envisioned that the trail may eventually be completed entirely around the Lake. Vallecito is a very popular destination for tourists and county residents alike. Existing portions of the trail are highly used recreationally and for transportation between developed areas. Completing the trail will improve recreational opportunities and promote public safety by providing an alternative to travel along the roads that encircle the lake. The trail also has the potential to be accessible to people with disabilities if designed accordingly.

The trail has not been completed around the reservoir for a variety of reasons including: Topographic constraints, access issues, potential conflicts with private land holdings and potential flooding of trail alignment when reservoir levels are high. Further study will be required to determine the feasibility of completing the trail and to develop necessary partnerships. Other issues to be addressed include trail maintenance and provision of trail facilities such as signs and benches. The Vallecito Service League and the Pine River Irrigation District should continue to work together, calling on other groups or agencies as necessary to assist their efforts to complete the trail. Other likely partners may include the Forest Service, the Vallecito Chamber of Commerce and the Vallecito Land Use Association, Trails 2000 and La Plata County.

Colorado Trail extension

The 473-mile long Colorado Trail runs from Denver almost to Durango. Currently the trail ends at the head of County Road 204, along Junction Creek. Completing the gap from the existing trail head to downtown Durango has been consistently expressed as a priority for local trail users and Colorado Trail supporters throughout the state. Completing the trail will allow direct access to the National Forest from Durango and will give hikers completing the entire trail a more fitting sense of accomplishment if they start or finish their trek in Durango itself.

Efforts to complete the trail have been complicated, in part, by management restrictions on Division of Wildlife lands between the existing trail head and the Durango Mountain Park. Current Division of Wildlife policies do not allow for the construction of trails across their properties due to the potential for trail

users to disturb wildlife. Several options exist for routing the trail within the Dry Gulch/Junction Creek drainages or the Lightner Creek drainage. However, each alignment will likely require crossing Division of Wildlife properties.

Involved parties such as the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, La Plata County, City of Durango, Colorado Division of Wildlife, the Colorado Trail Foundation, Trails 2000 and area residents and landowners; should continue their ongoing efforts to identify a preferred trail route and obtain the necessary approvals and environmental clearances to complete the Colorado Trail into Durango.

Categorized Needs and Opportunities

Following is a list of the needs and opportunities contained in the Trails Plan categorized by project type. This list is intended to provide a summary of the projects in the analysis tables. The numbers to the left of each item correspond to the project's numbering on the Trails Plan Map, i.e. 1-10 refers to Map 1, Need and Opportunity No. 10 - *Access Animas River: North of Electra Lake.* Additional information on each item is contained in the analysis tables that accompany each of the seven maps.

Public lands access

1-1 Access & Land Trade: Harris Ranch, West Cross Creek
1-10 Access Animas River: North of Electra Lake
1-12 Animas River
1-17 Hunting & Fishing Access: Rockwood Train Depot
1-19 Buck Creek Trail
2-2 Red Creek (Coolwater Ranch)
2-4 Middle Mt. Access/CR 501 (above Vallecito)
2-7 Enchanted Forest Subdivision
2-8 'Tween Lakes Subdivision
2-10 Texas Creek
2-11 Texas Creek
2-12 BLM Lands north of Forest Lakes
2-13 Beaver Meadows access from Forest Lakes
3-2 Connect: Mayday
3-4 La Plata and Lightner Creek drainages
3-5 BLM lands south of Hesperus Ski Area
3-6 BLM land west of CR 139 (Cherry Creek)
3-7 Old Fort Lewis College site
4-4 Falls Creek
4-5 CR 203 (West Animas)/Hidden Valley Forest Service lands
4-7 Lightner Creek/La Plata River Drainages
4-10 West side of Animas Mountain
4-11 East Animas Climbing Area
4-14 BLM lands east of Florida Road (Vosberg Pike)
4-16 BLM lands along CR 237 (Horse Gulch)
4-17 Explore public access potential to BLM lands east of CR 225 Vosberg Pike, state lands
4-29 Ridges Basin
4-32 CR 234 connection to Grandview Ridge & Horse Gulch trails
7-1 BLM lands south of CR 502
7-2 Loops/Gentle Slope: State Land Section north of Bayfield
7-5 Access/Gentle Slope: BLM lands south of Highway 160
7-8 Access/Loop: west side H-D Mountains CR 528
7-11 Access/Parking: west side HD Mountains
7-12 Access/Parking: west side HD Mountains

Neighborhood trail connections

1-4 West of Highway 550 between Cascade, Purgatory, Needles and Tamarron
1-6 East of Highway 550 between Purgatory Resort, Lake Purgatory, Lake of the Pines, Two Dogs, Needles, and Tamarron
2-1 Reservoir Loop: Vallecito Reservoir
4-3 Pedestrian crossing: Highway 550 N near Animas Valley
4-9 Separated trail: CR 204 - Junction Creek Road
4-20 Between current/future subs: Rafter J, Shenandoah, DWI and DWII
4-21 Connect: Trail Connection between Highway160 and Rafter J
4-23 From La Posta Road to Trappers Crossing
6-2 Neighborhood Trails: Koshak Mesa/Animas Air Park
6-4 Loop & Connects: Pastorious Reservoir to Florida Mesa School
6-6 Neighborhood trails: La Plata County Airport
6-8 River crossing: Animas River
7-6 Local ditch trails: irrigation canal between Highway 160 and 160B
7-10 Bayfield/Ignacio: Pine River between Bayfield and Ignacio
7-13 North/South contour trail: west side HD Mountains
7-15 Ignacio/Southern Ute Trails Plan: Ignacio

School trails

4-2 Animas Valley Elementary School
4-24 Escalante Middle School
4-26 Florida Mesa Elementary School
5-1 Fort Lewis Mesa Elementary School
6-7 Sunnyside Elementary School
7-3 Bayfield Elementary School
7-7 Bayfield High School

Rails to trails

3-3 Hesperus/Cherry Creek Area
3-8 South of Hesperus along Highway 145
4-19 South of CR 125
6-3 Florida Mesa to Ignacio
6-5 South Animas River corridor
7-14 Between Florida Mesa & Ignacio
7-17 Between Ignacio & Arboles

Parking/trail heads

1-7 Equestrian parking: Purgatory auxiliary parking lot
1-8 Parking: Strawberry Patch
1-9 Signs & parking: Elbert Creek Trail Head
1-14 Climber parking: Golf Wall Climbing Area
1-16 Signs & parking: Goulding Creek Trail Head
1-18 Signs & parking: Mitchell Lakes Trail Head
2-9 Shearer Creek Trail
4-1 Base of Hermosa Creek Road (CR 201) Hermosa Creek Trail Parking
4-11 East Animas Climbing Area

4-13 Edgemont Ranch (north of Florida Road)/Durango Hills
4-28 Mountain Park & Colorado Trail trail heads: Old VanDal Landfill site
4-29 Ridges Basin
4-33 CR 250/Stevens Creek Trail Head

Roadway improvements - bicycle/pedestrian accommodations

7-9 CR 509
4-6 Highway 550 N
4-15 CR 237 (Horse Gulch)
4-22 CR 211
4-27 Highway 160 from Durango - Bayfield
6-9 BIA Road: Southwest side Black Ridge
7-4 Highway 160

Trails

1-10 Access Animas River: north of Electra Lake
1-19 Access Buck Creek Trail
2-3 Reservoir Loop: Vallecito Reservoir
2-5 Loop: East side of Vallecito Reservoir, near Old Tymers Campground
3-1 Colorado Trail extension to Mancos
3-4 Access La Plata and Lightner Creek drainages
3-5 BLM lands south of Hesperus Ski Area
3-7 Access/trails: Old Fort Lewis College site
4-5 CR 203 (West Animas)/Hidden Valley Forest Service lands
4-8 Colorado Trail extension to Durango: Junction Creek, Dry Fork/Lightner Creek drainages, or north side Animas Mountain
4-10 West side of Animas Mountain
4-11 East Animas Climbing Area
4-12 Songbird Subdivision (Florida Road)
4-13 Edgemont Ranch (north of Florida Road)/Durango Hills
4-23 Connection from La Posta Road to Trappers Crossing
4-25 Grandview Ridge BLM land
4-30 Smelter Mountain Trail
6-1 Local loops: Access from La Posta Road: West Side Black Ridge
7-2 Access/loops/ Gentle Slope: State Land Section north of Bayfield
7-8 Access/loops: West side H-D Mountains, CR 528
7-13 North/south contour trail; west side HD Mountains
7-16 Stock drive trail: Piedra Stock Drive Trail
7-18 Forest Service - Sauls Creek Trail Plan and east of Bayfield

Trail work/reroutes

1-2 Gentle routes with vistas: Electra View Trail
1-3 Vistas: Dutch Creek and Pinkerton Flagstaff trails
1-5 Trail reroute: Purgatory Flats Trail
1-11 Trail enhancement: West side of Electra Lake
1-13 Identify gentle loops: Haviland Lake
1-15 Pinkerton – Flagstaff Trail, from Dutch Creek to Jones Creek Trail
2-1 Bridge: Upper Florida River (above Lemon Reservoir)
2-6 Nordic Ski Trails: Vallecito Reservoir

Trespass mitigation

1-10 Access Animas River: north of Electra Lake
1-12 Animas River
1-17 Hunting & Fishing Access: Rockwood Train Depot
1-19 Access Buck Creek Trail
2-2 Reservoir Loop: Vallecito Reservoir
2-7 Enchanted Forest Subdivision
2-8 'Tween Lakes Subdivision
2-13 Beaver Meadows access from Forest Lakes
3-2 Connect: Mayday
3-4 Access La Plata and Lightner Creek drainages
4-4 Falls Creek
4-5 CR 203 (West Animas)/Hidden Valley Forest Service lands
4-7 Lightner Creek /La Plata River drainages
4-11 East Animas Climbing Area
4-31 Hidden Valley/CR 203 connection

Maps and Analysis Tables

Table 1 -- Needs and Opportunities Analysis: Northwest

Map # and project type	Location	Actions and Issues	Likely Partners
1. Access & Land Trade	Harris Ranch, West Cross Creek	Establish public access and/or through traffic along old Rico Toll Road. FS interested in acquisition of private inholding. Also, may be possible to connect south of inholding on FS property.	Forest Service Pvt. Landowners Land Trust Partner
2. Gentle Routes with Vistas	Electra View Trail	Utilize existing routes and reroutes to provide vista trail along Hermosa Cliffs atop Purgatory. Add top of mountain trail head with parking and signage. Provide a return loop as well as a connection to the Elbert Creek trail. Take care to route trail in a manner that protects Peregrine Falcons. Seasonal closures possible.	Forest Service North County Service Groups Trails 2000 Purgatory Resort
3. Vistas	Dutch Creek and Pinkerton Flagstaff Trails	Reroute trails to provide vistas from high meadows. Existing trail routed through dense forest, with few vistas. Adequate buffers from edges of Hermosa Cliffs should be maintained to protect Peregrine Falcons.	Forest Service Trails 2000
4. Connectors	West side of Highway 550 between Cascade, Purgatory, Needles and South to Tamarron	Create community connection between and through neighborhoods. Discuss creating trail connection parallel to but separated from Highway 550. Likely route along parts of old stagecoach road between Purgatory and Needles. Trail could be used in conjunction with developed equestrian parking area near Purgatory to provide equestrian alternative access to Elbert Creek. Address potential loss of privacy to residents.	Forest Service Pvt. Landowners HOA - Various Cascade Resort CDOT Purgatory Resort North County Service Groups Trails 2000
5. Trail Reroute	Purgatory Flats Trail reroute	Relocate trail head to Lime Creek Road; existing trail head at old Purgatory Campground will be closed due to land transfer. Discussion re: potential for Purgatory Resort to keep existing trail open.	Forest Service Purgatory Resort Local Residents and Businesses Trails 2000
6. Connectors	East side of Highway 550 between Purgatory Resort, Lake Purgatory, Lake of the Pines, Two Dogs, Needles, and Tamarron	Establish pedestrian/bicycle connection between and through neighborhoods. Discussion about creating trail connection parallel to but separated from Highway 550.	Local Residents and Businesses Purgatory Resort Forest Service Trails 2000 Lake of the Pines Lake Purgatory Two Dogs Subdivision North County Service Groups

Map # and project type	Location	Actions and Issues	Likely Partners
7. Equestrian Parking	Purgatory auxiliary parking lot	Allow non-winter equestrian trail parking at Purgatory's auxiliary lot. Facilitate equestrian access to Elbert Creek trail via proposed west side connector (see # 3 above).	Forest Service Purgatory Resort
8. Parking	Strawberry Patch	Expand parking at trail head Potential conflict with Peregrine Falcons; seasonal closures possible.	Forest Service Four Corners Back Country Horsemen Trails 2000
9. Signs & Parking	Elbert Creek Trail head	Expand parking and properly sign trail head.	Forest Service CDOT? Pvt. Landowners
10. Access Animas River	North of Electra Lake	Establish public access to Animas River. Existing trespass issues near ecologically fragile N. end of Electra Lake. Potential for looped trail from Highway 550 North of Electra Lake to Animas River looping north to Purgatory Flats Trail. Design trail in a manner that provides views of Electra Lake, but discourages access to lake. Maintain Electra Lake front gate as primary public fishing access point to Lakeshore for fishing/hiking. Potential conflict with nesting Bald Eagles along west shore; seasonal closures possible. "Accessible" trails potential.	Forest Service Electra Lake Sporting Club Two Dogs Subdivision Public Service Company of Colorado Pvt. Landowners
11. Trail Enhancement	West Side of Electra Lake	Create a formal trail along West side of lake from entrance gate to north end of lake. Potential to connect with Animas River access (#12) Trail may focus users, mitigating impacts from scattered recreation and access.	Electra Lake Sporting Club Forest Service Trails 2000
12. Access	Animas River	Establish public access to National Forest from railroad stop.	Forest Service
13. Identify Gentle Loops	Haviland Lake	Maze of informal trails exists. Simplify existing maze of trails, establish main routes, and reclaim unnecessary trails, "Accessible" trails potential.	Forest Service Outfitters Trails 2000
14. Climber Parking	Golf Wall Climbing Area	Establish formal parking area for Golf Wall Climbing Area.	Forest Service CDOT Pvt. Landowners Climbing Comm.
15. Trail Segment Reroute	Pinkerton – Flagstaff Trail, from Dutch Creek to Jones Creek Trail	Reroute trail to avoid hills and maintain constant gentle grade; existing trail has many elevation gains and losses. This is a goal of hiking groups and the Forest Service.	Forest Service Trails 2000

Map # and project type	Location	Actions and Issues	Likely Partners
16. Signs & Parking	Goulding Creek Trail head	Expand parking and properly sign trail head. Potential conflict with Peregrine Falcons; seasonal closures possible.	Forest Service CDOT Pvt. Landowners
17. Hunting & Fishing Access	Rockwood train depot	Improve public access to Forest Service Lands (Animas River). Create relatively gentle trail to river.	Forest Service Durango Silverton Narrow Gauge Pvt. Landowners
18. Signs & Parking	Mitchell Lakes Trail head	Expand parking and properly sign trail head. Trail is too steep and rocky for bicycles; otherwise it could be an excellent loop from Jones Creek Trail. FS interested in acquisition of private inholding.	Forest Service La Plata County
19. Access	Buck Creek Trail	Establish public access to east end of trail on FS land. Safety issue because people get too tired at the bottom to backtrack up to Junction Creek. They then trespass to get out. Problems with trespassing need to be resolved.	Forest Service Pvt. Landowners Trails 2000

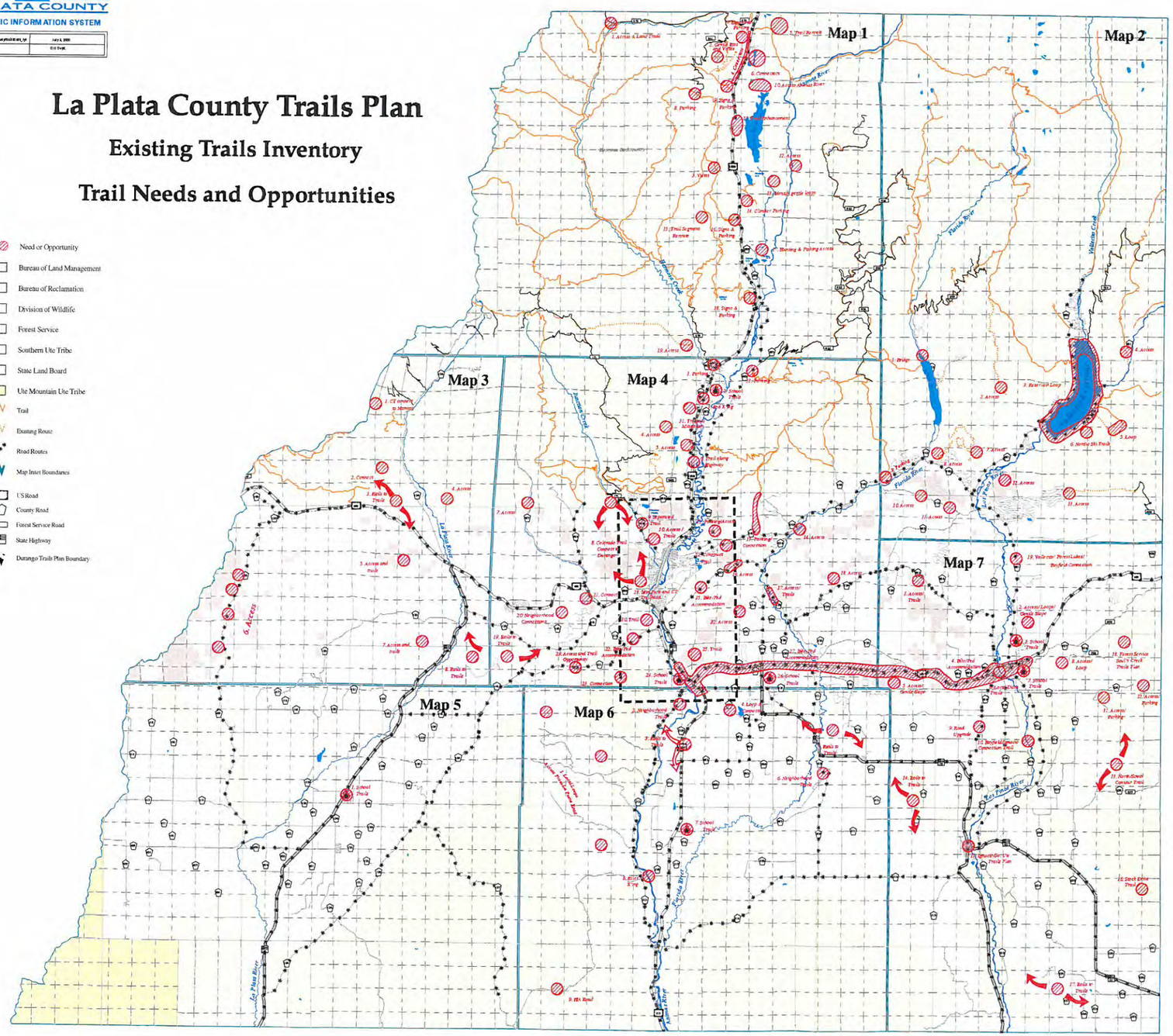
LA PLATA COUNTY
GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM

La Plata County Trails Plan

Existing Trails Inventory

Trail Needs and Opportunities

- Need or Opportunity
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Division of Wildlife
- Forest Service
- Southern Ute Tribe
- State Land Board
- Ute Mountain Ute Tribe
- Trail
- Existing Route
- Road Routes
- Map Inset Boundaries
- US Road
- County Road
- Forest Service Road
- State Highway
- Durango Trails Plan Boundary



Map 1

La Plata County Trails Plan
Existing Trails Inventory
Needs and Opportunities

- Need or Opportunity
- Trail
- Existing Route
- Road Routes
- Forest Service
- US Road
- County Road
- Forest Service Road
- State Highway

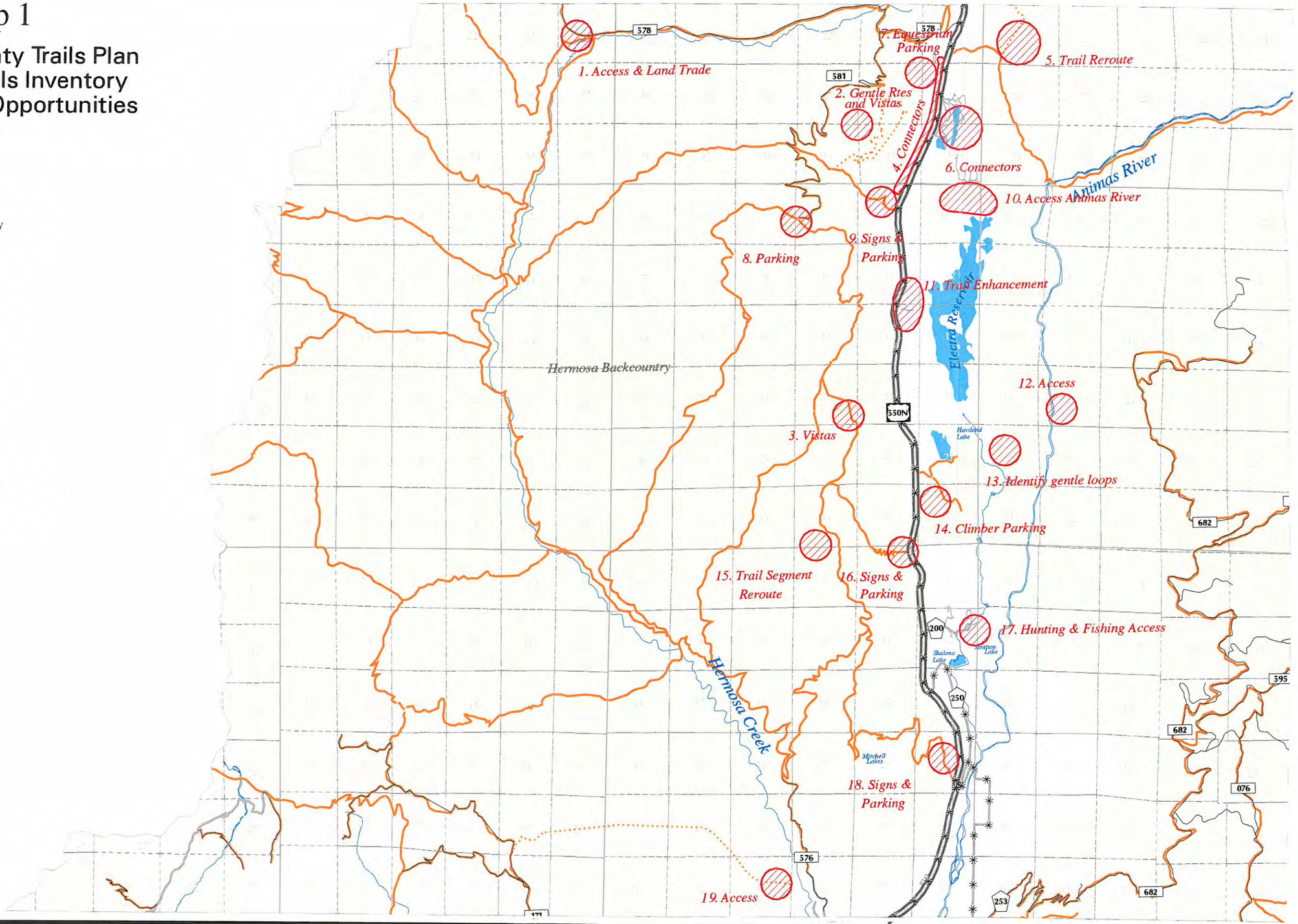


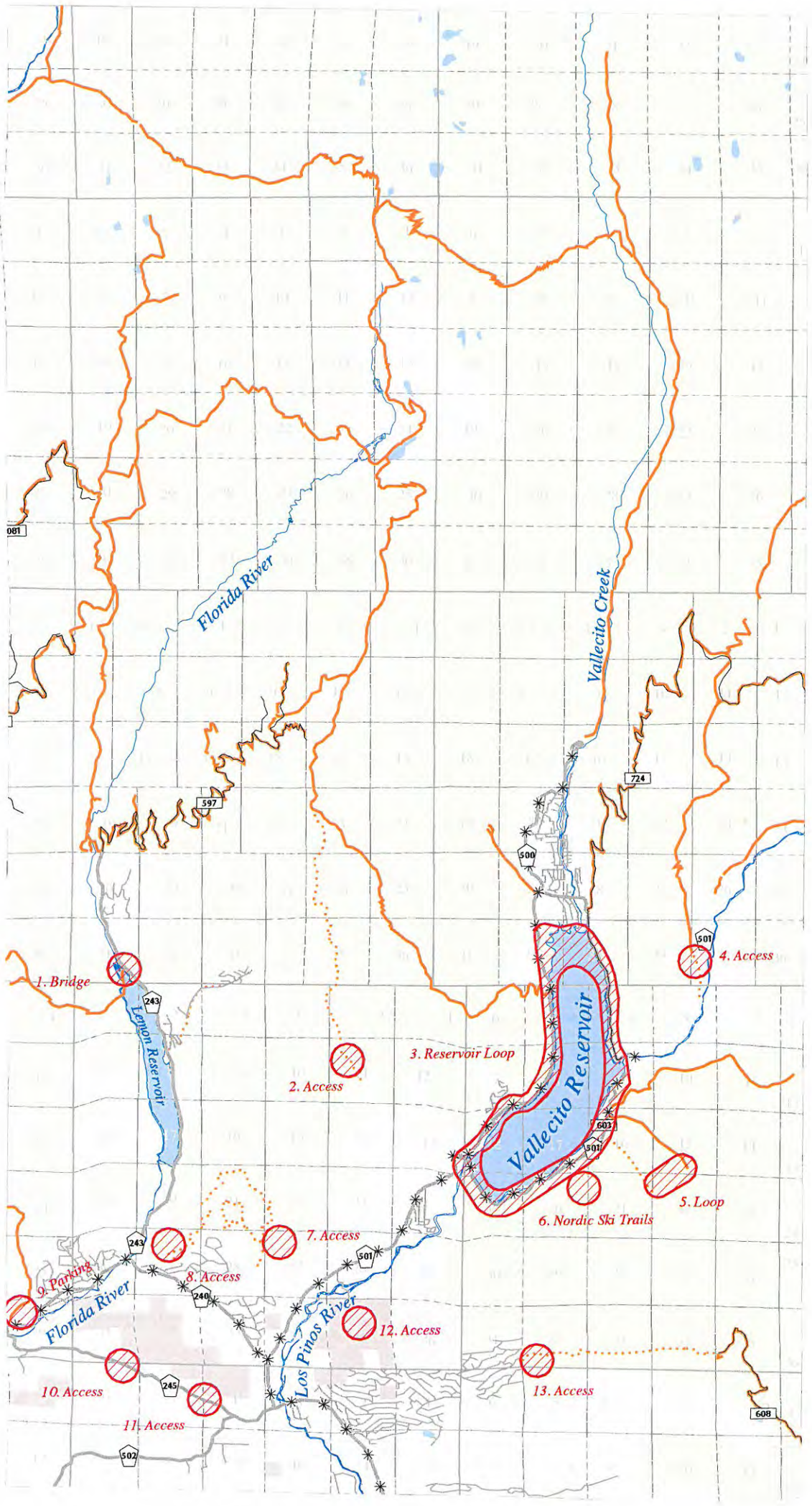
Table 2 -- Needs and Opportunities Analysis: Northeast

Map # and project type	Location	Actions and Issues	Likely Partners
1. Bridge	Upper Florida River (above Lemon Reservoir)	Establish safe crossing across Florida River to Young's Canyon. Discussion re Forest Service plans to construct bridge.	Forest Service
2. Access	Red Creek (Coolwater Ranch)	Establish public access to forest service trail. Landowner issues must be resolved. Access likely to be developed only in conjunction with development of property.	Forest Service Pvt. Landowners La Plata County
3. Reservoir Loop	Vallecito Reservoir	Complete trail around reservoir; existing Vallecito Trail does not completely encircle reservoir.	Forest Service PRID Vallecito Ladies Auxiliary BuRec Pvt. Landowners
4. Access	Middle Mt. Access/CR 501 (above Vallecito)	Establish public access between Middle Mt area and CR 501 (Upper Pine). Potential for conflict with motorized users must be addressed.	Forest Service Pvt. Landowners Trails 2000
5. Loop	East side of Vallecito Reservoir, near Old Tymers Campground	Establish trail connection between two trails east of Vallecito Reservoir. Discussion regarding creating looped trails by connecting two existing trails on Forest Service land.	Forest Service Trails 2000
6. Nordic Ski Trails	Vallecito Reservoir	Continue grooming Nordic Ski Trails.	Pine River Ski Group Forest Service La Plata County
7. Access	Enchanted Forest Subdivision	Establish public access to Forest Service Lands, discussion regarding development of trails and establishment of access. Care must be taken to address potential trespass issues, parking, etc.	Forest Service Pvt. Landowners La Plata County
8. Access	'Tween Lakes Subdivision	Establish public access to Forest Service Lands, discussion regarding development of trails and establishment of access. Care must be taken to address potential trespass issues, parking, etc.	Forest Service Pvt. Landowners La Plata County
9. Parking	Shearer Creek Trail	Expand parking area; road widening further reduced size.	Forest Service Pvt. Landowners County Road & Bridge

Map # and project type	Location	Actions and Issues	Likely Partners
10. Access	Texas Creek	Unknown access opportunity to BLM lands in Texas Creek. Research potential for public access to BLM lands. Care must be taken to address potential trespass issues, parking, etc. Potential winter conflicts with Elk.	BLM Pvt. Landowners County Road & Bridge
11. Access	Texas Creek	Unknown access opportunity to BLM lands in Texas Creek. Care must be taken to address potential trespass issues, parking, etc. Potential winter conflicts with Elk.	BLM Pvt. Landowners County Road & Bridge
12. Access	BLM Lands North of Forest Lakes	Unknown access opportunity to BLM lands near Forest Lakes. Care must be taken to address potential trespass issues, parking, etc. Potential winter conflicts with Elk.	BLM Pvt. Landowners
13. Access	Beaver Meadows access from Forest Lakes	Establish public access to existing trails on Forest Service lands east of Forest Lakes. Care must be taken to address potential trespass issues, parking, etc. Potential winter conflicts with Elk.	Forest Service Pvt. Landowners Forest Lakes Metro District

Map 2

La Plata County Trails Plan
Existing Trails Inventory
Needs and Opportunities



Trails

Existing Routes

Road Routes

Bureau of Land Management

Bureau of Reclamation

Division of Wildlife

Forest Service

State Land Board

Need or Opportunity

US Road

County Road

Forest Service Road

State Highway

Table 3 -- Needs and Opportunities Analysis: West Central

Map # and project type	Location	Actions and Issues	Likely Partners
1. Connect	Colorado Trail extension to Mancos	Establish connection to Mancos, research route potential across Forest Service lands. Difficulty will be in identifying route from Transfer Park Campground to Mancos.	Forest Service Montezuma County
2. Connect	Mayday	Establish connection to Mayday area from trail along old railroad ROW. Address potential trespass issues; need to acquire easements.	Forest Service Pvt. Landowners Ute Mtn Ute Tribe La Plata County
3. Rails to Trails	Hesperus/ Cherry Creek Area	Establish connection to Hesperus area from trail along old railroad ROW. Address potential trespass issues; need to acquire easements. Winter closures for motor vehicles in effect.	Forest Service Ute Mt. Ute Tribe Pvt. Landowners La Plata County
4. Access and Colorado Trail extension	La Plata and Lightner Creek Drainages	Establish access to FS lands between La Plata Canyon and Lightner Creek. Address potential trespass issues; need to acquire &/or reestablish easements.	Forest Service Pvt. Landowners La Plata County
5. Access and Trails	BLM lands south of Hesperus Ski Area	Establish public access to BLM land south of Hesperus Ski Area. Research suitability for trails and availability of access. Address potential trespass issues on adjacent private lands. Research potential for access from Hesperus Ski Area lands.	BLM Pvt. Landowners La Plata County
6. Access	BLM land west of CR 139 (Cherry Creek)	Research public access potential to BLM lands from adjacent County Roads.	BLM La Plata County Pvt. Landowners Landowner
7. Access/ Trails	Old Fort Lewis College Site	Establish trails and public access, and accessible trail opportunities. Potential trail along irrigation canal through college property on east side of Highway 140, connecting to CR 141. Private lands issue between state lands and CR 141.	State of Colorado Trails 2000 La Plata County Pvt. Landowners
8. Rails to Trails	South of Hesperus along Highway 145	Establish trail along abandoned Railroad ROW; research access and ownership and potential conflicts with private landowners.	La Plata County Ute Mt. Ute Tribe Pvt. Landowners

Map 3

La Plata County Trails Plan
Existing Trails Inventory
Needs and Opportunities

- Trail
- Existing Route
- Road Routes
- Need or Opportunity
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Division of Wildlife
- Forest Service
- Southern Ute Tribe
- State Land Board
- US Road
- County Road
- Forest Service Road
- State Highway

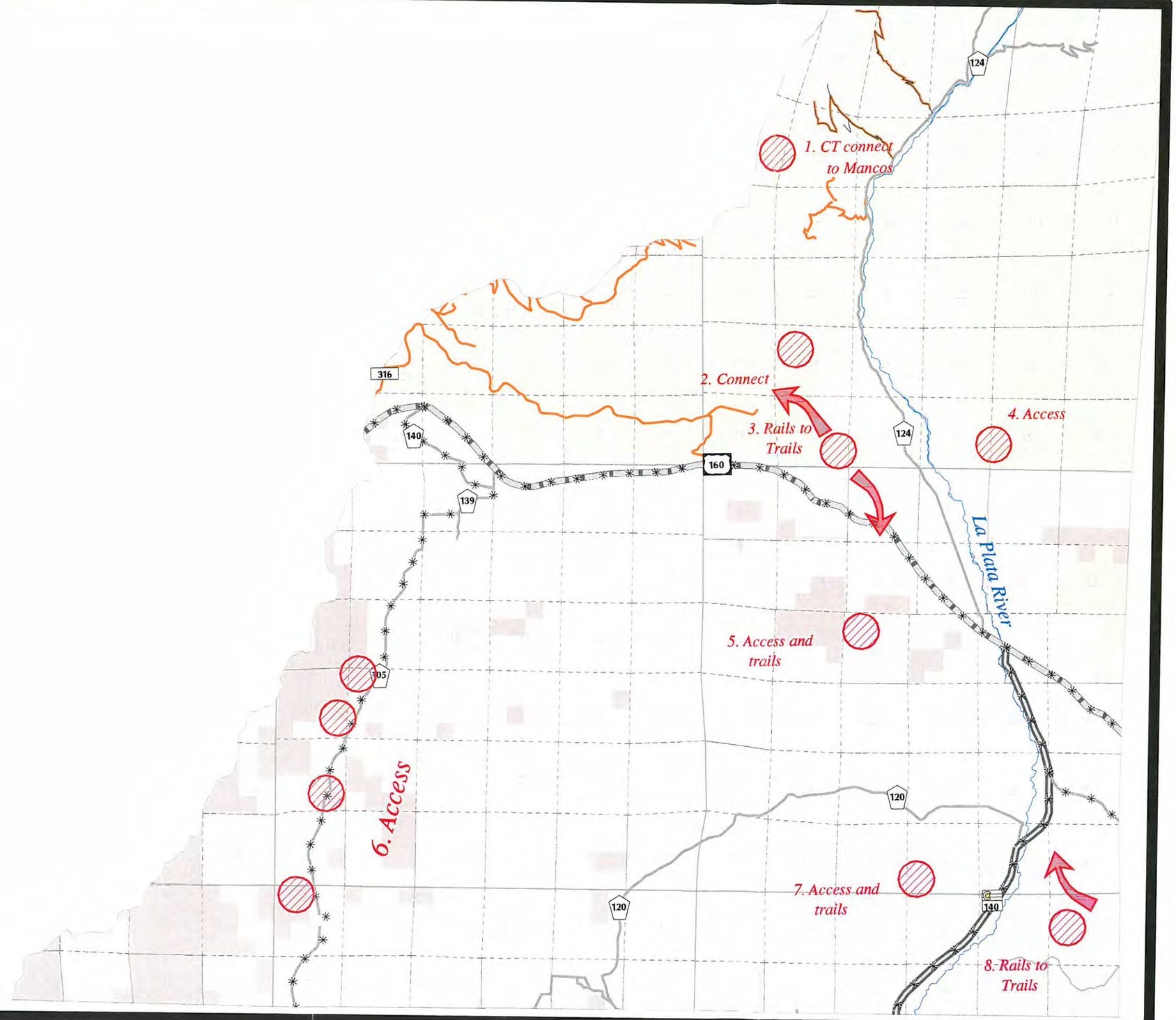


Table 4 -- Needs and Opportunities Analysis: Central

Map # and project type	Location	Actions and Issues	Likely Partners
1. Parking	Base of Hermosa Creek Road (CR 201) Hermosa Creek Trail Parking	Establish parking to accommodate the motor vehicles of cyclists completing Hermosa Creek Trail. Existing arrangement of cars parking along CR impacts residents along the road.	La Plata County Forest Service CDOT Pvt. Landowners
2. School Trails	Animas Valley Elementary School	Establish trail connections between school and neighboring subdivisions. Safety and trespassing concerns to be considered.	La Plata County 9R School District Pvt. Landowners
3. Pedestrian Crossing	Highway 550 near Animas Valley Elementary School	Establish safe pedestrian crossing of Highway 550; discussion regarding potential for pedestrian underpass.	CDOT DSNG Railroad Pvt. Landowners Trails 2000
4. Access	Falls Creek	Establish public access to existing trail between Falls Creek and FS Road 171 (Junction Creek). Existing trail from Falls Creek lacks public access. Trespassing is an ongoing problem that needs resolving. Potential Peregrine Falcon Mitigation. Proposed Winter closures for big game. Archeological Area Closures.	Forest Service Pvt. Landowners DOW La Plata County
5. Access	CR 203 / Hidden Valley Forest Service Lands	Establish trail connection across FS Land connecting CR 203 (West Animas) and Hidden Valley. Discussion regarding creating a trail on Forest Service land, which does touch the County Road. Winter closures for big game. Archeological Area Closures.	Forest Service Trails 2000 DOW La Plata County
6. Trail along Highway	Highway 550 North	Establish separated bicycle path and pedestrian accommodations through the Animas Valley. Potential may exist for a trail within the CDOT &/or Railroad ROW. CDOT ROW may be easiest to work in; RR ROW is not necessarily consistent ownership.	CDOT DSNG Railroad La Plata County Pvt. Landowners
7. Access	Lightner Creek /La Plata River Drainages	Establish public access to public lands between Lightner Creek and La Plata Canyon.	Forest Service Pvt. Landowners La Plata County

Map # and project type	Location	Actions and Issues	Likely Partners
8. Colorado Trail Extension to Durango	Junction Creek and/or Lightner Creek Drainages – North side Animas Mountain	Create Colorado Trail extension to Durango. Discussion regarding several possible alternatives along east side of existing DOW lands near Junction Creek. Extending to BLM lands and Mountain Park would likely require land exchange between DOW and BLM. DOW concerned regarding impacts to wildlife lands. Other potential routes include via Dry fork and Lightner Creek drainages, or around north end of Animas Mountain crossing CR 204 and joining existing trail head.	Forest Service Division of Wildlife BLM La Plata County Pvt. Landowners
9. Separated Trail	CR 204 - Junction Creek Road	Create separate path along east side of Junction Creek Road connecting to Durango. Wildlife and private lands issues to be addressed.	La Plata County BLM Pvt. Landowners Trials 2000
10. Access Trails	West Side of Animas Mountain	Establish public access to Animas Mt from its west side. Several options exist for routing trail. County-owned power line parcel or route across private land connecting to City & BLM-owned land.	BLM La Plata County City of Durango Pvt. Landowners
11. Parking & Access	East Animas Climbing Area	Establish formal access and parking for climbers. Informal access arrangement exists with private landowner. Formal easements need to be acquired and parking considerations addressed.	Climbing Groups BLM Pvt. Landowners La Plata County
12. Construct Trail	Songbird Subdivision (Florida Rd.)	Establish trail to BLM lands via existing public access easement. Trail needs to be constructed across easement and through BLM lands.	BLM Trails 2000 La Plata County Developers
13. Parking/ Connection	Edgemont Ranch (North of Florida Rd.)/Durango Hills	Establish trail connection from CR 240 (Florida Rd.) to Durango Hills/Missionary Ridge across existing Forest Service easement through Edgemont Ranch (North side of Florida Rd.). Need to delineate route and address potential trespassing from easement onto private lands would need to be addressed. Winter closures for big game.	Forest Service Trails 2000 Edgemont Ranch Durango Hills Road Imp. District BLM
14. Access	BLM lands east of Florida Rd. (Vosberg Pike)	Explore public access opportunities to BLM lands. Ascertain potential for wildlife impacts. Winter closures for big game.	BLM Pvt. Landowners La Plata County

Map # and project type	Location	Actions and Issues	Likely Partners
15. Bike / Pedestrian Accommodation	CR 237 (Horse Gulch)	Construct bicycle/pedestrian accommodations along CR 237 (Horse Gulch Road) if road is opened to through motor vehicle traffic.	La Plata County BLM Landowners in Horse Gulch
16. Access	BLM lands along CR 237 (Horse Gulch)	Establish public lands access from CR. Address potential for trespass onto adjacent private lands.	BLM La Plata County Pvt. Landowners
17. Access/Trails	BLM lands east of CR 225	Establish public lands access from CR. Address potential for trespass onto adjacent private lands.	BLM La Plata County Pvt. Landowners
18. Access	Vosberg Pike, State Lands	Establish public access to state lands.	State Land Board Pvt. Landowners Trails 2000
19. Rails to Trails	South of CR 125	Rails to Trails Potential along abandoned Railroad ROW.	
20. Neighborhood connections	Rafter J, Shenandoah, DWI & DWII	Create trails between existing subdivisions. Address potential trespass and privacy issues, and the need to acquire trail easements.	La Plata County Pvt. Landowners Trails 2000
21. Connect	Trail Connection between Highway. 160 and Rafter J	Trail exists; address status of easements and potential for trespass.	Subdivision Residents CDOT Pvt. Landowners La Plata County
22. Bicycle / Pedestrian Accommodation	CR 211	Ensure bicycle/pedestrian accommodations are included in any improvements to CR 211, may involve creation of separated path or widened shoulder. Address wildlife and land management issues across DOW properties.	La Plata County Bureau of Reclamation Division of Wildlife
23. Connection	Connection from La Posta Road to Trappers Crossing	Research ownership and easement status along existing road connection to enable public use of road between La Posta Road and Trappers' Crossing.	La Plata County Pvt. Landowners Southern Ute Tribe
24. School Trails	Escalante Middle School	Establish trail connections between Escalante Middle School and surrounding neighborhoods.	City of Durango La Plata County CDOT 9-R School District Pvt. Landowners

Map # and project type	Location	Actions and Issues	Likely Partners
25. Trails	Grandview Ridge BLM lands	Construct trails. Trails intended to be compatible with BLM management plans for the area. Winter closures for big game.	BLM Trails 2000
26. School Trails	Florida Mesa Elementary School	Establish trails between school and neighborhoods. Address trespass issues and easement acquisition.	La Plata County CDOT 9-R School District Trails 2000 Pvt. Landowners
27. Bike / Pedestrian Accommodation	Highway 160 between Durango and Bayfield	Establish safe bicycle/pedestrian accommodations including separated path &/or adequate shoulders. Potential for routing within CDOT ROW being researched. Address funding constraints.	CDOT La Plata County 9-R School District SMART 160 Town of Bayfield City of Durango
28. Mountain Park & Colorado Trail trail head	Old VanDal Landfill Site	Develop trail heads at old county landfill for access to Mountain Park and at Colorado Trail.	City of Durango La Plata County BLM Forest Service
29. Access and trail opportunity	Ridges Basin	Establish trails and public land access to BuRec lands in Ridges Basin.	BuRec Trails 2000 La Plata County DOW
30. Trail	Smelter Mountain Trail	Potential trail from Smelter property up east side of Smelter Mountain; likely to occur only if DOW exchanges or sells property.	BLM La Plata County DOW City of Durango
31. Trespass Mitigation	Hidden Valley/CR 203 Connection	Resolve trespass issues along private lands between CR 203 and Hidden Valley via Church Camp Road.	Pvt. Landowners La Plata County Forest Service
32. Access	CR 234 Connection to Grandview Ridge & Horse Gulch Trails	Establish access from Grandview/CR 234 area to BLM lands along Grandview Ridge.	BLM La Plata County Pvt. Landowners
33. Parking	CR 250/ Stevens Creek trail head	Improve trail head parking.	Forest Service La Plata County Pvt. Landowners

Map 4

La Plata County Trails Plan
Existing Trails Inventory
Needs and Opportunities

- Need or Opportunity
- Trails
- Existing Routes
- Road Routes
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Division of Wildlife
- Forest Service
- Southern Ute Tribe
- State Land Board
- US Road
- County Road
- Forest Service Road
- State Highway
- Durango Trail Study Extent

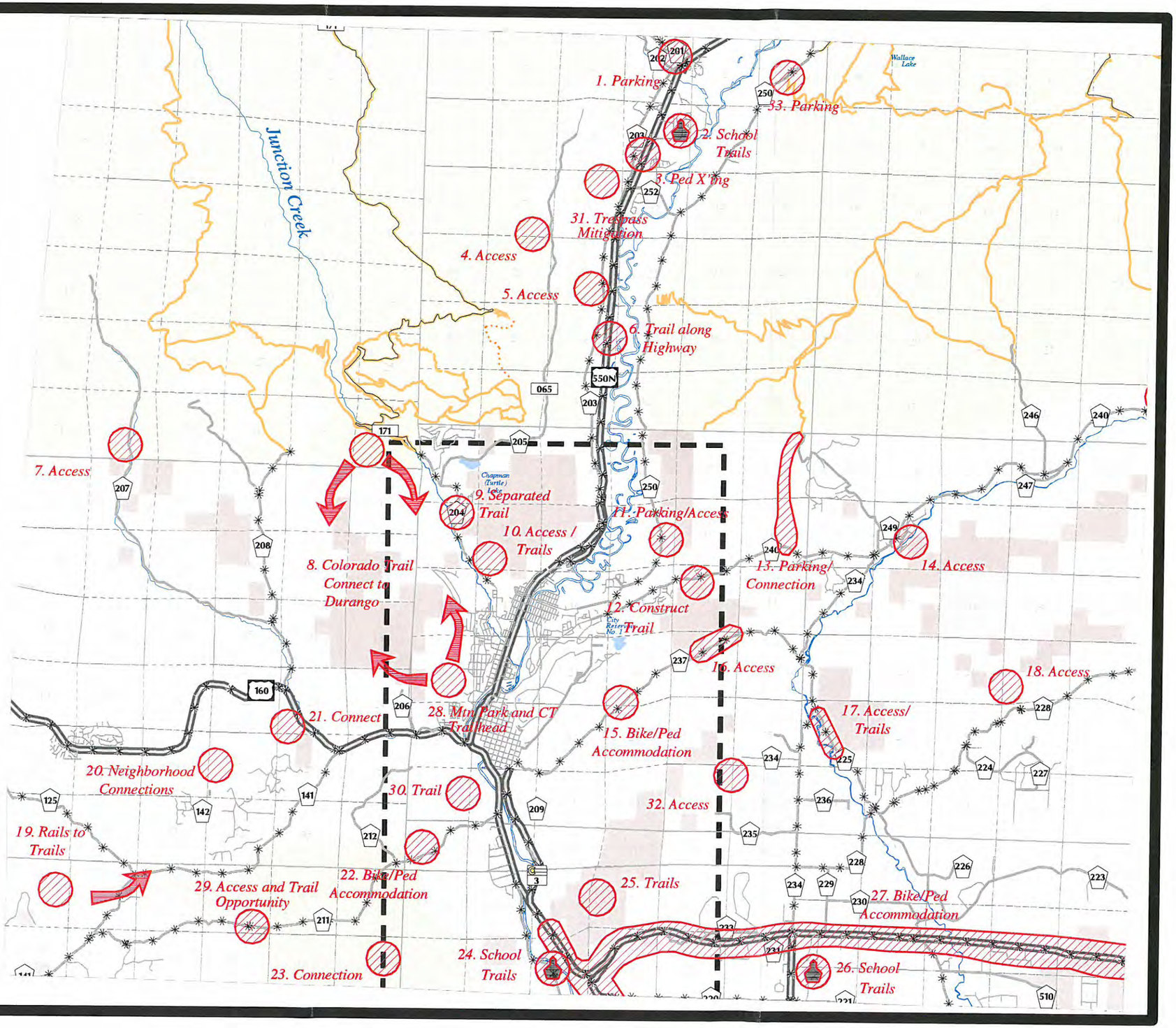


Table 5 -- Needs and Opportunities Analysis: Southwest

Map # and project type	Location	Actions and Issues	Likely Partners
1. School Trails	Fort Lewis Mesa Elementary School	Establish trail connections to area neighborhoods.	La Plata County Pvt. Landowners 9-R School District Trails 2000

Map 5

La Plata County Trails Plan
Existing Trails Inventory
Needs and Opportunities

- Need or Opportunity
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Division of Wildlife
- Forest Service
- Southern Ute Tribe
- State Land Board
- US Road
- County Road
- Forest Service Road
- State Highway
- Trail
- Existing Route
- Road Routes

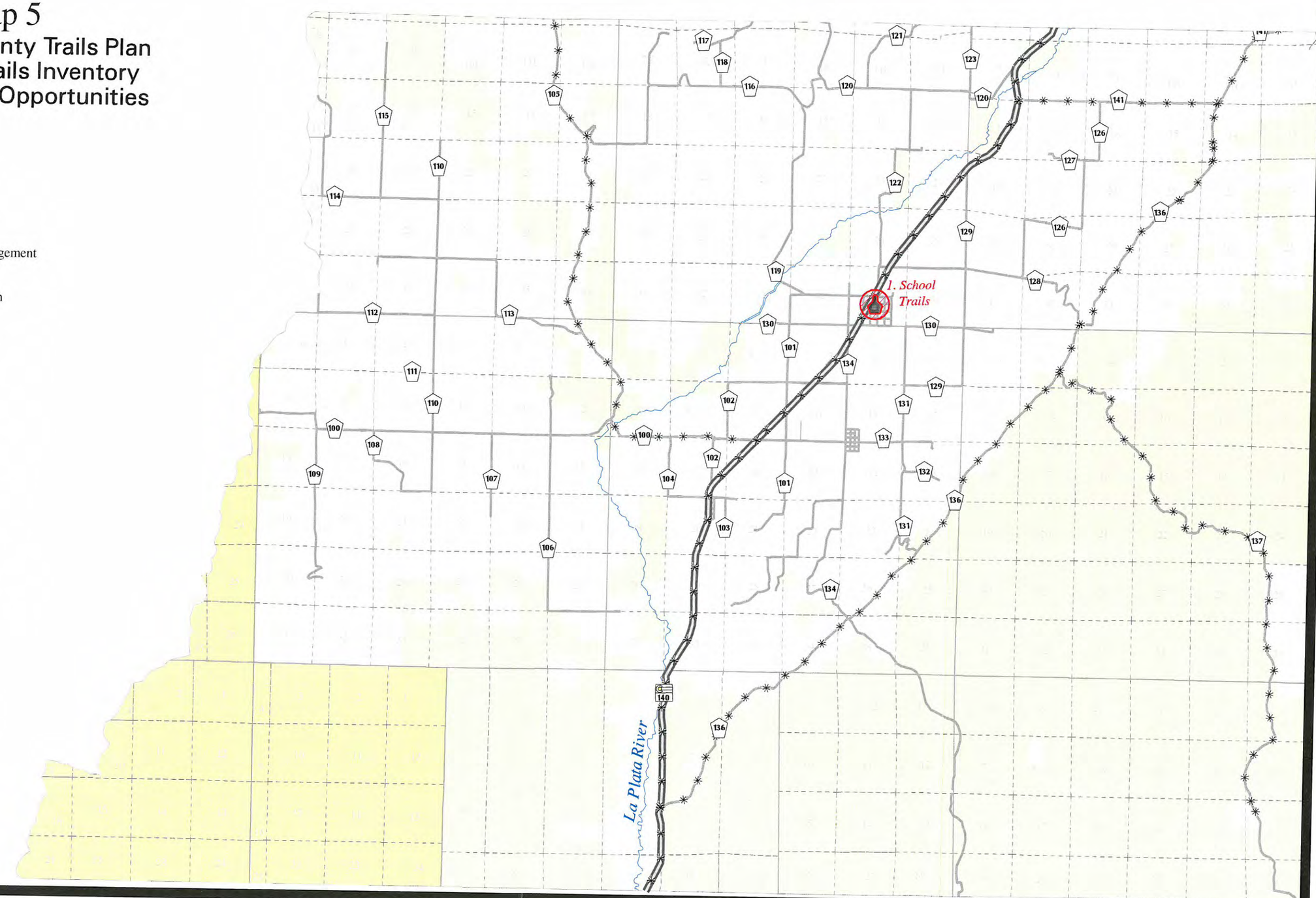


Table 6 -- Needs and Opportunities Analysis: South Central

Map # and project type	Location	Actions and Issues	Likely Partners
1. Local Loops; Access from La Posta Road	West Side Black Ridge	Establish looped connections among various roads up canyons on west side of Black Ridge. Address potential issues regarding crossing of Ute Lands as well as access along roads across Southern Ute land. Research potential to cross Black Ridge via existing roads.	Southern Ute Tribe Pvt. Landowners Trails 2000
2. Neighborhood Trails	Koshak Mesa/ Animas Air Park	Create trail connections between neighborhoods.	La Plata County Pvt. Landowners
3. Rails to Trails	South Animas River Corridor	Establish trail along abandoned railroad ROW. May combine with East Mesa Ditch alignment to create a trail connection to Durango's Animas River Trail. Need to address private property issues.	Area Residents La Plata County Pvt. Landowners Ditch Companies City of Durango
4. Loop & Connects	Pastorious Reservoir to Florida Mesa School	Create trail around reservoir and connections to neighborhoods and Florida Mesa School. Address potential to reduce existing vandalism, partying problems at reservoir. DOW has concerns re increasing use.	Division of Wildlife Area Residents Pvt. Landowners City of Durango (water right holders) La Plata County
5. Rails to Trails	Florida Mesa to Ignacio	Create trail along abandoned railroad ROW.	La Plata County Pvt. Landowners SUIT
6. Neighborhood Trails	La Plata County Airport	Establish trails in business/industrial area at/near airport. Address potential to incorporate trails into development plans of airport and surrounding properties; contact area landowners.	La Plata County City of Durango Pvt. Landowners
7. School Trails	Sunnyside Elementary School	Establish trail connections to area neighborhoods.	La Plata County Pvt. Landowners Trails 2000 9-R School District
8. River crossing	Animas River	Create river crossing to connect neighborhoods along Animas River.	Area Residents Pvt. Landowners La Plata County
9. BIA Road	SW side Black Ridge	Clarify status of public access rights along BIA road.	La Plata County SUIT

Map 6

La Plata County Trails Plan
Existing Trails Inventory
Needs and Opportunities

- Need or Opportunity
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Division of Wildlife
- Forest Service
- Southern Ute Tribe
- State Land Board
- Trails
- Existing Routes
- Road Routes
- US Road
- County Road
- Forest Service Road
- State Highway
- Durango Trails Plan Boundary

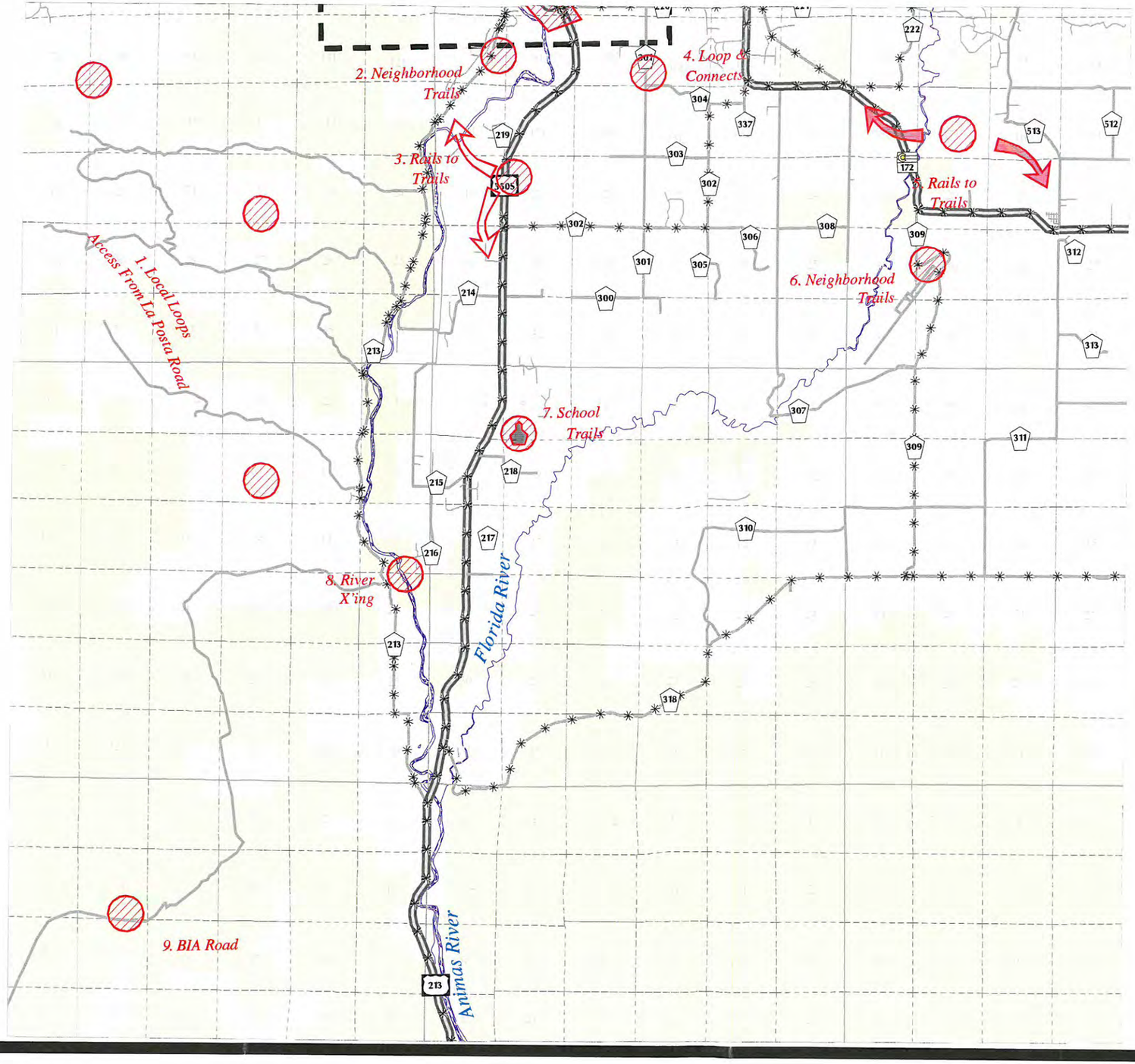


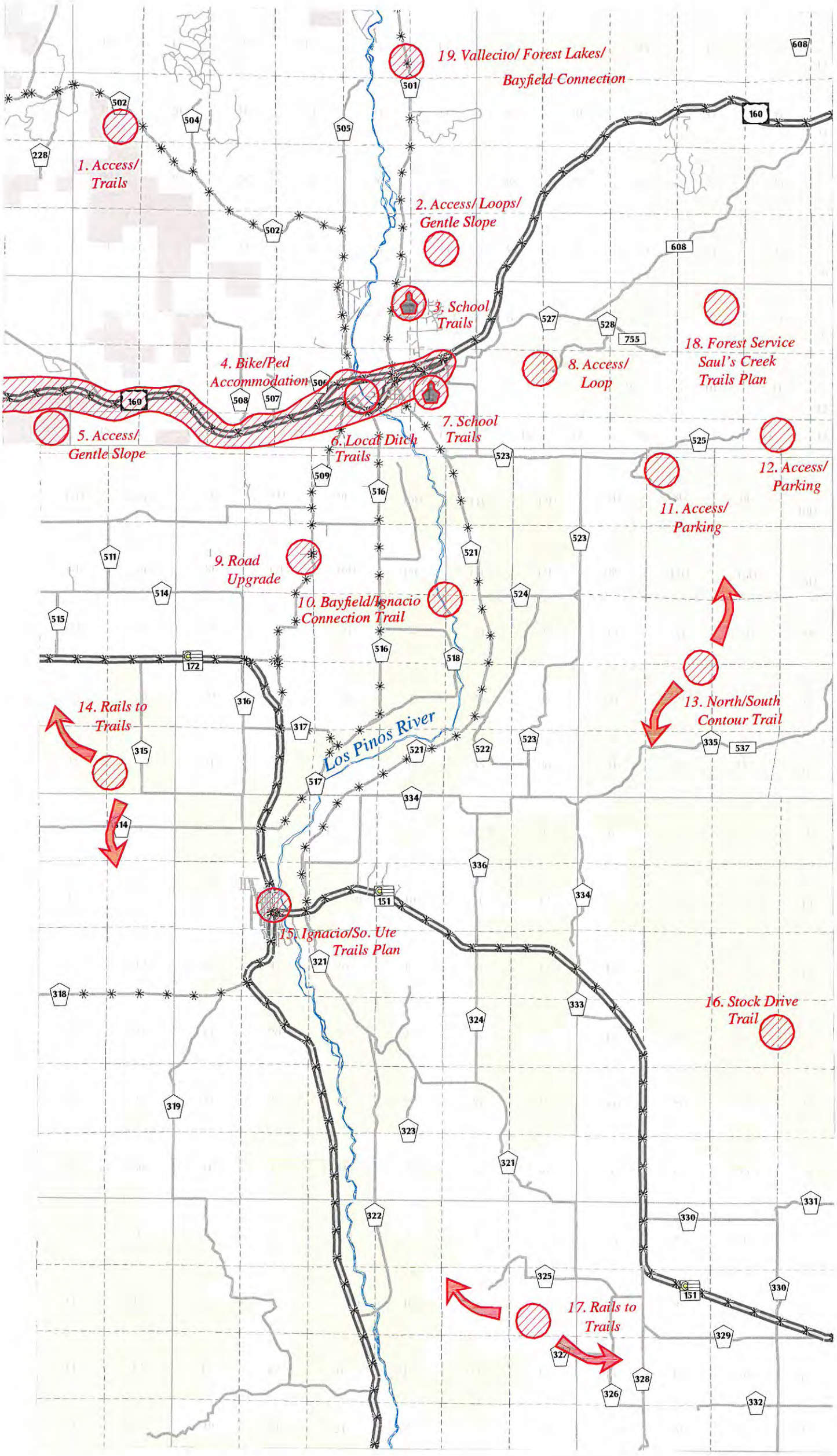
Table 7 -- Needs and Opportunities Analysis: Southeast

Map # and project type	Location	Actions and Issues	Likely Partners
1. Access and Trails	BLM lands south of CR 502	Explore access and trail opportunities on BLM lands adjacent to county road. Elk winter range.	BLM Trails 2000 La Plata County
2. Access/ Loops/ Gentle Slope	State Land Section north of Bayfield	Establish public access to state land. Accessible trail potential? Research status of existing lease and current use of land (grazing)? Elk winter range.	Town of Bayfield State Land Board Lease holder
3. School Trails	Bayfield High School	Establish trail connections between school and neighborhoods.	Town of Bayfield Bayfield School Dist. Pvt. Landowners
4. Bike/ Pedestrian Accommodation	Highway 160	Establish bicycle pedestrian accommodations along highway.	CDOT La Plata County Smart 160 Town of Bayfield
5. Access/Gentle Slope	BLM lands south of Highway 160	Research access and trail issues. Accessible trail options? Lands may be identified for trade or sale by BLM. Elk winter range. Habitat improvements have been made by BLM and DOW.	BLM CDOT
6. Local Ditch Trails	Irrigation canal between Highway 160 and 160B	Establish connection between highway and town. Address potential liability issues along canal as well as potential conflicts with private landowners.	Town of Bayfield Canal Company Pvt. Landowners
7. School Trails	Bayfield Elementary School	Establish trail connections between school and neighborhoods.	Town of Bayfield La Plata County Bayfield School Dist. Pvt. Landowners
8. Access/Loop	West side H-D Mts., CR 528	Establish access and trails. Elk winter range and winter closures.	Forest Service La Plata County
9. Road Upgrade	CR 509	Incorporate pedestrian/bicycle accommodations into any road reconstruction plans for CR 509.	La Plata County
10. Bayfield/ Ignacio Connection Trail	Pine River between Bayfield and Ignacio	Establish trail connection between the two towns. Address wildlife issues along Pine River Corridor. Requires cooperation with Tribe and probably some private landowners.	La Plata County SUIT Pvt. Landowners Town of Ignacio Town of Bayfield
11. Access/ Parking	West Side HD Mountains	Establish access and parking. Elk winter range and winter closures.	Forest Service La Plata County

Map # and project type	Location	Actions and Issues	Likely Partners
12. Access/ Parking	West Side HD Mountains	Establish access and parking. Elk winter range and winter closures.	Forest Service La Plata County
13. North/South Contour Trail	West Side HD Mountains	Improve trail along west flank of HD's. Elk winter range and winter closures.	Forest Service
14. Rails to Trails	Abandoned RR ROW between Florida Mesa and Ignacio	Establish trail along abandoned RR ROW. Address private property issues.	La Plata County Pvt. Landowners SUIT Town of Ignacio
15. Ignacio/SUIT Trails Plan	Ignacio	Implement trail plans of Ignacio and the Southern Ute Tribe. Bald eagle roosting areas along Pine River.	Town of Ignacio SUIT La Plata County Pvt. Landowners
16. Stock Drive Trail	Piedra Stock Drive Trail	Improve/maintain access to historic stock drive trail across HD Mountains; much of trail is in Archuleta County.	Forest Service La Plata County SUIT
17. Rails to Trails	Abandoned RR ROW between Ignacio and Arboles	Establish trail along abandoned RR ROW. Address private property issues.	Pvt. Landowners SUIT La Plata County
18. Forest Service Sauls Creek Trail Plan	F.S. East of Bayfield	F.S. proposed trail plan.	Forest Service
19. Vallecito/Forest Lakes/Bayfield Connection	Neighborhood connector parallel to CR 501 or CR 502	Trail connection between Vallecito, Forest Lakes, and Vallecito connecting these developed areas. Trail may function as transportation route as well as potential stock driveway. Private landowner concerns. Wildlife and riparian habitat concerns along Pine River.	La Plata County Forest Service Pvt. Landowners Ranchers

Map 7

La Plata County Trails Plan
Existing Trails Inventory
Needs and Opportunities



CHAPTER 6. TRAIL DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

The following section is intended to provide general guidance concerning trail maintenance, design, routing and management issues. Such issues are not unique to La Plata County and many outside reference sources exist. Appendix 4 contains references for detailed guidance and information regarding trail development and management.

Trail Design

Proper design of a new trail or the rerouting of an existing trail is necessary to ensure that a project will be successful and well used. Thoughtful design is also crucial to help address issues of privacy, security, safety, wildlife and environmental impacts, and durability of the trail. Several "big picture" design issues deserve mention here as they pertain to most trails:

Gentle grades

As simple as this may sound, gentle grades are one of the most critical aspects of good trail design. Gently sloping trails are better for people and the environment. Such trails serve the broadest range of trail users and provide the most enjoyable experiences. Gradually sloped trails wear slower, require less maintenance, and are less susceptible to erosion because water is more likely to drain off the sides of the trail rather than down the middle of it.

Guiding Principle:

Trails should be designed such that grades, widths, drainage systems, water crossings, sight distances, and vertical clearance are appropriate for the types of uses anticipated.

Design for anticipated use

Evaluating a trail's purpose and identifying the predominant user groups will aid in determining appropriate trail widths, grades, surfaces and routing. Trail designers should ask who will be the predominant users of the trail and what type of experience they will be looking for, e.g. is this a trail for mountain bikers or a children's nature walk?

Design to address opportunities and constraints

Trail designers should address specific opportunities and constraints associated with a trail and its surrounding landscape. Examples of such opportunities and constraints include:

- Mitigation of trespass or loss of privacy to private landowners
- Separating trail users from busy roads
- Avoiding sensitive natural areas, critical wildlife habitat and hazards such as steep slopes or loose rocks
- Accessing scenic areas or historic sites
- Providing accessibility for people with disabilities
- Design for aesthetic trail experiences
- Routing trails to scenic viewpoints

Signage

Signs can be an important trail management tool. Effective signs help users stay on desired routes, follow rules and have more enjoyable outings. Proper signs enhance safety and make it easier to identify trails and to educate trail users about particular management goals, such as efforts to minimize trespassing, reduce soil erosion or avoid disruption of wildlife. Signs do not have to be elaborate, in fact, given the potential for any sign to be destroyed by vandals or deteriorated by the elements, it often makes sense to use signs that can be easily and cost effectively replaced. In addition to aiding the trail user and land manager, signs also help search and rescue personnel in the event of an emergency. Signage types include the following:

- Trail head identification
- On-trail directional signs
- Trail intersection signs
- "You are here" orientation
- Uses allowed, precautions & warnings
- User education & trail etiquette
- Seasonal wildlife closures
- Location for emergency response
- Private property/trespass warnings
- Trail supporter acknowledgement

Guiding Principle:

Trails should be adequately signed and routinely maintained.

Education

Trail user education programs can address a variety of trail use and management issues. Educational strategies include the use of maps; brochures; radio, print and television advertisements; volunteer trail patrols; and advocacy group efforts and events such as the "Share the Trails Team Triathlon." Issues to address include trail safety and etiquette, as well as rules and regulations:

Trail safety and etiquette

Being courteous and following some simple rules make trail use a safe and enjoyable experience for all users sharing trails. Some of these important rules to remember include:

- Be courteous to other trail users.
- Plan ahead. Know your equipment, your ability, the trail you're using and prepare accordingly.
- Ride, skate and walk on the right. Stay in single file when in groups.
- Control your speed; slow down or stop and use caution when approaching or overtaking other trail users.
- Be aware of curves, corners and blind spots; use caution when approaching them.
- When passing other trail users, do not surprise them and never spook animals. Know the right-of-way (who yields to whom) rules:
  - Equestrians always have the right-of-way. All other trail users must yield to them. If you are unsure of what action to take, ask the riders.
  - Bicyclists and skaters yield to walkers.
  - Bicyclists yield to skaters.
  - Downhill users yield to uphill users.
  - Faster users yield to slower users.
- Restrain use of muddy trails to minimize maintenance.
- Minimize trespassing and trail impacts by staying on trails.
- Help minimize erosion by not shortcutting switchbacks.
- Respect wildlife laws and the safety of other trail users by leashing dogs and cleaning up after them.
- Running cattle and disturbing wildlife are serious offenses. Do not harass animals, nor allow your pets to do so.
- Leave gates as you find them or as marked.
- Leave No Trace/Tread Lightly ethics:
  - Stay on existing trails and don't create any new ones.
  - Avoid wet or muddy trails.
  - Pack out whatever you pack in (don't litter!)
  - Respect trail and road closures – ask if you're not certain.
  - Obtain permits and authorization as appropriate.
  - Federal and state wilderness areas are closed to cycling. The way you ride will influence trail management decisions.

Trail rules and regulations

Different trails may have different rules and regulations governing them. Be sure to know the rules for the trails you use. Such regulations may include:

- Closure periods
- Prohibited uses
- Speed limits
- Trespass cautions

Maintenance

A major issue that arose during the preparation of the plan was the need to properly maintain trails. Members of the public consistently ranked maintenance of existing trails as very important. Correspondingly, a significant number of the plan's needs and opportunities address trail and trail facility maintenance.

> Guiding Principle:
>
> Poorly placed or built trails should be redesigned, rerouted, or in some cases, closed and revegetated.

Trail maintenance needs vary according to the type and location of the particular trail. Backcountry recreation trails typically need clearing of fallen trees, tread work, installation and maintenance of water drainage structures, and removal of loose rocks. On the other hand, soft surface trails between neighborhoods may be built and maintained by volunteers using hand tools, and hard surface asphalt or concrete paths require more specialized treatment, including mechanical sweeping, snow removal and asphalt patching. These maintenance procedures require expenditures that are often justified by the high levels of use of hard surface trails.

Since sweeping of shoulders is critical in order for shoulders to be usable by cyclists, maintenance of on-street shoulders or bicycle lanes on city streets, county roads and state highways should be performed in conjunction with routine road work. Another issue associated with the maintenance of road shoulders is the need to create an even edge between old and new layers of pavement. Uneven edges can be hazardous to bicycle riders.

Wildlife Considerations

> Guiding Principle:
>
> Trails should be designed and managed to minimize significant impacts to wildlife and ecosystems.

Trails can play a variety of roles in relation to wildlife, and wildlife considerations have rated high among the priorities expressed in public input. The presence of humans along trails may impact wildlife species during certain times of the year (e.g. winter and nesting periods) and

cause animals to relocate to a new area. Conversely, impacts to wildlife can be reduced by concentrating users along trails as opposed to dispersing them throughout a broader area along informal paths. Although some scientific research has been conducted regarding the impacts of trails to wildlife, it has proven difficult to quantify the extent of these impacts. However, it is not unreasonable to conclude that trails will often have some level of impact (positive or negative), and that wildlife considerations should always be taken into account when planning and managing trails.

A variety of generalized "rules of thumb" for managing wildlife impacts exist. These rules and other valuable information on trails and wildlife are contained in a booklet published by the Colorado State Parks Division. The booklet is titled Planning Trails with Wildlife in Mind, September, 1998, Colorado State Parks. Trail planners and advocates are encouraged to use this book for assistance and advice when making trail planning and management decisions. It is available for downloading on the Internet at www.dnr.state.co.us/parks/

Ecology and the environment

Considerations for protecting ecosystems and the environment are similar to those necessary to minimize wildlife impacts. Poorly managed trails can harm sensitive environments. However, trails can also serve as management tools to protect sensitive areas by routing people onto trails and discouraging dispersion through a broad area.

Major points to consider when addressing wildlife and environmental issues include:

- ✓ Think big: Look at the broad landscape where a trail is envisioned and identify potential impacts to wildlife and the environment.
- ✓ Think thin: In constructing or upgrading a trail, disturb as narrow an area as possible to help minimize the zone of influence.
- ✓ Think edges: Align a trail along or near an existing edge or disturbed area rather than cutting through the middle of an undisturbed area. Strive to leave an undisturbed area intact.

Guiding Principle:

In order to minimize the impact of new trails on the surrounding environment, removal of soil and vegetation should be limited to only that amount that is necessary to provide a safe and well-designed trail.

- ✓ Pay particular attention to potential impacts to riparian (streamside) and wetland habitat areas. Consider routing a trail to a point along a stream rather than parallel the entire stream corridor.

- ✓ Trails need to be carefully planned and developed when constructed near riparian areas and wetlands in order to protect sensitive habitat and reduce fragmentation of habitat and vegetation.

- ✓ Consider seasonal trail closures (as necessary) and the use of educational/interpretative signage

Funding, Donations and Volunteerism

The need for funding or donations of labor and materials is crucial to any trail effort. Even the most modest trail projects will require some sort of financial assistance, while the cost of larger projects such as hard-surface paths can be considerable. Funds can be required for many different items and services including:

- ❖ Maintenance and trail building tools
- ❖ Planning and design
- ❖ Rights of way acquisition
- ❖ Grading and earthwork
- ❖ Trail surfacing materials
- ❖ Project management and coordination of volunteers
- ❖ Signs, maps and brochures

> Guiding Principle:
>
> Trail building plans should be grounded in financial reality.

Sources

Many sources of funding exist for trail planning and development, but competition for trail funds can be extensive. Major trail funding sources in La Plata County include:

- ❖ Federal transportation funds
- ❖ Federal land management agencies
- ❖ Colorado state lottery grants (Great Outdoors Colorado)
- ❖ Colorado energy impact assistance grants
- ❖ County and municipal governments
- ❖ Local businesses and individuals (cash and in-kind donations of labor, materials and trail easements)

Appendix 3 contains an outline of major trail funding and assistance sources. It is important to keep in mind the following general strategies when searching for funds.

Strategic need

Demonstrate the strategic need for the project. Identify how the project fits within the bigger picture of trails in the state, region, county or local neighborhood. Conformance with the goals of a plan such as this one can help demonstrate the strategic value of the project in the context of the community's broader vision for trails.

Establish partnerships

Demonstrate a broad range of support for the project: Strive to obtain cash, in-kind or volunteer contributions from a variety of groups, agencies or individuals. Spreading a project's financial burden among a variety of sources helps to improve the project's viability and it assures contributors they are participating in a team effort.

Long-term issues

It is critical to address how a trail project will be supported and maintained over time. Determine who will be responsible for maintenance and management of the project and identify probable funding sources for these activities up front. This is necessary to ensure donors that the project will maintain its viability and usefulness over time.

Access

> Guiding Principle:
>
> Trail development efforts should be carried out in a manner that respects the rights of private property owners while also realizing the legitimate public benefit associated with trails and the provision of access to and from public lands, schools, businesses, neighborhoods and other developed areas.

When establishing new trails or public lands access, formal access rights must be obtained in order to properly manage trails use and avoid conflicts between landowners and trail users. Methods for ensuring access vary between private and public lands. On public lands such as BLM or Forest Service, new trails or accesses are generally required to comply with the management objectives of the particular area and they must be evaluated for potentially significant environmental impacts (National Environmental Policy Act compliance). If a trail or access crosses private lands, a formal access arrangement must be made with the landowner. Three of the most common methods for securing access are: fee simple acquisition, dedication, and easements. Following is a discussion of each of these strategies along with some general suggestions for making access arrangements.

Fee simple acquisition

Fee simple acquisitions transfer full title of the property via cash purchase. This offers the most comprehensive form of access and protection, but it is often the most expensive form. In some instances, property owners will be willing to donate fee simple title, sometimes receiving tax benefits for doing so. A related approach is the bargain sale, which is a combination sale and donation. In a bargain sale, a landowner transfers title at a price below market value. This may provide the landowner with tax benefits for the price differential, as well as a direct cash return. When a government entity assumes fee simple title it eliminates any liability risk for the landowner by transferring it to the government entity, which is usually better positioned to assume liability risks.

Dedication

When property is developed or subdivided, trails can be incorporated into the project through dedicated easements established during the county or municipal development approval process. It can be particularly worthwhile to incorporate trails into projects when they will enhance the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians, and when they will provide viable alternatives to automobile travel. Trails can be voluntarily dedicated by the developer, negotiated via a development agreement, or required as a condition of approval by the governing body.

Easements

Negotiated easements are often used to protect open lands and provide trail access. Easements are based on relinquishing development potential in exchange for tax considerations. Easements can be donated by a landowner (usually with a tax benefit for the value of development that is precluded) or purchased by a public or nonprofit entity. The landowner retains ownership of the land and is able to exercise the uses that are not restricted in the easement. Easements should be established on a cooperative basis working with willing landowners.

General strategies

Regardless of the methods used to acquire access, it is important to be forward and upfront when working with landowners. Listen carefully to their concerns and, above all respect their rights. Strive to build partnerships and obtain their cooperation or move on to find an alternative solution.

CHAPTER 7. COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION OF EFFORTS

Introduction

The success of many trail projects often depends upon effective and efficient partnerships and coordination among the many entities involved. This chapter aims to further such coordination by highlighting the relationships between local governments, state and federal agencies, citizen groups and individuals. The agencies, groups and individuals that may be involved in a specific trail project will vary according to factors such as, type of trail, land ownership and location. Discussion of the listed main agencies follows:

- ✓ La Plata County
- ✓ Municipal Governments
- ✓ Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT)
- ✓ Federal Land Management Agencies
- ✓ Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW)
- ✓ Colorado State Board of Land Commissioners
- ✓ Southern Ute Tribe
- ✓ Non-Profit Land Trusts
- ✓ Private Advocacy Groups
- ✓ Neighborhood Groups, Property Owners Associations, Individual Landowners, and Residents

La Plata County

The county plays a central role in guiding development and providing services within unincorporated portions of the county. The provision of trails and roads are among the many issues considered by the county when reviewing public and private development proposals.

The Trails Plan identifies guiding principles for trail development and identifies specific needs and opportunities. Some of these may have relevance to projects being considered during the county's development review process. In particular, as a commercial or residential project goes through the county's review process, opportunities may exist to incorporate trails, pedestrian facilities or public lands access into the project. Particular emphasis should be placed on the creation of trail connections that promote public safety, reduce automobile use and provide connections between neighborhoods, schools, businesses, parks and public lands.

In addition to the development review process, the county plays a variety of roles in the development and management of trails in the county. Examples include:

- Participation in the leasing of federal lands for recreational use
- Acceptance of fee title ownership of trails
- Acceptance of trail easements
- Co-sponsorship of trail planning and development grant applications
- Partnership with advocacy groups to further trails projects
- Construction of pedestrian and bicycle accommodations along county roads
- Participation in the planning of trails in conjunction with public and private development and infrastructure projects

A variety of the county's plans, regulations and activities relate to trails. Following is a discussion of these plans accompanied by recommendations for improving or clarifying them.

A Collaborative Success Story:

The establishment in 1998 of over 11 miles of recreational trails in Horse Gulch, was an outstanding example of La Plata County working with a private landowner and trail advocates to secure a trail access. The landowner donated the to county fee title to a narrow swath of land, which was used for 11 miles of trail. The trails are now among the most popular in the county, and trespassing, which had been a problem on other portions of the landowner's property, has virtually been eliminated, because recreationalists now have a legitimate trail alternative.

Comprehensive Plan

The Trails Plan is incorporated by reference as part of the county's comprehensive plan, which addresses a variety of countywide growth and development issues with trails being only one of them. As a component of the comprehensive plan, the Trails Plan is intended to be used in conjunction with the La Plata Land Use Code, District Plans and Transportation Plan to direct county decision making.

La Plata Land Use Code (County Code)

The county's subdivision requirements and development review standards are contained within the county code. Appendix 5 includes excerpts from the county code that pertain to the provision of "sidewalks and pedestrian facilities" and "access to public land". These excerpts are the primary sections of the code that deal with trails and public lands. The code could clearly benefit from a more detailed treatment of trails and their role within new developments. There is no mention of or reference to the term "trails" within the county code's development standards, although the term "pedestrian facilities" can certainly be interpreted to include trails.

It is recommended that the county code be amended to define trails and to clarify requirements for the inclusion of trails and pedestrian improvements in new developments. In many cases, trails can significantly enhance the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians. The need for such safety improvements is implied in code section. 102-103, which states that sidewalks or pedestrian walkways shall be required when, among other things, a proposed development will generate pedestrian use, such as to a school or bus stop, or if a school site is present within a subdivision.

Section 82-162 of the county code is an "encouraged" (optional) standard, addressing the development of potential public lands access points. This standard discusses the preparation of a "public access needs analysis" when potential public access points exist on land to be developed. If the analysis indicates that public access is desired, agencies and landowners are directed to work together to provide a mutually acceptable access arrangement. However, this standard has rarely been applied due to its optional nature. The county should consider converting this to a required standard.

Maintaining public access to public lands emerged as a major goal during the Trails Plan public input process and converting this to a required standard will help further this goal.

> Guiding Principle:
>
> More trail connections should be established between the developed areas (front country) and undeveloped areas (back country).

The Trails Plan should be utilized when the county is reviewing specific development proposals. The major themes, Guiding Principles, and Needs and Opportunities should be used to determine trail and public lands access issues within a project.

District Land Use Plans

The county has adopted seven district land use plans that guide development decisions in seven of the county's nine planning districts. These land use plans address trails in a variety of ways and Appendix 6 contains relevant excerpts from the various district plans. Topics addressed in the district plans include:

- Pedestrian safety
- Providing information to trail users on topics such as wildlife protection, trail etiquette and loose dogs
- Maintenance of appropriate recreational access and use of public lands
- Expansion of bike paths to increase safety
- Providing incentives to build trails that provide connections to public lands
- Connecting communities and neighborhoods
- Providing public access to public lands

Additionally, five of the county's seven district plans contain density incentives for the granting of easements to public-use trails and/or public lands. These incentives provide residential density bonuses for density increases between 10 percent and 25 percent above the minimum allowable densities. The county should actively encourage the granting of trail easements and the development of trails and public land access points per the incentive provisions of the district plans.

The county should also assist in the fulfillment of the district plans' trail-related goals (See Appendix 6). To achieve this, the county should strive to make project applicants and district residents aware of each plan's goals and promote efforts to fulfill them. Such efforts may include:

- Applying for trail planning and development grants
- Acceptance of conservation and trail easements or fee title to trail rights of ways from willing landowners
- Dedication of county property or road rights-of-way for trail purposes
- Trail maintenance efforts, trail education materials, and trail signing projects

Transportation Plan

The Transportation Plan identifies roads that receive heavy bicycle use and recommends shoulder widening on specific routes to improve cyclist and pedestrian safety. The plan also contains a number of important policies for non-motorized uses. These policies have been incorporated into the Trails Plan and are included in Chapter 4.

The county should continue to pursue the construction of such improvements to the fullest extent possible. The county should also continue to partner with other entities as a method to secure funding and other resources for safety improvements.

Development Review

In order to assist applicants, and county planners and decision makers to utilize the Trails Plan during the review of development proposals, a trails plan checklist or summary sheet should be prepared. The checklist should summarize the major themes and guiding principles of the plan as they relate to issues such as project design, pedestrian safety, and neighborhood connectivity. The checklist should also provide guidance for use of the Needs and Opportunities Analysis Tables relative to a specific proposal.

Municipal Governments

The county Trails Plan is intended to complement the trail planning efforts and mesh with the trail plans of Durango, Bayfield and Ignacio. The county Trails Plan focuses on links and connections between trails in these municipalities and adjacent unincorporated areas. The boundaries of the City of Durango's Trails Plan are superimposed on the county Trails Plan Map, and the Needs and Opportunities Analysis Tables focus on projects that link with Durango's existing and proposed trail system.

> Guiding Principle:
>
> Trails should be developed where they can legitimately play a role in reducing motor vehicle use, such as close to population centers and along busy roads.

The Trails Plan includes a variety of trail needs and opportunities that involve the coordination of planning, development and management between these municipalities, the county, and other entities. It is recommended that these municipalities continue to pursue their trail-planning and development efforts, and do so in a manner that acknowledges the value of connecting core development areas with outlying developing areas in the county. The potential for trails to provide real alternatives to motor vehicle travel is very high in and around Durango, Bayfield and Ignacio. Such goals should be actively pursued as these municipalities continue to develop.

Federal Land Management Agencies

The vast majority of trails in the county are located on public lands managed by the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Bureau of Reclamation (BuRec). Agency representatives were actively involved in the preparation of the Trails Plan, which is intended to complement the land management plans of these agencies. Information contained in the document should provide land managers with valuable perspectives on public preferences for trails and related facility improvements. Some relevant issues addressed in the plan include:

- Identification of potential new access points in areas lacking access to public lands
- Rerouting segments that are steep, and connecting trails to provide loops
- Development of trails along canals
- Improving substandard trails, trail heads and parking areas
- Mitigating trespass problems in areas lacking public access
- Improving signage and facilities at trail heads

These federal agencies have a long history of closely working with other entities and the public. They should continue this coordination and utilize the Trails Plan in their efforts. It is also recommended that federal land management agencies routinely update their travel management and recreation plans.

Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT)

The Trails Plan provides recommendations for highway design features intended to safely accommodate pedestrians and cyclists. Priority bicycle routes on state highways and county roads have been identified and are included in this plan. CDOT should continue its efforts to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists along state highways. CDOT should also continue to pursue the construction of separated multi-use paths along state highways. Such paths are likely to be most successful if pursued in collaboration with other agencies and private groups.

Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW)

The CDOW oversees management of more than 10,000 acres of land in the county, some of which they own. They also assist in the management of wildlife on other public and private lands throughout the county. Trail and access issues differ significantly on public lands managed by the CDOW vs. most other public lands, which are managed for multiple uses. The CDOW manages their lands primarily for wildlife, wildlife habitat, fishing, hunting, and watchable wildlife opportunities. Trails and public access are only accessory considerations.

The Trails Plan generally avoids discussion of trails on CDOW lands because their lands are generally not available for trail development. However, there are several areas such as the desired extension of the Colorado Trail to Durango, where some potential trails are discussed because few other alternatives exist. The CDOW was actively involved in the preparation of the Trails Plan. It is recommended that the CDOW continue to provide assistance regarding the design and management of trail projects to minimize impacts to wildlife. CDOW should also continue to work with land management agencies, the public and landowners to explore options for creating and managing hunting access onto public and private lands.

Colorado State Board of Land Commissioners

Isolated sections of Colorado School Trust lands land exist throughout the county. These lands are owned and managed by the Colorado State Board of Land Commissioners. Often, these are comprised of Sections 16 & 32 in each township/range. Presently, trails and public access are not a major use of school trust lands. In several locations, the Needs and Opportunities Analysis Tables

identify specific school trust lands that possess trail development opportunities. These lands represent a significant public access opportunity that should be explored. Interested parties in the county should begin working with the State Board of Land Commissioners to explore the potential for trail development on suitable trust lands.

Southern Ute Indian Tribe

The Southern Ute Tribe controls a vast amount of land in the southern half of the county. Several potential trails contained in the Needs and Opportunities Analysis Tables will require cooperation and participation from the tribe. The tribe's land use planner participated in the stakeholders group and the tribal council was directly consulted during the preparation of the plan. Pursuit of any trail opportunities on tribal lands will have to occur with the active participation and consent of the tribe.

Non-Profit Land Trusts

Several non-profit land trusts are active in the county, including the La Plata Open Space Conservancy, the Animas Conservancy, the Cattlemen's Association Agricultural Land Trust and The Trust for Public Land. These groups have been responsible for securing easements and purchase of lands for agricultural, recreational, open space, and wildlife purposes. Properly planned trails can enhance the value of open space areas. When appropriate, public trail easements should be included with easements or land purchases made by land trusts in the county.

Private Advocacy Groups

Several private groups in the county are very involved in trail and recreation issues. Many of these groups, including Trails 2000, Four Corners Back Country Horsemen and the Durango Wheel Club, actively participated in the preparation of this plan. Trails 2000 was one of the primary sponsors of the Trails Plan and has played an extensive role in county trail planning.

Private groups play a crucial role in focusing the energy and resources of citizens in the county, and by building and maintaining trails through volunteer efforts. They are also a valuable source of input in the local government and agency planning and decision-making process. Advocacy groups in the county should continue to pursue grants and build coalitions and partnerships, this often provides the catalyst to make things happen.

Neighborhood Groups, Property Owners Associations, Individual Landowners and Residents

Various local groups and individuals have specific trail projects worthy of pursuit. In many respects, these can be the most satisfying and productive types of trail projects because they are pursued by the groups or individuals who will use them the most. Examples may include a connection between a subdivision and a school or a new public lands access point.

The very popular Vallecito Reservoir Trail is a great example of an ongoing project initiated and constructed through the efforts of local residents. Groups and individuals should use this plan for guidance and reference, when pursuing local trails projects.

CHAPTER 8. IMPLEMENTATION

The Trails Plan assesses trail needs and opportunities in La Plata County. It also provides considerable background and recommendations for addressing trail issues. However, adoption of the plan does not initiate any specific actions or projects. The key to successfully addressing trail issues will depend on the individuals, groups, agencies and local governments involved with trails in the county.

This chapter outlines 11 major "action steps" that should be taken to implement the plan. Each action step is described along with a list of responsible parties. Also included is a section that outlines actions and strategies for effective citizen action.

Action Steps

Action 1: Address specific needs & opportunities identified in the plan

Likely Partners: Numerous and varied

Discussion: The plan's needs and opportunities analysis identifies over 100 area specific needs and opportunities. This list is expected to evolve over time; some needs and opportunities will be addressed, and new ones will inevitably emerge. Addressing a specific issue will involve a unique set of actions. It is envisioned that various parties throughout the county may initiate action on a specific project at any given time. Four specific projects are called out due to their countywide significance. But aside from these four projects, the other needs and opportunities are not prioritized, because they are not intended to be mutually exclusive. That is, the pursuit of one project is not meant to impede or diminish the ability of another group to pursue a project that may be equally important, yet entirely unrelated.

Action 2: Identify potential trail corridors

Likely Partners: County residents, local governments, land management agencies, advocacy groups

Discussion: Neighborhood planning and trail development efforts are most effective if they are initiated prior to or concurrently with new development. The Needs and Opportunities Analysis Tables identify specific neighborhoods and areas where trail connections and/or public lands access may be desirable. The plan recommends revisions to the county's development review procedures in order to better facilitate trail planning in conjunction with land development. Such revisions will be key to the successful implementation of the plan. In developed areas, neighborhood residents and advocacy groups must continue to work together to establish safe trail connections.

Action 3: Development of trails and public lands access points

Likely Partners: Neighborhood residents, advocacy groups, land trusts, local governments, land management agencies

Discussion: Nowhere is the need to work cooperatively greater than in the establishment of new trails or public lands access points. Trail projects must be managed carefully and decisions should be made in a manner that allows all interested parties to participate. It is important to clearly present the strategic need of a project, and to identify and address potential concerns.

Action 4: Minimize wildlife and environmental impacts of new and existing trails

Likely Partners: Colorado Division of Wildlife, United States Forest Service and BLM, neighborhood residents, advocacy groups

Discussion: The plan contains a variety of recommendations for managing and designing trails with wildlife and environmental considerations in mind. The booklet, *Planning Trails with Wildlife in Mind,* published by Colorado State Parks, should be referenced when developing trail prescriptions. A listing of references and resources on the subject is also included in Appendix 4. Biologists and wildlife managers from state and federal land and wildlife management agencies may also be consulted for suggestions regarding wildlife and environmental management strategies.

Action 5: Coordinate trail and transportation planning among local governments and land, wildlife, and transportation agencies

Likely Partners: More than 20 groups, agencies and governments are involved in trail and transportation issues in the county, and many neighborhood groups and individuals also play an important role.

Discussion: The need for coordination of trail efforts is essential because seldom is only one constituency or agency involved in a trail issue. Many of the entities involved with trails came together very successfully during the preparation of this plan through the stakeholders group. These groups may wish to develop a trails committee or council that meets on a regular basis to achieve the objectives of this plan. The group could review progress that is being made toward addressing the current needs and opportunities, discuss new or revised needs and opportunities, and otherwise collaborate on trail projects in the county. Another avenue for continued coordination may be the existing Urban Interface Task Force. This interagency group already meets on a regular basis; they may wish to include a review of the Trails Plan implementation as one of their semi-regular agenda items.

Action 6: Develop safe connections between schools and adjacent neighborhoods

Likely Partners: Neighborhood residents, businesses, and landowners; parent teacher organizations; school administrators; local governments; state and federal agencies (e.g. CDOT); and advocacy groups.

Discussion: The need for creative and collaborative solutions is critically important as it pertains to school trail issues. The circumstances surrounding the development of safe routes are unique at each school. If new residential or commercial development is occurring near a school, the county or appropriate municipality should take steps to ensure that safe connections are incorporated into the project's initial design. In developed areas that lack safe connections, local residents must work together with the school administrators, parent teacher organizations, trail advocates and local governments to address trail needs.

Action 7: Plan for trails to safely take people where they need to go, connecting schools, neighborhoods, businesses, recreation areas, and public lands

Likely Partners: Neighborhood residents, businesses, and landowners; local governments; state and federal agencies; and advocacy groups

Discussion: The Needs and Opportunities Analysis Tables identify many neighborhoods in the county that will benefit from better trail connections. Specific needs and opportunities will vary depending upon location. The development review process can be an important avenue for planning trails as neighborhoods develop. Local governments should refer to the Trails Plan when reviewing development applications to address potential trail issues. In established neighborhoods; residents, land management agencies, local governments and advocacy groups must continue to work together to refine the trail systems. The need to work cooperatively with private landowners cannot be overstressed. Landowners are often the key players in many neighborhood projects. Their concerns should be identified and their partnership should be sought as early as possible in the neighborhood and trail planning process.

Action 8: Provide safe accommodations for pedestrians and cyclists along roadways

Likely Partners: County Road and Bridge Department, Colorado Department of Transportation, Southern Ute Indian Tribe, U. S. Forest Service, local property owners associations, and metro districts.

Discussion: The entities responsible for road improvements vary according to the type of road and its location. It is critical that all agencies continue to consider non-motorized users when planning road improvements. Vigilant public participation in road improvement planning and budgeting process is often required to ensure that proper accommodations are made for non-motorized users. Agencies and groups responsible for developing and maintaining roads in the county must be encouraged to follow the non-motorized transportation policies and recommendations contained within the Trails Plan, County Transportation Plan, and state and federal highway plans. Projects that utilize state and federal funding are often mandated to include accommodations for non-motorized uses; such mandates must be followed. Advocacy groups such as the Durango Wheel Club, Trails 2000 and Bicycle Colorado should continue to advocate for safety improvements.

Action 9: Ensure that trails are properly designed, routed, and built

Likely Partners: local, state, and federal governments and land and wildlife management agencies, user groups, and individual trail advocates

Discussion: Proper trail design is necessary to meet the needs of multiple user groups and it is necessary to minimize wildlife and environmental impacts and trail degradation. Many resources are available for assistance and guidance regarding trail design considerations. Land management agencies, such as the Forest Service and BLM and advocacy groups such as Trails 2000, have exceptional experience designing trails. Many printed resources also exist (See Appendix 4). It is also important to remain open to creative, customized solutions that address the nuances and intricacies of a specific local issue.

Action 10: Ensure that trails are maintained on a regular basis

Likely Partners: local, state, and federal governments and land and wildlife management agencies, user groups, and individual trail advocates

Discussion: The need to provide upkeep and maintenance on existing trails is critical. Trail maintenance varies according to the type and location of a particular trail. Soft surface trails can usually be maintained with hand tools, while hard surface trails often require specialized machinery. In any case there is a duty to maintain trails, and there is usually a cost associated with such maintenance. All trail efforts must build routine maintenance responsibilities into their trail activities and budgets.

Action 11: Pursue ongoing education programs to promote and encourage safe and responsible trail and road use

Likely Partners: Local, state, and federal government agencies, trail users and advocacy groups

Discussion: Education of trail users and the general public is an important tool for minimizing conflicts and environmental impacts, and promoting respect and tolerance. Public education efforts should be a component of trail management programs throughout the county.

Summary of Recommendations

Chapter 7 addressed the role of numerous agencies, groups and individuals involved in trails planning in the county and it contains recommendations for future action. Fulfillment of these recommendations is a major component of the plan's implementation. Following is a summary of the recommended actions, categorized by agency or entity:

La Plata County

The County should:

- ✓ Amend the county code to clarify requirements for the inclusion of trails and public lands access within new developments.
- ✓ Continue to assist in trail development and management, including the acceptance of title to trails or trail easements, and partnering with other entities to pursue trail funding grants.
- ✓ Continue to pursue the construction of road improvements, with an aim toward improving pedestrian and cyclist safety.
- ✓ Consider the establishment of an annually funded line item in the budget for trail planning, development, and maintenance.
- ✓ Prepare a checklist or summary sheet to assist applicants, and county planners and decision-makers to appropriately incorporate the Trails Plan into the site planning and review of development proposals.
- ✓ Assist in fulfillment of trails-related goals listed in the various district land use plans.

Municipal governments

Durango, Bayfield, and Ignacio should:

- ✓ Continue to pursue trail planning and development efforts in a manner that includes trail connections between core, developed areas and outlying unincorporated neighborhoods and public lands.

Federal agencies

The Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and Bureau of Reclamation should:

- ✓ Continue to coordinate with each other and incorporate this plan in their trail planning efforts.
- ✓ Routinely update their travel management and recreation plans.

Colorado Department of Transportation

CDOT should:

- ✓ Continue its efforts to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists along state highways through the construction of separated paths, underpasses, and cyclist-friendly merge lanes, intersections, and shoulders.

Colorado Division of Wildlife

It is recommended that the CDOW continue to:

- ✓ Provide assistance to design and manage trail projects that minimize impacts to wildlife.
- ✓ Work with land management agencies, the public, and landowners to explore options for creating and managing hunting access onto public and private lands.

Colorado State Board of Land Commissioners

Interested parties should:

- ✓ Work with the State Board of Land Commissioners to determine the potential for trail development on suitable trust lands.

Southern Ute Indian Tribe

- ✓ Pursuit of any trail opportunities on tribal lands will have to occur with the active participation and consent of the tribe.

Non-profit land trusts

- ✓ When appropriate, public trail easements should be included with easements or land purchases made by land trusts in the county.

Advocacy groups

Advocacy groups in the county should:

- ✓ Continue to pursue trail-funding grants.
- ✓ Continue to build coalitions and partnerships, this often provides the catalyst to make things happen.
- ✓ Continue their active roles in volunteer trail building and maintenance.

Neighborhood groups, property owners associations, individual landowners and residents

Groups and individuals should:

- ✓ Use this plan for guidance and reference when pursuing local trails projects.

Guide for Citizen Action

While there are many entities involved with trails in the county, most often action on a project is initiated because an individual or group in the community takes an interest and decides to pursue a solution. In fact, most of the needs and opportunities contained in this plan will likely be addressed in response to the actions of the public rather than a particular agency or government. This section provides guidance for initiating citizen action. It outlines typical actions that may be necessary when undertaking a trail project.

Topic 1: Clearly identify and define the scope and intent of your project

Describing a proposed project provides a necessary focus on the desired outcome and defining the project's scope and intent provides a goal by which to measure its success. An example of a clear definition and intent may be: "Rerouting of the Pinkerton –Flagstaff Trail from Dutch Creek to Jones Creek Trail in order to reduce the trail's undulating grades, making it easier to travel and reducing trail erosion", vs. a more vague description such as "working on the Pinkerton – Flagstaff Trail."

Topic 2: Identify the specific sequential steps necessary to fulfill your objective

Prior to beginning work on a trail project, it is often necessary to gather information, funding and approvals. Identifying each step of a proposed project is essential for scheduling, budgeting and planning a project. In many cases, on-the-ground actions such as establishing a parking area, erecting signs or building a new section of trail will be the simplest and most straightforward part of a project. Conducting research, obtaining access and funding are often the biggest issues to resolve when undertaking a trail project. A typical project sequence may contain steps such as these:

- ✓ Research land ownership records and rights of way
- ✓ Contact property owners
- ✓ Develop project design
- ✓ Obtain necessary approvals
- ✓ Secure necessary funding/donations of labor and materials
- ✓ Obtain construction materials and trail building tools
- ✓ Schedule volunteer labor parties for trail construction and maintenance

Topic 3: Coordination of efforts

Coordinating a group's efforts will include assigning responsibility for specific actions. This avoids duplication of effort and conflicting messages. For instance, if a landowner needs to be contacted, designate one person to be in charge of that task and ensure that any attempts to contact the landowner are initiated by the assigned person.

Topic 4: Resources and budgeting

Identify necessary resources, their anticipated cost and potential sources. Examples of frequently required resources include:

- ✓ Legal counsel
- ✓ Land surveying services
- ✓ Trail building tools and materials
- ✓ Trail signs
- ✓ Volunteer labor

Topic 5: Likely partners

Identify likely partners by asking- what groups, agencies, businesses, governments and individuals are likely to have an interest or concern in the project? Determine what support or funding they may provide, or what concerns they may have and enlist their participation early in the planning process. Reach out to as broad a cross section of the community as possible, and work to build strong relationships with elected officials and government agencies.

Topic 6: Follow-up

When planning a trail project, make provisions to monitor the progress of the project once it is completed. Routine maintenance and upkeep are almost always necessary to keep trails usable. If there are long-term maintenance costs associated with the project, make sure to include them into your budget.

Topic 7: Publicity, celebration and thanks

Once a project is completed, ensure that its success is publicized through outlets such as the local media, newsletter publications or other appropriate means. Make certain that those who participated and provided support are given proper thanks and credit. Finally, create an opportunity for a celebration to recognize the accomplishments that have been made and have a little fun. A picnic or barbecue is an enjoyable contrast to the endless hours of organizing and decision-making that often accompanies trail projects.

CHAPTER 9. UPDATING THE PLAN

The Trails Plan and the Needs and Opportunities Analysis Tables will require periodic updating and revision. It is recommended that the county and the agencies and groups involved in the preparation of the plan convene on at least an annual basis to review progress that has been made to implement the Plan and to consider the need for revision. The County Planning Commission should review proposed amendments to the plan and hold a public hearing before adopting any formal changes.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 -- Inventory and Priority of Paved Roads in La Plata County for Improved Bicycling and Pedestrian Safety; Durango Wheel Club

Appendix 2 -- Equestrian Recommendations; Four Corners Backcountry Horsemen

Appendix 3 -- Funding Sources

Appendix 4 -- Trail Design, Development, and Management References

Appendix 5 -- La Plata Land Use Code, Relevant Excerpts

Appendix 6 -- La Plata County District Land Use Plans, Relevant Excerpts

Appendix 7 -- Discussion of Proposed Regulations for Trail Development to Comply with ADA

Appendix 8 – La Plata County Planning Commission Resolution 2000 – 5, adopting the Trails Plan

Appendix 1 -- Inventory and Priority of Paved Roads in La Plata County for Improved Bicycling and Pedestrian Safety; Durango Wheel Club

Inventory and Priority of Paved Roads in LaPlata County for Improved Bicycling and Pedestrian Safety

Prepared by:

Durango Wheel Club
Concerned citizens for safer bicycle riding,
walking and running

Prepared for:
La Plata County Board of Commissioners
La Plata County Transportation Plan
La Plata County Trails Plan Stakeholders Group
Colorado Department of Transportation

October, 1999

Inventory and Priority of Paved Roads in LaPlata County for Improved Bicycling and Pedestrian Safety

I. Objective

The overall objective of this assessment is to provide a list of road needs in La Plata county that could protect the safety of bicycle riders of all ages and abilities, while minimizing the interference with the flow and safe operation of motor vehicles.

In addition to increasing safety for current riders, such improvements should open up the opportunities for bicycling, running, and walking to a wider audience in the community. In many cases, current cycling road users tend to be expert bike handlers who are comfortable with high motor vehicle traffic densities and speeds, and/or minimal or non-existent shoulders. The compilers have personal knowledge of many families who do not currently utilize the riding opportunities, in part because of the perceived (and real) danger of current popular ride routes.

II. Scope

We considered all existing paved roads in La Plata county including county roads (CR), state routes (SR) and U.S. highways (U.S). We did not inventory non-paved roads. although we do comment briefly on four road areas (Page A-7) that, because of increasing development in the future, may be paved. If they are paved, they will have significant impact on the bicycling community and thus were deemed appropriately included here. We also excluded streets within the cities of Durango, Bayfield and Ignacio, as well as roads within subdivisions of the county.

III. Methodology

a. Major cycling and pedestrian routes were identified. A working group identified major cycling and pedestrian paved routes in La Plata county.

b. Priorities were assigned to each route. As a very concerned constituency, we are naturally inclined to want safety improvements to all roads for the benefit of riders, walkers and runners. However, we understand that budgetary and other constraints will limit the number of miles of roads that can be improved. For that reason, and to aid in the planning process, we have assigned priorities to the major routes identified and have provided some background information about why those priorities have been assigned. Priorities were labeled as "A" - Highest Priority, "B" - High Priority, and "C" - Moderate Priorities. Many paved roads were not assigned priorities. Within categories ("A", "B" and "C"), no particular order is implied by the listing.

Some of the factors that went into assigning priorities include: current usage (number of riders and pedestrians), future usage, and current road conditions, particularly shoulder width and condition.

In some cases, a low priority is assigned to a road, not because it is not important or not widely used, but because the current conditions (notably a wider than average shoulder or low traffic density) are favorable and the cycling and pedestrian communities are therefore better served if the timing of improvements is moved to higher priority projects. A notable example is SR 172 from Ignacio to the intersection of US 160 which currently manifests an excellent riding surface. It is highly used by cyclists, but has only a "B" priority (indicating the need for on-going road cleaning to maintain the very desirable riding surface).

c. Suggested safety improvements were developed. We are all automobile drivers as well as cyclists or pedestrians, and know the difficulties faced by automobiles when confronted with slow moving cyclists, limited sight lines, and narrow roads. An obvious solution is to increase the amount of space available for cyclists and thus allow them to safely follow their natural tendency to move to the right to allow for safe passing by the faster moving vehicular traffic. Thus, for the most part, the suggested improvements consider shoulder improvements - increased pavement width or more consistent shoulders.

Mile-by-mile assessments of each road were not conducted for this scoping inventory. Thus, for example, "shoulder improvements" may not be required over the entire route cited either because of the adequacy of existing shoulders, or because of significantly lower traffic densities over some portions of the route.

d. Summary tables were prepared. A table was prepared indicating the popular name of the route, each leg of the affected route, suggested safety improvements for each leg, and comments/reasons.

IV. Results

The road inventory completed is provided in Pages A-1 through A-8 as follows:

Contents	Pages
"A" Priority Roads (Highest)	A-1 through A-3
"B" Priority Roads (High)	A-4
"C" Priority Roads (Moderate)	A-5, A-6
Unpaved road comments	A-7

The map attached to each copy of this report shows the results as presented on Pages A-1 through A-7. "A" priority roads are marked in red. "B" priority roads are marked in blue. "C" priority roads are marked in green. Four critical but currently unpaved road areas specifically discussed are marked in yellow. Note

that we are not requesting that any unpaved roads be paved, only that if they are paved in the future, adequate allowance be made for safe bicycle and pedestrian traffic.

A summary of county roads where shoulder improvement needs over some or a portion of the road have been identified are shown in Table 1. County roads where only continued maintenance (specifically road sweeping) is requested are listed in Table 2. For completeness, affected state and federal highways are summarized in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 1
Summary of Affected County Roads by Number
(Shoulder Improvement and On-Going Maintenance Desirable)

County Road Number	Description	Priority
141	From intersection of SR 140 east to intersection with US 160	A
203	From intersection of US 550 at Iron Horse Inn north to intersection of US 550 above Hermosa	A
204	From city limits to end of pavement.	A
208	From intersection of US 160 west to intersection with CR 207.	C
234	From intersection of CR 240 south to US 160.	A
240	From intersection of CR 250 northeast to intersection of CR 501	A
250	From CR 240 (Florida Road) north to intersection with US 550.	A
302	From SR 172 south and west to US 550.	C
501	From intersection CR 240 south to intersection US 160	A
501	From intersection CR 240 north to the intersection with CR 500.	C
521	From intersection with US 160 south to intersection with SR 151.	B

Table 2
Summary of Affected County Roads by Number
(Maintenance Only)

County Road Number	Description	Priority
220	From intersection of SR 172 west to intersection of US 550	B
222	From intersection with US 160 south and west to SR 172.	C
317	From intersection of CR 516 west to intersection SR 172.	C
318	From intersection with US 550 east to SR 172	C
516	From intersection of US 160 south to intersection with CR 317.	C

Table 3
Summary of Affected State Highways by Number
(Shoulder Improvement and On-Going Maintenance Desirable unless otherwise indicated)

State Highway Number	Description	Priority
140	From intersection with US 160 south to the intersection with CR 141	A
140	From intersection with CR 141 south to state line	B
151	From Ignacio east to county line	C
172	From intersection of US 160 south and east to Ignacio (routine maintenance only - current shoulder excellent)	B
172	From Ignacio to state line	C

Table 4
Summary of Affected U.S. Highways by Number
(Shoulder Improvement and On-Going Maintenance Desirable unless otherwise indicated)

U.S. Highway Number	Description	Priority
160	From intersection of 550/160 (Doubletree Inn) west to county line (Mancos Hill)	A
160	From intersection of 550/160 (Farmington Hill) east to county line.	A
550	From intersection 550/160 (Farmington Hill) south to intersection CR 213	A
550	From intersection CR 203 (Iron Horse Inn) north to county line (Purgatory). (routine maintenance only - current shoulder excellent)	B

V. Other Issues

a. Need for regular road sweeping. Shoulders need to be swept and repaired regularly to ensure that cyclists can safely and easily ride in the increased shoulder or lane. In our view, the ranking of roads by priority can be used to set road cleaning priorities as well; that is, in our view, "A" priority roads should receive on-going maintenance before "B", etc. In some cases, such as SR 172, current shoulder size is acceptable; however, an increased frequency of road sweeping would ensure that debris accumulation is minimized and thus safe riding conditions maintained on the shoulders.

b. Need for considering bicycle riding when resurfacing roads. Once adequate shoulders or bike lanes are in place, it is critical that resurfacing cover the full extent of those areas. There are many examples of county and state roads in La Plata county where reasonable shoulders exist, but re-paving projects, extending only part way across the existing shoulder, have cut down the usable shoulder width and created unsafe riding conditions. As an example, overlays on US 160 heading from Durango to Hesperus, in many cases, extend only part way across the existing shoulder. This often forces cyclists out of the shoulder and into high speed, high traffic density road areas.

c. Need for considering bicycle operating characteristics when designing road improvements, particularly intersections and traffic control systems. We have not made specific recommendations about shoulder sizes, geometries and associated design features. There are numerous standards such as American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) I-GBF-3, "Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities" (a 1999 revision has replaced the 1991 standard), and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) "Selecting Roadway Design Treatments to Accommodate Bicycles", as well as ample state requirements. Both the AASHTO and FHWA standards recommend that designers take into account cyclist ability, as well as a host of transportation factors such as traffic speed, volume and mix, when making roadways more bicycle friendly. We have tried to comment on these factors for each major route identified to provide the community perspective on these issues. Both design guides also note that ***as little as two feet of extra paving along the side of the roadway can be extremely helpful for bicyclists when more extensive improvements aren't possible*** - an observation which we strongly support.

d. Signage. The addition of signs indicating the potential for bicycles and pedestrians can be an inexpensive means of increasing motor vehicle alertness and improving road safety. Signs such as "Bike Route", "Share the Road", and other cautions for cyclists and pedestrians should be considered. The cost of such signs may be covered by available funding under such programs as the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21); see below.

e. Use of "rumble" strips. We are concerned about the increased use of so-called "rumble" strips on state highways. These periodic depressions in the pavement are located in the shoulder, immediately to the right of the painted white line at the edge of the traffic lane. These are a safety concern for bicycle riders, particularly when used on roads with undersized shoulders. At this time, it appears that La Plata county is not considering using such structures. We would respectfully request that this policy be continued, that is, that they not be used on county roads. If absolutely necessary for some overriding motor vehicle safety reason, then we would request that rumble strip use be restricted to applications which meet the full requirements of applicable state law, specifically pertaining to shoulder width and spacing between sets of strips.

VI. Possible Funding Sources

Although we have not done an extensive study of funding sources, we are aware that there may be possible funds available to aid in improving the bicycle friendliness of roads throughout the county. In 1991, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) started the federal trend toward such funding. It has been estimated by the Federal Highway Administration that ISTEA was directly responsible for providing more than $1 billion dollars for bicycle projects and programs. Another six-year bill, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), was passed to continue this effort; under this umbrella bill, there are multiple opportunities for funding.

The most important TEA-21 funding opportunities for bicycles relevant to La Plata county routes appear to include: (i) Transportation Enhancements program, (ii) hazard elimination, and (iii) other Surface Transportation Program funds. Transportation Enhancement Activities (TEAs) fund such improvements as bicycle route signing and bicycle parking facilities. Each state is required to set aside 10 percent of its annual Surface Transportation Program funds for TEAs.

Each state is also required to identify and correct locations that may constitute a danger to motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians under the Hazard Elimination Program. Another 10 percent of state STP funds are set aside to address bicycle and pedestrian safety issues with the Hazard Elimination and Railway-Highway Crossing programs. Relevant types of projects that might be funded under this program might include: (i) surveys of hazardous locations, (ii) projects on any publicly owned bicycle or pedestrian pathway or trail, and (iii) safety-related traffic calming measures.

Other STP funds might be available for non-construction projects such as maps, brochures, and public service announcements related to safe bicycling use. The search for such funds might be combined with the other activities listed above during the search for available TEA-21 funding.

National Highway System funds may be used to construct bicycle transportation facilities and pedestrian walkways on land adjacent to any highway in the National Highway system. Types of improvements funded through the NHS have included shoulder improvements on highways.

Finally, the Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) funds may also be available for uses that enhance bicyclist and pedestrian safety throughout the county.

We would encourage the county to seek out some of these alternative sources of funding in order to extend the amount of bicycle and pedestrian safety work that can be done in the future in La Plata county.

Road Inventory: "A" Priority Roads (Highest)

Popular Name	Affected Roads	Suggested Safety Improvements	Comments/Reason for Priority
I. Animas Valley Loop	a. CR 250 from CR 240 (Florida Road) north to intersection with US 550. **("A")** b. CR 203 from intersection of US 550 (at Iron Horse Inn) north to intersection of US 550 (in Hermosa). **("A")**	a. Add shoulder. b. Add shoulder.	• Excellent, easy access from Durango. • Very high current cyclist and runner density. • High likelihood of increased usage. • Because of relatively low speed limits, and as one of the few flat routes in Durango area, would be very desirable for children and family riders, walkers, and runners, if safety improvements were made. • Portion of CR 250 from Baker's Bridge KOA up "Shalona Hill" to the intersection with US 550 is an example of where, although there is no shoulder, the traffic density is so light that shoulder improvements are not required.
II. Breen/Wildcat Canyon Loop	a. US 160 from intersection of US 550/160 west to intersection with SR 140. **("A")** b. SR 140 from intersection with US 160 south to intersection with CR 141. **("A")** c. CR 141 from intersection with SR 140 east to intersection with US 160. **("A")**	a. Improve shoulder past Wildcat Canyon. b. Add/improve shoulder. c. Add shoulder.	• Excellent, easy access from Durango. • Very high current rider density. • Along the US 160 leg, high traffic volume, high traffic speeds (particularly with 65 mph speed limit), and limited sightlines create dangerous riding conditions. • Extension of route continuing down SR 140 described under Priority **"B"**.
III. Durango Loop	a. CR 240 (Florida Rd) from intersection with CR 250 northeast to CR 234. **("A")** b. CR 234 from intersection of CR 240 south to US 160. **("A")** c. SR 172 from intersection of US 160 south to CR 220. **("B")** d. CR 220 from intersection of SR 172 west to intersection of US 550. **("B")** e. US 550 from intersection with CR 220 northwest to intersection of US 550/160. **("A")**	a. Improve shoulder b. Improve shoulder c. Maintenance. d. See under **"B"** . priority. e. Shoulder improvements.	• Excellent, easy access from Durango. • Very high current rider density. • High pedestrian and runner density along Florida Road. • Because of high motor vehicle speeds and poor shoulder, alternative to CR 222 of US 160 from intersection with CR 234 west to intersection with US 550 is less traveled by local riders. If a bike lane were available along US 160, it is possible that the leg along CR 220 would be less popular and would go to a **"C"** priority. • See comments pertaining to SR 172 under **"B"** priorities.

Road Inventory: "A" Priority Roads (Highest) (continued)

Popular Name	Affected Roads	Suggested Safety Improvements	Comments/Reason for Priority
IV. Helen's Store, Bayfield, Ignacio Loop	a. CR 240 (Florida Rd.) from intersection with CR 250 northeast to intersection CR 501. **("A")** b. CR 501 from intersection CR 240 south to intersection US 160. **("A")** c. CR 521 (Buck Highway) from intersection with US 160 south to intersection with SR 151 **("B")** d. SR 151 from CR 521 west to SR 172. **("C")** e. SR 172 from Ignacio west/northwest to CR 220. **("B")** f. CR 220 from intersection of SR 172 west to intersection of US 550. **("B")** g. US 550 from intersection with CR 220 northwest to intersection of US 550/160. **("A")**	a. Improved shoulder beyond Edgemont Ranch. b. Improved shoulder. c. Improved shoulder. d. None. e. Continued maintenance. f. None. g. Improved shoulder.	• Reasonably high rider traffic. • Extension of ride along CR 501 to Vallecito dam and loop described under priority **"C"**. • Lower Florida road has reasonable shoulder (although non-existent is some spots), however, above Edgemont addition or expansion would be desirable. • CR 521 (Buck Highway) assigned **"B"** priority because of relatively light traffic, see also comments under **"B"** priority. • SR 151 assigned **"C"** priority because of short distance and light traffic. • SR 172 has an excellent shoulder, but accumulates roadside hazards rapidly, thus it is assigned a **"B"** priority in hopes of allocation of resources for road sweeping. See also comments under **"B"** priorities.
V. Junction Creek Road	a. CR 204 (32nd Avenue) from city limits to end of pavement. **("A")**	a. Improved shoulder.	• This route provides mountain bike access to the Junction Creek areas including: Colorado Trail, Log Chutes trails, Hoffhein's Connection and Dry Forks Loop. Its improvement would be of great benefit to both cyclists and runners, for whom these trails are popular. • CR 204 also sees a high density of runners and pedestrians.

Road Inventory: "A" Priority Roads (Highest) (continued)

Popular Name	Affected Roads	Suggested Safety Improvements	Comments/Reason for Priority
VI. US 160 East from Durango to county line.	a. US 160 from intersection with US 550 east to county line. **("A")**	a. Addition of shoulder.	• U.S. Highways 160, 550, and 550/160 are major cross-county routes that could be critical bicycle routes, however, significant shoulder improvements are required for US 160 east and US 550 south from Durango. Highway 160 east from Durango is typically avoided by local cyclists whenever possible because of non-existent shoulder, very high traffic density and speeds. The ride from Durango to Pagosa (or the reverse) is common among touring companies and would see increased local interest and usage if a reasonable shoulder was added.
VII. US 550 from Farmington Hill to Bondad Hill.	a. US 550 from intersection with US 160 south to intersection with CR 220. **("A")** b. Continuation of US 550 from intersection with CR 220 south to intersection with CR 213. **("A")**	a. Improved shoulder. b. Add shoulder	• The route along US 550 south from Farmington Hill sees very little cycling traffic because of high motor vehicle density and speeds, and non-existent shoulder. If this route was improved, it would provide access for bicyclists living along the route as well as safe access to loops along La Posta road and to the very ridable CR 318 to Ignacio (see under **"C"** priorities. The gentle grades have high rider appeal, although even with modest shoulders, the high speed traffic might still limit family usage.
VIII. US 160 from Hesperus to top of Mancos Hill (county line).	a. US 160 from intersection of SR 140 west to La Plata county line (top of Mancos Hill). **("A")**	a. Improved shoulder.	• This out and back route sees an intermediate amount of cyclists. High motor vehicle volume, and speeds limit appeal. For the most part, above average shoulders exist. Current construction may provide desired improvements.

Road Inventory: "B" Priority Roads (High)

Popular Name	Affected Roads	Suggested Safety Improvement	Comments/Reason for Priority
IX. LaPlata Highway to State Line	a. SR 140 from intersection with US 160 south to the intersection with CR 141. **("A")** b. SR 140 from the intersection with CR 141 south to the state line. **("B)**	a. See discussion under Priority. **("A")** b. Improved shoulder.	• The priority for SR 140 south of the intersection with CR 141 primarily reflects the fact that there is currently little cycle traffic along this route due to poor or non-existent shoulder. Route would see higher cycle traffic, particularly if proposed "Park and Ride" was established at intersection with CR 141.
X. US 550 Hermosa to Purgatory.	a. US 550 from the intersection with CR 250 north to county line. **("B")**	a. On-going maintenance.	• This is an exceptionally popular section of road (particularly above the intersection with CR 250). Exceptional shoulders are currently in place. Its priority indicates the importance of the route, tempered by the existing shoulders. The coexistence of vehicle traffic and cyclists on this stretch of road is exemplary.
XI. US 550 Durango to Hermosa	a. US 550 from Durango city limits north to the intersection of CR 250. **("B")**	a. On-going maintenance.	• Because of the parallel roads of CR 250 and CR 203, high traffic density and speeds this stretch of US 550 is less ridden although there is an excellent shoulder. On-going maintenance to control excessive roadside debris is indicated.
XII. Buck Highway	a. CR 521 from intersection of US 160 south to SR 151. **("B")**	a. Improved shoulder.	• As noted above, this road is typically a part of a larger loop. Currently it has poor shoulder conditions, however, priority reflects the fact that there is relatively little vehicular traffic.
XIII. SR 172	a. SR 172 from Ignacio to US 160. **("B")**	a. Continued maintenance.	• This road is currently excellent for cyclist, with better than average shoulder width. Its ranking as a **"B"** priority reflects high use and a hope for continuing good maintenance (roadside sweeping, in particular) to handle accumulation of excessive amounts of glass and other roadside debris.
XIV. CR 220	a. CR 220 from intersection of SR 172 west to intersection US 550. **("B")**	a. None currently needed.	• As noted above, this short connecting road is used to complete several loops. Shoulders are inadequate, but traffic is light, so that safety is acceptable. Its **"B"** priority is a recognition that traffic will likely increase on this road during the next few years and with that increase, a concurrent need to add shoulders to ensure continued cycling safety.

Road Inventory: "C" Priority Roads (Moderate)

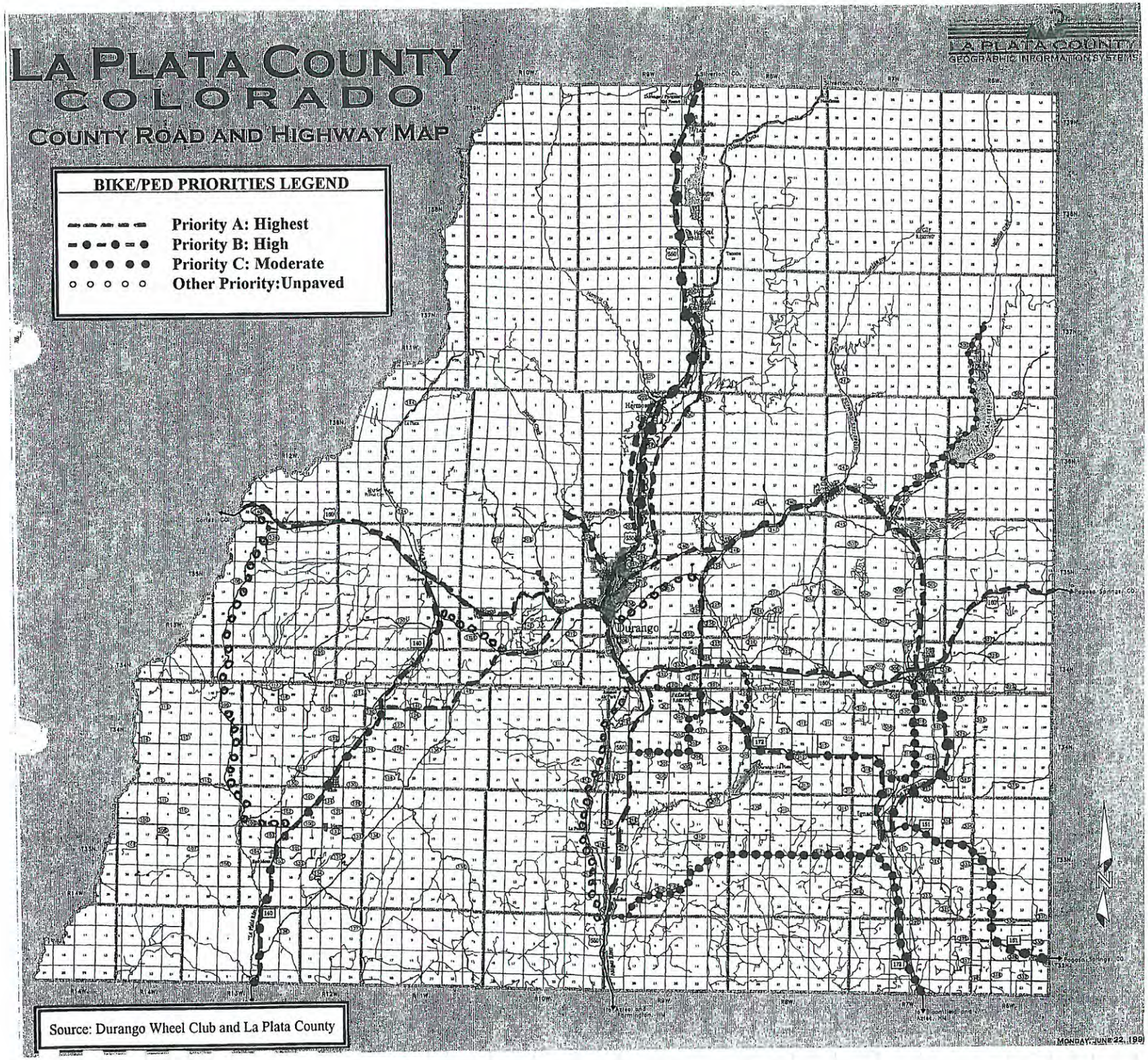
Popular Name	Affected Roads	Suggested Safety Improvement	Comments/Reason for Priority
XV. Rainbow Highway	a. CR 516 from intersection of US 160 south to intersection with CR 317. **("C")** b. CR 317 from intersection CR 516 west to intersection SR 172. **("C")**	a. None. b. None.	• These two roads are commonly used as an alternative route when riding the loops through Durango, Bayfield, and Ignacio. The **"C"** priority reflects, that although there is little if any shoulder, than traffic is light and therefore safety generally a lesser concern.
XVI. Vallecito Dam and loop	a. CR 501 from intersection CR 240 north to intersection with CR 500. **("C")**	a. Improved shoulder should funds permit. b. Improved shoulder should funds permit.	• The extension of the Helen's store loop up to Vallecito dam or along the two shores following paved roads sees lesser traffic, thus its **"C"** priority. However, vehicle traffic can be heavy at times, the shoulder is small and thus safety is an issue. With larger shoulder, this might evolve into a popular ride for families.
XVII. Lightner Creek access	a. CR 208 from intersection of US 160 west to intersection with CR 207. **("C")**	a. Improved shoulder should funds permit.	• This section of pavement (and subsequent unpaved road) provides access to the Dry Fork, Hoffhein's, Colorado Trail. Although cycling traffic is fairly constant and shoulders are marginal, vehicular traffic is modest and the typically rider is proceeding south bound (downhill) and thus is at risk for a relatively small amount of time.
XVIII. CR 222	a. CR 222 from intersection with US 160 south and west to SR 172. **("C)**	a. None currently needed.	• Used as a connecting route. Currently low traffic density offsets the lack of shoulders and results in a **"C"** priority for this short road section.
XIX. SR 172 from Ignacio to the State Line	a. SR 172 from Ignacio city limits south to the State Line. **("C")**	a. On-going maintenance.	• Riding surface is adequate, given relatively light vehicular traffic, particularly during peak riding seasons along this road - spring and fall.
XX. SR 151 from Ignacio to the county line	a. SR 151 from Ignacio city limits to the county line. **("C")**	a. Shoulder improvement.	• This road to the north end of Navajo Lake sees high traffic levels including vehicles towing boats and thus would merit consideration of the improvement of shoulders.

Road Inventory: "C" Priority Roads (Moderate) (continued)

Popular Name	Affected Roads	Suggested Safety Improvement	Comments/Reason for Priority
XXI. Bondad Hill to Ignacio on CR 318.	a. CR 318 from intersection with US 550 east to SR 172. **("C")**	a. None.	• CR 318 is given a **"C"** priority because it currently has a good road surface and very little vehicle traffic - thus improvement dollars could be better spent elsewhere. If significant development occurs in this area, upgraded shoulders will be required to maintain safe riding conditions.
XXII. CR 302	a. CR 302 from SR 172 south and west to US 550. **("C")**	a. Shoulder improvements if possible; on-going maintenance.	• This short connecting road has relatively low traffic volume.

Road Inventory: Comments About Currently Unpaved Roads That If Paved Would Greatly Affect Bicycling Use

Popular Name	Affected Roads	Suggested Safety Improvement	Comments/Reason for Priority
Horse Gulch	a. CR 237 from Durango city limits to CR 234	a. None currently.	• Horse Gulch, currently unpaved offers access to major area of mountain biking. If development leads to paving this road, specific road accommodations to allow continued access to mountain biking routes should be included. In this regard, if ranked this road would be a **"B"** priority.
CR 125	a. CR 125 from the intersection with SR 140 to the intersection with SR 141.	a. None currently.	• This road is currently partially paved. If development requires completion of paving, this road will become a significant cycling option. Therefore, consideration of design to accommodate increased cycling traffic is recommended. For this reason, this road would receive a **"B"** priority.
Cherry Creek Loop	a. CR 105 from intersection with US 160 south to the intersection with CR 100. b. CR 100 from inter with CR 105 east to the intersection with SR 140	a. None currently. b. None currently.	• At the present time the two legs of what could be an excellent cycling loop are unpaved. If in the future, development supports the paving of these roads, consideration should be given to a bicycling- and pedestrian-friendly design.
LaPosta Road	a. CR 213 from intersection with US 550/160 in Bodo Park south to intersection with US 550 at Bondad.	a. None currently.	• Most of this road is currently unpaved. There is modest motor vehicle density and the road sees light cycling traffic. However, with the expansion of housing density in the area served by this road, it is possible that future plans will call for paving the entire length. Should such an event occur, adequate shoulders for bicycling and pedestrian traffic would be desirable.


LA PLATA COUNTY
COLORADO
COUNTY ROAD AND HIGHWAY MAP
LA PLATA COUNTY
GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS
BIKE/PED PRIORITIES LEGEND
Priority A: Highest
Priority B: High
Priority C: Moderate
Other Priority: Unpaved
Durango
Source: Durango Wheel Club and La Plata County
MONDAY, JUNE 22, 199

Appendix 2 -- Equestrian Recommendations; Four Corners Backcountry Horsemen

EQUESTRIAN NEEDS RECOMMENDED BY FOUR CORNERS BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN TO THE LA PLATA COUNTY TRAILS PLANNING GROUP

By Jim Libby, Member Four Corners Back Country Horsemen Oct. 3, 1999

CONTRIBUTORS:

Don Polzin, President
Forrest Capps, Past President
Pat Amthor, Vice-president
Jim Appel, Board Member
Larry Zauberis, Board Member
Lisa Cribbs, Board Member
David Griggs, Outfitter and member
Karen Otterstein, Member and Public Affairs Chairwoman
Frank Amthor, Member and Trail Activities Chairman
Jim Libby, Member

PARKING AT TRAILHEADS

Without exception, everyone said this is the number one need for existing and new trails.

Parking need not be elaborate or fancy, but should provide room for multiple horse trailers and room to turn them around.

Good trailhead parking promotes high usage. A way to limit usage is through less than perfect access.

NO PARKING SIGNS AT TRAILHEAD TURN AROUNDS

With very limited parking at trailheads, some unthinking users park in the areas used by horse trailers to turn around. Sign these with NO PARKING signs to keep them open for everyone.

HITCHING RAILS

Provide hitching rails at three different locations.

1. At trail heads.
2. At 3 hours to 1/2 day distance from the trailhead. This is where riders will stop the rest, have lunch, take a break, or maybe camp. If there is a hitching rail, riders will far less inclined to tie their horses to trees, thus saving many trees and the fragile root systems and grasses under the trees.
3. At springs or watering places. As in 2 above, hitching rails will help prevent damaged trees.

SIGN ALL MAJOR TRAILS

Experienced users who know the trails and terrain are few and far between. Most users are novices or exploring the trail for the first time.

Having a map and compass or GPS is fine if all the landmarks are easily identifiable. But in new territory, the trail user is often unable to differentiate between the trail itself, a well used wild animal trail, or a cattle trail. Signs help users find their way.

In recent years it seems the Forest Service has removed, or at least failed to replace vandalized or fallen down signs. Today, the trail user is left to guessing what trail he or she is connecting to or approaching.

A good signage system is useful to all users, not just equestrians.

In addition to trail names, distances on signs are both useful and of interest. Among other things, they help users decide if they should proceed further or perhaps turn back.

Signs must be:

1. Durable. Metal is superior to wood. Wood weathers, fades, and deteriorates.
2. Easy to see and read, large, and bright.

3. Placed in conspicuous places where a trail user can't miss them.

There are differing opinions about the levels to which signing should be taken. Some believe only major trails should be signed while others favor also signing minor trails. However, all voted for signing major trails.

OLD STOCK DRIVEWAYS

Use or find the old stock driveways and establish these as trails. Some advantages are:

1. They are already there.
2. These are already in the National Forest, rather than in Wilderness Areas.
3. They usually follow ridges offering outstanding views.

As an example, one old stock driveway starts east of Ignacio and west of Arboles. It winds through the HD Mountains and crosses Hwy 160 near Yellow Jacket and then follows the Piedra and Pine Rivers up and past Indian Mountain. It then crosses Beaver Meadows and eventually intersects East Creek Trail.

Old Forest Service maps show these old trails.

The old stock driveways had signs identifying them. For example, some signs said, "Driveway, No Grazing Within 100 Feet".

It is also interesting to read the old, old carvings on Aspen trees along old stock driveways. Some of them date back to the turn of the century.

TRAIL WITDTH AND OVERHEAD CLEARANCE

Where trails are used by pack strings, clear brush and branches to accommodate a big horse with a large pack on each side.

The trail itself need be only about 18 inches wide, but must have overhead and side clearance to accommodate a horseback rider and a packhorse.

It is not unusual for horseback riders and pack strings to ride these trails at night after dark which is why overhead clearance is so important.

SIGN IN BOARDS AT TRAILHEADS

Place sign in boards close to where horse riders will mount up, not just where hikers are apt to use them. Often the sign in boards are not where the riders enter the trails.

WATER TROUGHS

In areas where there are springs or spring run off, build troughs or catch basins for watering livestock.

FROST-FREE POTABLE WATER HYDRANTS

If possible, provide frost-free potable water hydrants at trailheads. These would accommodate all users, not just equestrians.

GATES AND CATTLE GUARDS

If trails contain gates, they should be at least 6 ft. wide for pack stock.

All other users can easily negotiate cattle guards. Equestrians, however, must look for a way around, or open and close a gate. Is there a way to fabricate some kind of a labyrinth which horseback riders could negotiate without dismounting, but at the same time prevent cattle from negotiating?

TRAIL MAPS AND DESCRIPTIONS

There seems to be no comprehensive trail maps and trail descriptions for equestrians. Needed are trail guidelines and maps, which describe:

1. Maps of the trails
2. Where the trails are, how to find them
3. Degree of difficulty and altitude gain
4. Trailhead parking facilities
5. Users one would expect to encounter on the trail
6. Water crossings, distance to, difficulty of, and danger during spring runoff
7. Is water available for horses

CAMPING FACILITIES AT OR NEAR TRAILHEADS

Most riders do not own pack stock. Therefore, their rides are limited to one day. However, many riders have campers and or tents which allows them to camp at or near the trailhead where they park their horse trailers. This allows them to spend multi-days riding simply by returning to their campsite at night and selecting a different trail the next day.

Unfortunately, most trailheads do not offer the opportunity to camp overnight. Facilities need not be elaborate. All that is really needed is just enough room to pitch a tent or park a rig.

However, while we are wishing, the ideal situation would be a horse campground with hookups, a corral, and perhaps some covered paddocks.

TRAIL QUALITY

Trail quality should vary, from sidewalk quailty close to town to semi-rough in more remote areas.

Gravel on trails should be very limited, only used near high traffic areas.

SAFETY WARNINGS ABOUT MOTORIZED VEHICLES

Because horses are easily frightened or spooked, provide warnings at trailheads about user groups which may unknowingly spook a horse. Good examples are two wheel and four wheel motorized vehicles traveling at high rates of speed and making loud noises.

Our intent is not to separate users, but to notify equestrians on which trails to expect motorized users. Then the equestrian can decide if he or she wants to risk riding with the possibility of encountering motorized vehicles.

EDUCATION FOR MOTORIZED TRAIL USERS

High speed motorized trail users are a serious concern to horseback riders. They come upon the horse and rider either from the front or rear at a high rate of speed. Because of the speed with which they ride, they often do not see the rider until almost too late to brake. The horses are often frightened and spooked.

Many riders simply avoid trails used by motorized vehicles. Their fear of an accident (a wreck in horsemen's terms) forces them to give up riding any trail where they may encounter careless motorcycle or ATV riders.

There needs to be an education or notification program for motorized vehicle riders, which would allow them to see the danger they pose to horseback riders.

Appendix 3 -- Funding Sources

TRAIL FUNDING AND ASSISTANCE

By Stuart H. Macdonald, State Trails Coordinator, Colorado State Parks

Trail Funding-- State, Federal, and Private

The following summary includes programs and agencies that have provided direct funding for trails, as well as a number of others that have provided different kinds of assistance that may contribute towards trail development, management, and publicity. Each program includes information marked by symbols for Contacts and Publications.

Colorado Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation

State Trails Program grants -- This program uses a portion of State Parks' revenue from the Colorado Lottery and the Great Outdoors Colorado Fund. The 50/50 matching grants are for trail construction by local governments and non-profit organizations throughout the state. In the years prior to the Lottery, 1973 to 1983, state funding for trails amounted to $1,176,393.

Funding for trails since the advent of the Lottery in 1983 has amounted to $3.6 million, helping build many miles of trails, primarily multi-use paved trails. An average of 10 projects were funded annually with individual project grants limited to $50-75,000 per year. The maximum available in any fiscal year for grants was $500,000; only $100,000 was allocated for FY 90-91, FY 91-92, and FY 92-93.

Great Outdoors Colorado, also funded by lottery revenue, has increased trail funding dramatically. In the first year of funding, FY 94-95, $1 million was provided for trail grants to local governments. For FY 95-96, the figure arises to $1.1 million. Of this amount, $350,000 comes from State Parks' share of GO Colorado funds, and for the first time non-profit organizations are eligible for funding. It is anticipated that more backcountry trails outside the urban areas will be funded.

Grant applications are reviewed by the State Recreational Trails Committee and State Parks staff. Applications are accepted at year-end. To be eligible for funding, trails must be identified as first priority corridors on the State Recreational Trails Master Plan.

Colorado Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Fund -- On June 7, 1989, Governor Roy Romer signed House Bill 1329, titled "Concerning Vehicles Used for Recreation Purposes on Routes Open for Off-Highway Use." This law creates an off-highway vehicle (OHV) recreation fund which will accept "all fees collected from the registration of OHVs." The $15 annual registration fee for unlicensed motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles has been well-received and registrations have increased each year. The first

grants from the OHV Recreation fund, administered by the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, were approved March 22, 1991. A total of $50,000 was allocated for 12 projects. In 1999 we awarded 28 grants and gave $800,000 as recommended by the State Trails OHV Subcommittee. Up to ten citizens are active in OHV interests.

Applications are accepted from any Colorado town, county, state or federal agency, or non-profit group. Preference is given to projects that include volunteer help, donated funds, community involvement, user education, and environmental problem-solving. While the emphasis of the program is to benefit motorized trail recreation, it includes a wide variety of facility improvements as well as safety, education, and environmental projects.

Colorado Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, State Trails Program, Stuart Macdonald, (303) 866-3203 Ext. 306, or Jack Placchi (303) 866-3203 Ext. 338, 1313 Sherman St., Rm. 618, Denver CO 80203.

Colorado Division of Wildlife

"Fishing is Fun" Program -- The "Fishing is Fun in Colorado" program (FIF) is designed to encourage the development of fisheries projects in cooperation with local communities, counties, or non-profit groups. Since the program began in 1987 more than $14 million worth of fishing projects are benefiting Colorado's anglers. The program is funded by federal excise taxes collected on the purchase of fishing equipment, boats, and motor boat fuels. It is managed as a federal grant program to the states by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service as a "user pays - user benefits" program.

While the emphasis is clearly on improving fishing opportunities, some greenway and other stream-corridor trail projects can be enhanced by including "Fishing is Fun" grants. Some examples would be access trails and parking areas; fishing access for the disabled, which may include piers, well-developed trails; obtaining public access along streams and lakes by fee title, easement, or lease; sanitary facilities; stream corridor improvements such as bank stabilization, instream structures, erosion control, revegetation, and fencing.

Up to 75% of the total project cost may be covered by the grant. Matching for the grant may be in the form of volunteer labor, cash donations, or in-kind contributions. Projects where non-fishing facilities such as multi-use trails are included may also be eligible, and a prorated amount will be established for funding assistance.

Fishing Is Fun Program, Ed Dumph, Colorado Division of Wildlife, 6060 Broadway, Denver CO 80216 (303) 291-7450, www.dnr.state.co.us/wildlife

•**Watchable Wildlife Program** -- Watchable Wildlife purposes are to manage wildlife resources & people and to provide sustainable recreational benefits to those who wish to observe, photograph, and otherwise enjoy wildlife through activities other than hunting and fishing. Watchable Wildlife provides the kinds of services and opportunities that will

result in people choosing to devote an additional 10.7 million recreation days to watching wildlife in 15 years.

Trails and trailheads provide many possibilities for watching wildlife, both new and existing trail projects should be seen as candidates for wildlife interpretive facilities, signs, and booklets. This program presents opportunities for trail planners to look at possible funding, a way to enhance the attractiveness of a trail, and a means of increasing public awareness of trails with wildlife interest. In the long run the Watchable Wildlife Program will also help build support for trails by demonstrating another of their benefits.

Watchable Wildlife Program, Bob Hernbrode, Colorado Division of Wildlife, 6060 Broadway, Denver CO 80216 (303) 291-7271, www.dnr.state.co.us/wildlife

Department of Local Affairs

•**Energy Impact Assistance Program** -- Local governments, counties, school districts, special districts, and state agencies are eligible for grants based on impacts of energy and mineral development. While health and safety issues such as fire protection and water projects have taken preference, economic development and public works projects are also eligible. A current example of a trail-related project provided funds for Steamboat Springs and Craig to develop the Yampa Valley Alliance plan for greenways and recreation facilities along the Yampa River. Projects must be a county-wide priority and a local funding match is also important.

Energy Impact Assistance Program, Bill Timmermeyer, Colorado Department of Local Affairs, 1313 Sherman St, Rm #518, Denver, CO 80203 (303) 866-2205, http://www.dlg.oem2.state.co.us/

•**Colorado Initiatives Program** -- Since 1986 this cooperative program has been in place to help rural towns receive professional development assistance and project funding. Colorado Initiatives is a joint venture among U S West, the University of Colorado, and the state Department of Local Affairs. Initially, each recipient receives a $5,000 grant, followed by a chance to compete for a part of the $100,000 annual grant from U S West. An average of eight towns are selected for the program each year. Projects including trails have been included in several projects, such as Grand County's trails network development plan and a recreation corridor plan along the Uncompahgre River through Delta, Montrose, and Ouray counties.

Colorado Department of Local Affairs Northeastern Region, Kent Gumina, Regional Manager, 300 N. Main, Ft. Morgan, CO 80701 (303) 867-7580

Colorado Department of Local Affairs Southeastern Region, Mark Lowrey, Regional Manager, 2200 Bonforte Blvd. LW 317, Pueblo, CO 80701 (719) 549-2464

Colorado Department of Local Affairs South Central Region, Debra Downs, Regional Manager, PO Box 300, Alamosa, CO 81101 (719) 589-7490

Colorado Department of Local Affairs Southwestern Region, Ken Charles, Regional Manager, FLC Miller Student Center, Room 108, Durango, CO 81301 (303) 247-7311

Colorado Department of Local Affairs Northwestern Region, Tim Sarmo, Regional Manager, 222 S 6th St., Rm 409, Grand Junction, CO 81501 (303) 248-7310

Colorado Department of Local Affairs Northern Mountains Region, Cathy Shipley, Regional Manager, PO Box 739, Frisco, CO 80443 (303) 668-5445

Colorado Department of Local Affairs North Central Region, Don Sandoval, Regional Manager, 150 E 29th St., Suite 238, Loveland, CO 80538 (303) 679-4501

Colorado Department of Local Affairs Central Region, Jack Kirtland, Regional Manager, 1313 Sherman St., Rm 518, Denver, CO 80203 (303) 866-3688

Colorado Department of Transportation

In 1991 the Department's name and mission were changed from "Department of Highways," reflecting its charge to deal with wider issues and intermodal transportation. A State Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator was appointed to build a statewide program emphasizing education, safety, and planning facilities such as bikeways and improved road riding opportunities. The Department also administers grants through TEA-21.

Colorado Department of Transportation, Gay Page, Bicycle Program Manager, 4201 E. Arkansas Ave. DTD, Denver CO 80222 (303) 757-9982 or by e-mail at Gay.Page@DOT.STATE.CO.US

Colorado Historical Society, State Historical Fund

The Colorado Historical Society serves as the primary state agency for the preservation and interpretation of historical and archeological resources in the state. The Society develops activities to interpret and protect all facets of Colorado cultural , material and architectural heritage.

As one of the programs of the Colorado Historical Society the State Historical Fund (SHF) is one source of funding for trails projects which serves to preserve Colorado's diverse architectural history. Trail related projects that might qualify for funding from the SHF would include providing signage along a trail to identify and elaborate on a significant building, site, structure, or object; or SHF grant funds might be used to survey a trail path to ensure there were no archeological resources that might be damaged.

Colorado Historical Society, The Colorado History Museum, 1300 Broadway, Denver, CO 80203-2137 (303) 866-2825, http://www.coloradohistory.org/SHF

State University System Programs

•**Colorado State University Extension Program** -- The Cooperative Extension offices work with communities and agencies throughout Colorado. They typically help with educational assistance on projects improving the quality of life or economic circumstances. Cooperative Extension locates providers of assistance, often from units of Colorado's higher education system.

Colorado State University Cooperative Extension, Joel Plath, Southeast Regional Director, 2200 Bonforte BLVD, RM 317 Library BLDG, Pueblo, CO 81001 (719) 549-2049, http://www.co.state.edu/

Colorado State University Cooperative Extension, Nathan Moreng, Northwest Regional Director, 2764 Compass Dr., Suite 236, Grand Junction, CO 81506 (303) 241-3346

Colorado State University Cooperative Extension, JoAnn Powell, Front Range Regional Director, 234 Aylesworth Hall NW, CSU, Ft. Collins, CO 80523 (303) 491-6421

•**Colorado School of Mines** -- Located in Golden, CSM emphasize a variety of engineering and other technical programs. Assistance to communities takes the form of involving small or large groups of students in local projects. Students are able to perform conceptual and detailed engineering design, project development, and data acquisition and processing. Projects are approached on a multi-disciplinary basis with mentor (faculty) supervision and assistance. Recreation projects have included designs of visitor centers, historic and recreational problems, and trail access, bicycle and off-highway vehicle systems.

Colorado School of Mines, Bob Knecht, Design (EPICS) Division, Golden CO 80401 (303) 273-3592, http://www.mines.edu/

•**Colorado Center for Community Development** -- Part of the University of Colorado at Denver for more than 30 years, the Center has assisted rural and urban communities statewide: community development, town planning, economic development strategies, conducting surveys, evaluating programs, designing new uses for old facilities. Priority is given to communities that cannot afford professional services.

The Center draws upon its own small professional staff, the faculty and students of the University system to provide a variety of technical services. Recreational projects have included numerous designs for visitor centers, community tourism development studies or projects, master plans for community parks, scenic highway corridor studies, and regional and community trail system designs.

Colorado Center for Community Development, P O Box 173364, Campus Box 128, Denver CO 80217-3364 (303) 556-6650.

Colorado Community Tourism Action Guide, by Sarah Richardson; available from the Colorado Center for Community Development.

National Parks Service

•**Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program** --This small but experienced staff with over 70 years of planning experience offers state and local governments as well as non profit organizations technical assistance in the planning of trails and trail systems, river recreation and river and wetland restoration design, conservation planning and open space management. Sample projects we have helped with in Colorado include the riverfront in Grand Junction; the Historic Arkansas Riverfront in Pueblo; watershed plans for the Eagle and San Miguel basins; open space management planning in Lakewood, Wheat Ridge and Northglenn; a county-wide trail plans in Grand and Teller Counties; Yampa River planning in Routt and Moffat Counties; as well as stream or wetland restoration design in Montrose, Ridgway, Denver, and Wheat Ridge.

Duane A. Holmes, Manager, National Park Service (IMDE-RTCA), P.O. Box 25287, Denver, CO 80225 voice (303) 969-2855 fax (303) 987-6676 email duane_holmes@nps.gov or http://www.ncrc.nps.gov/rtea

Soil Conservation Service

•**Resource Conservation and Development Program** -- Administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service and governed by local volunteer boards, the seven RC&D offices provide a variety of services based on community development. Assistance includes project coordination, engineering and design, technical assistance, and help finding grants and funding sources. Recreation-related projects include: Two Rivers Park in Glenwood Springs, Zapata Falls in Alamosa County, a handicapped-accessible trail near Durango, and erosion control for lakes and stream corridors.

San Juan RC&D, Gary Jennings, RC&D Coordinator, 31 Suttle Street, Durango, CO 81301 (970) 259-9277.

San Luis Valley RC&D, Jim Mietz, RC&D Coordinator, 2205 State Avenue, Alamosa, CO 81101 (719) 589-3907 ext 124.

East Central Colorado RC&D, Will Arnold, RC&D Coordinator, P.O. Box 157, Hugo, CO 80821 (719) 743-2408.

Colorado Big Country RC&D, Willa Holgate, RC&D Coordinator, 401 23rd. St., Suite 105, P.O. Box 2168, Glenwood Springs, CO 81602-2168 (970) 945-5494.

Sangre de Christo RC&D, Jane Wostrow, RC&D Coordinator, 1630 Highway 50 West, Pueblo, CO 81008 (719) 543-8386.

Southeast Colorado RC&D, Robert Appel, RC&D Coordinator, 3505 S. Main Street, Lamar, CO 81052 (719) 336-3437.

Painted Sky RC&D, Rick Isom, RC&D Coordinator, 2250 Highway 50, Delta, CO 81416 (970) 874-6643.

Volunteers Programs

•**Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado** -- Applications are accepted each year for project proposals to be organized as official VOC efforts. More than half of VOC's major projects have involved trail development, rebuilding, and disabled access. Projects have included a crusher fines interpretive trail, a handicapped-accessible wood boardwalk, revegetation and tree-planting, and numerous trail construction and re-routing projects. In 1992 with agency and corporate support, VOC began a Volunteer Clearinghouse to match a variety of volunteers and skills with jobs and needs.

Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado, 1410 Grant ST, B-105, Denver CO 80203 (303) 715-1010, http://www.voc.org/

•**Colorado Mountain Club** -- The CMC Trail Committee has scheduled light trail maintenance to heavy construction work crews every Saturday and Sunday from May through September. They coordinate projects with three USFS Districts, Colorado Fourteener Initiative Peaks, the Continental Divide Trail, Jeffco Open Space and other volunteer nonprofit organization joint trips. Choose from one day trips to two day car camps to three day backpacks into wilderness areas from the summer schedule. Cook tent meals are available on most two day overnight trips plus a social hour with food and drinks at the end of each work day. Telephone the CMC membership services desk for trip signup info.

Colorado Mountain Club, 710 10th ST, Golden CO 80401 (303) 279-3080, www.xpert.net/cmc/

•**Student Conservation Association (SCA)** -- Founded in 1957, the Student Conservation Association (SCA) is America's largest and oldest provider of conservation service opportunities, outdoor education and career training for youth. Natural and cultural resource managers rely on SCA for highly motivated conservation interns of college and age up who serve for 12 weeks to 12 months at a time, and supervised crew of high school students who serve for a four week period, primarily in summer. Interns provide a wide variety of services including interpretation, research, surveying and wilderness patrols. Conservation crews most often perform labor-intensive, backcountry trail projects.

Student Conservation Association, 689 River Road, PO Box 550, Charlestown, NH 03603, (603) 543-1700, askus@sca-inc.org, http://www.sca-inc.org/

•**American Hiking Society (A.H.S.)** -- A.H.S. is the only national nonprofit organization dedicated to establishing, protecting and maintaining foot trails in American. AHS's programs include: Volunteer Vacations, one-and two-week trips to work on backcountry trails; National Trails Day, the largest celebration of the outdoors, always the first

Saturday of June; and legislative action, working on Capital Hill to increase federal funding for and public access to hiking trails.

American Hiking Society, P O Box 20160, Washington, DC 20041-2160 (301) 565-6704, http://www.americanhiking.org/

•**International Work Camps** -- International Volunteer Projects is a volunteer service provided by Council Exchanges, a division of the Council on International Educational Exchange. The program recruits international volunteers, some U.S. volunteers, and a U.S. group coordinator to work on various types of projects including trail construction/reconstruction, renovation, environmental, and social service. In addition to the work provided by the volunteers, this program allows for cultural interaction among the volunteers. The National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service and other government agencies have used council crews in projects across the country. The project host provides food, accommodation and insurance coverage for an average 10-15 person crew for 3 weeks, as well as the stipend for the group coordinator. As a ballpark figure, the total cost to a project host is $2,180 - $3,120.

Council Exchanges, International Volunteer Projects, Erin Davney, Program Manager, 205 East 42nd Street, New York, New York 10017, 1-888-COUNCIL, www.councilexchanges.org/vol

Labor Resources

•**Colorado Alternative Sentencing Programs (C.A.S.P.)** -- This program is responsible for placing and monitoring offenders who are court-ordered to perform useful public of community service work. In Colorado it is mandatory that offenders perform community service work for DUI, DWAI, Minor in possession of Alcohol, and possession of Marajuana or Paraphenalia. The vast majority of these individuals are required to perform between 24 and 48 hours of service. The sentencing county is responsible for carrying medical insurance on any participant they send out to work in the community.

Colorado Alternative Sentencing Programs, Cindy David, P.O. Box 1701, Montrose, CO, 81401 (970) 874-2028 or (970) 240-9097

Colorado Alternative Sentencing Programs, Sheila Davidson, 2405 Midpoint Drive, Ft. Collins, CO 80525 (970) 498-5280

•**Denver Youth Employment Services** -- Young adults from this program are available for work including trails projects in the vicinity of the Denver Metro area. Supervisors are provided.

Denver Youth Employment Services, Alex Gayek, 1761 Ogden, Denver, CO 80218 (303) 861-0793

Organizational Development

•**Community Resource Center** -- This group provides leadership training, technical assistance, and consultation to community-based nonprofit organizations in Colorado and beyond. CRC's expertise management, leadership development, and fundraising has helped thousands of organizations better serve their constituencies. Services include assistance in starting a nonprofit, one-on-one consultation, low-cost training workshops, a yearlong leadership and management program, assistance in community organizing, and fundraising publications.

Community Resource Center, Steve Graham, Executive Director, 655 Broadway, Suite 300 Denver, CO 80203 (303) 623-1540 fax (303) 623-1567, email info@crcamerica.org, www.crcamerica.org

Foundations and Corporation

Because of the critical role of outdoor recreation and tourism in Colorado's economy, many of the state's companies and foundations believe that supporting outdoor efforts is good business. They have made major contributions to trail and greenway projects as well as to environmental, education, wildlife, and water and air quality improvement. Some examples of the projects and their benefactors are:

•Cherry Creek South Greenway: Contributions from Urban Drainage and Flood Control District, Gates Foundation, Boettcher Foundation, and the Stroh Ranch development.

•Colorado Riverfront Trail: Contributions from the Coors, Gates, Goodwin, and El Pomar Foundations, the Lions, Rotary, and Kiwanis Clubs, and numerous businesses.

•Summit Huts and Trails Association: Janet's Cabin, the first in Summit County's hut-to-hut ski trail system was built with numerous donations by individuals plus contributions from Ski the Summit, Copper Mountain Resort, and the Gates, Boettcher, and El Pomar Foundations.

•Colorado Grants Guide--a 500 page guide to funding sources for nonprofits, Calendar of Funding Deadlines--an annual calendar listing foundation, corporate, and government agency proposal deadlines; available from the Community Resource Center, 655 Broadway, Suite 300 Denver, CO 80203 (303) 623-1540 fax (303) 623-1567, email info@crcamerica.org

Off-Highway Vehicle Grants

A number of vehicle manufacturers and industry associations provide modest grants for a variety of off-highway vehicle recreation projects. Some examples are:

•**Polaris Grant-in-Aid Program:** Polaris Industries Inc. provides grants of up to $1,000 to snowmobile clubs or associations to help fund safety related projects such as rescue toboggans, two-way radios and avalanche awareness.

•**American Honda Motor Co., Inc:** Grants are provided for projects that create partnerships and promote OHV recreation and club development.

Other Grants Programs

•**C.P.R.A**-- The tree planting program of the Colorado Parks and Outdoor Recreation Association Foundation (CPRA) makes up to $500 available for 50/50 matching money for tree planting projects in Colorado. Projects must be on public land of for public benefit. A planting plan is needed with follow-up care provided for the new trees. A list of sources for assistance in planning is included in the application packet. The local match must be private money raised locally for this project.

•Colorado Parks and Recreation Association, Barb Widney (303) 231-0943, or Ralph Campbell (303) 231-0943-3400.

Appendix 4 -- Trail Design, Development, and Management References

Colorado Bicycling Manual; Colorado Department of Transportation Bicycle / Pedestrian Program; 7th Edition; 1998

Colorado Greenway Planning Guide; Colorado State Parks; 1994

Colorado Bicycle and Pedestrian Resource Guide; Colorado Department of Transportation Bicycle / Pedestrian Program

Bayfield, A Town Divided; Town of Bayfield; Bayfield, Colorado
Town of Bayfield Pedestrian and Bicyclist Connections Plan; Town of Bayfield; Bayfield, Colorado; 1998

Draft Durango Parks, Open Space and Trails Plan, City of Durango, 2000

Trails for the Twenty-First Century; Planning Design and Management Manual for Multi-Use Trails, Rails to Trails Conservancy, Edited by Karen-Lee Ryan, Island Press, 1993

Trail Construction and Maintenance Notebook; United States Department of Agriculture Technology of Development Program; Revised 1997

Trails Design and Management Handbook; Pitkin County, Colorado; Revision 1.0; 1993

Planning Trails with Wildlife in Mind; Trails and Wildlife Task Force; Colorado State Parks; 1998

Appendix 5 -- La Plata Land Use Code, Relevant Excerpts

LA PLATA COUNTY LAND USE CODE RELEVANT EXCERPTS
PROVISIONS FOR TRAILS, PEDESTRIAN ACCESS, & TRAIL HEADS
(9-4-99)

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS:

Sec. 102-53. Details concerning conceptual development plan and plat requirements.

(h) *Streets; access; parking and circulation plan contents (plat and/or supporting documents).*

(1) The street layout, width, pedestrian and equestrian ways and parking areas shall be indicated.

(2) The access points to the subdivision, including connections to the adjoining subdivision, shall be shown as well as the county and state roads.

(3) The proposed ownership shall be clearly labeled as private, and the method of maintenance of the roads shall be indicated.

(i) *Recreational, open space and dedicated land location (plat).*
The size of proposed open space and dedicated land shall be clearly located, labeled and indicated.

PROJECT STANDARDS - REQUIRED:

Sec. 82-161. Access and roads.

(d) *Pedestrian circulation.* New developments are required to provide pedestrian circulation areas within and adjacent to the facility in those instances where pedestrian traffic is expected to be sufficient to necessitate these facilities.

Sec. 82-162. Access to public lands.

(a) *Existing easements to public lands.* Development upon land on which there are existing easements to public land or streams is required to maintain those easements or substitute comparable easements acceptable to the county and other affected entities.

Sec. 102-103. Sidewalks/pedestrian walkways.

Sidewalks or pedestrian walkways shall be required:

(1) For a proposed subdivision which is contiguous to a municipality that requires sidewalks for the type of subdivision proposed.

(2) When it is determined that the proposed subdivision will generate pedestrian use such as to a school or bus stop.

(3) Where the average lot size in the proposed subdivision is less than 15,000 square feet.

(4) In subdivisions with dedicated school sites.

PROJECT STANDARDS - ENCOURAGED:

Sec. 82-162. Access to public lands.

(b) *Potential access to public lands.* If potential public access points exist on land to be developed, a public access needs analysis shall be conducted by the appropriate governmental agencies. If the needs analysis indicates that public access is desired, the agencies and the landowner shall work together to provide a mutually acceptable access arrangement which shall provide for the maintenance of the easement.
Score x 3 (importance factor) = the rating.
Score available: 0/+2.

TYPES OF STANDARDS - REQUIRED VS. ENCOURAGED:

Sec. 82-127. Types of standards; importance factors; scores.

There are two types of standards described in this division: "required" and "encouraged."

(1) *Required standards.* Failure to comply with any required standard shall result in a continuance or denial of a permit application. The director shall indicate whether the application meets required development standards.

(2) *Encouraged standards.* Encouraged standards encourage or discourage certain characteristics of a development. Each development is assigned points by the reviewing entity. Points assigned are a reflection of the compliance of the development with the standard. The assigned points for each standard is referred to as a "score." The director shall present a score sheet to the planning commission and board of county commissioners for consideration. Ratings for each standard are a product of this score, multiplied by an importance factor, as explained in subsection (3) of this section.

TYPES OF STANDARDS - IMPORTANCE FACTORS & SCORING:

Sec. 82-127. Types of standards; importance factors; scores.

(3) *Importance factors and scores.*

a. *Assignment of importance factors.* Importance factors indicate the relative importance of encouraged standards. These factors are assigned to each encouraged standard.

b. The meaning of each importance factor is:

1 = The least important encouraged standards;
2 = Encouraged standards of minor importance;
3 = Encouraged standards of average importance;
4 = Important encouraged standards; and
5 = The most important encouraged standards.

(4) *Assignment of scores.* A developer's performance on encouraged standards is awarded positive or negative scores. The director shall be responsible for scoring each proposal. The scores assigned by the director are advisory recommendations and shall not be considered binding upon any reviewing entity.

+2 is awarded for an excellent job of implementation of the standard, and/or for creating a significant public benefit with no substantial public detriment.

+1 is awarded for doing a good job of implementing the standard, and/or creating some public benefit or mitigating a public detriment.

0 is awarded for an average job of implementing the standard, if the standard is not applicable to the development, or if there is no public benefit or detriment.

-1 is awarded for an inadequate job of implementation or when some public detriment is created.

-2 is awarded for a poor job of implementation or when significant public detriment is created.

(5) *Range.* The score assigned to a particular project is limited by the range available on a particular standard. Some standards are written so that only positive points are available. In such a case the range would be written 0/2, and the reviewing entity may choose between 0, 1 and 2 in assigning a score to a particular project, depending on its performance in terms of the standard. Conversely, some standards have a range limited so that only negative points are available. This is written as -2/0. The score to choose between in this case would be -2, -1 and 0.

Appendix 6 -- La Plata County District Land Use Plans, Relevant Excerpts

LA PLATA COUNTY DISTRICT LAND USE PLAN
RELEVANT EXCERPTS
PROVISIONS FOR TRAILS

GOALS & OBJECTIVES BY PLAN

Following are excerpts from each district plan that discusses trails in its goals and objectives.

Florida Road Planning District Land Use Plan – October 2, 1996

A. Goal: Maintain recreational access to Public Lands

Objective 1. Preserve existing access points and avoid establishing new trailheads.

- **Action a.** Work cooperatively with the Forest Service, Division of Wildlife, and Bureau of Land Management.
- **Action b.** Minimize parking and trespassing conflicts between residents and public land access points. Promote the development of adequate parking areas at established trailheads.

B. Goal: Promote safety enhancement for automobiles, recreational vehicles, bicyclists, equestrians, and all other travelers.

Objective 1. Control population growth in a manner consistent with safe traffic capacity on roadways leading to and within the district.

Objective 2. Ensure that necessary roadway improvements are made concurrently with the approval of new development.

- **Action a.** Make provisions for the construction of bike lanes when making road improvements on Florida Road.

Junction Creek Planning District Land Use Plan – June 12, 1997

D. Goal: To maintain high quality wildlife habitats.

Objective 1. To encourage community education about wildlife, especially among recreationalists.

- **Action a.** Provide information to recreationalists and others, specifically on wildlife tolerance, trail etiquette, loose dogs, etc.
- **Action b.** Develop guidelines for wildlife protection (such as acceptable fencing types, setbacks from riparian areas, and appropriate landscaping materials).

Objective 2. To insure the protection of wildlife corridors.

- **Action a.** Explore the possibility of purchasing land for winter range.
- **Action b.** Maintain wildlife habitats and encourage new developments to allow wildlife to move freely throughout the project.
- **Action c.** Identify critical wildlife corridors.
- **Action d.** Identify winter wildlife habitats.
- **Action e.** Avoid trail impacts in riparian areas.

Objective 3. To encourage the preservation of sizable open tracts of land and discourage development pressures.

- **Action a.** Maintain lower overall residential density.
- **Action b.** Develop detailed land use guidelines.
- **Action c.** Initiate riparian and wildlife education.
- **Action d.** Prohibit fencing where not absolutely necessary.
- **Action e.** Secure funding for the purchase of appropriate properties, especially valuable as habitat or migration corridors.

E. Goal: To maintain an appropriate level of infrastructure development to support low density, rural neighborhood development.

Objective 3. To establish an adequate transportation system that will provide safety for residents and those accessing public lands.

Action a. Prohibit improvements that will result in increased speeds, i.e., do not allow line-of-sight improvements or straightening improvements.

Action b. Leave natural barriers to control speed.

Action c. Avoid the use of urban road standards for the District's rural setting. Adopt rural road standards with minimum impacts appropriate for the area and its steep terrain. For instance, require road widths no wider than necessary for the normal and emergency access. This would minimize the cut through the trees and meadows.

Action d. Add shoulders for safety.

Objective 4. To establish a safe hiking/biking trail system, on public land, that is sensitive to the natural environment, particularly wildlife.

Action a. Work with the FS to create safe parking at Colorado Trail head and enforce parking within the designated area, i.e., respecting private properties.

Action b. Explore the possibility of a bike path along Junction Creek Road.

Action c. Critically assess pros and cons of Barnes Mountain and Animas Mountain Trails Westside connection

F. Goal: To protect the quality of public lands

Objective 1. To maintain appropriate recreation access and use, avoiding social and environmental conflicts among users

Action a. Explore the possibility of specific use designation on trails.

Action b. Explore possibilities for enforcing regulations concerning dogs and bikers.

Action c. Establish adequate parking areas at public land access points.

Objective 2. To support good public and private land planning that avoids negative impacts such as wildfires, hunting near residencies, and protects cultural and natural resources.

Action a. Discourage public land exchanges for private development unless there is clear public interest value.

Action b. Implement use restricted buffer zones on public lands adjacent to private residences.

Action c. Encourage B.L.M. not to open public land for development.

Action d. Work with U.S. and Colorado State Forest Services to use prescribed burns for residential safety and to improve wildlife habitat.

North County Planning District Land Use Plan – October 8, 1996

II. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NORTH COUNTY DISTRICT

A. UNIQUE AND DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

3. Infrastructure

e. Trails Numerous hiking/biking/equestrian trails exist throughout the District. Most of them are located on National Forest Lands. Popular trails include, the Elbert Creek Trail, the Hermosa Creek Trail, The Goulding Creek Trail, the Pinkerton-Flagstaff Trail, Purgatory Trail, The Worlds Trail, and the Castle Rock Trail.

E. Goal: Protect Local Autonomy and Sense of Community.

Objective 2. Promote North County as its own community and provide local facilities to maintain the district as a community where residents can live, work and play.

Action a. Identify potential locations and pursue funding for the development of local parks, playgrounds, garbage collection, a post office and possibly a community center to serve area residents.

Action b. Develop a trail system to connect different neighborhoods. Such trails would be intended for both recreation and as an alternative to driving/riding on the highway, thus promoting more neighborhood interaction and improving safety.

Vallecito Planning District Land Use Plan – October 16, 1996

A. Goal: Preserve the Rural, Low Density Character of the Valley, with Pockets of Resort and Recreational Uses.

Objective 1: Maintain peace, serenity, diversity and current low density of the Valley.

Objective 2: Do not allow commercial development of a type or in locations ('splatter')that will change the rural character of community.

Objective 3: Allow for the continued use of home occupations provided they do not adversely affect neighboring residential uses.

Objective 4: Preserve the right to board and use horses or other domestic animals for trail rides and other dude-ranch operations.

Objective 5: Access to trailheads and public lands for recreational use including hiking, fishing, and horseback riding should be preserved . Additional local trails and public access to public lands should be developed and encouraged.

West Durango Planning District Land Use Plan – July 1, 1997

ROADS

C. Goal: Expand bike paths to increase safety

Objective 1. Creation of a bike path separate from Wildcat Canyon Road (CR141) working in cooperation with public lands management agencies.

Objective 2. Include landowners and area residents in the creation of any bike trail plans.

E. Goal: Manage traffic better at major intersections, specifically Rafter J/King Mountain at Wildcat Canyon Road (CR141); Durango West I and II at Highway 160; Wildcat Canyon Road at Highway 160; and Highway 160 and CR207.

Objective 1. Assure that the County addresses and corrects the safety problems at the intersection of Rafter J/King Mountain and Wildcat Canyon Road (CR141).

Objective 2. Creation of acceleration/deceleration lanes for Durango West I and II/Highway 160 intersection.

Objective 3. Improvement of acceleration/deceleration lanes for Wildcat Canyon Road (CR141)/Highway 160 intersection.

Objective 4. Cooperate with the State in the creation of acceleration/deceleration lanes for CR207/Highway 160 intersection.

Objective 5. Address the issue of pedestrian safety throughout the West Durango Planning District.

TRAILS

A. Goal: Establish a trail system that achieves the following objectives:

Objective 1. Connects communities safely to Durango.
Objective 2. Provides incentives for developers to build trails to public lands, Durango and communities in West Durango Planning District.[1]
Objective 3. Connects communities to each other in West Durango Planning District.
Objective 4. Provides liability protection for landowners who have trails on their properties.
Objective 5. Reduces conflicts between trail users.
Objective 6. Coordinates with Trails 2000, the City of Durango, and/or appropriate public agencies to implement all of these goals.

PUBLIC BENEFIT CRITERIA COMPILATION

Following are excerpts from each district plan offering a density bonus for projects which grant trail easements. Percentages indicate the particular weighting given to trail easements within the criteria of each plan.

Bayfield
10% Granting of easements for trails for public use and/or access to public lands.

Florida Mesa
15% Granting of easements for trails for public use and/or public lands access.

Florida Road
15% Granting of easements for trails for public use and/or public lands access.

North County
25% Granting of easements for trails and public lands access or other public uses.

Vallecito
15% Granting of easements for trails for public use and/or public lands access.

West Durango
15% Granting of trail easements for non-motorized access to public lands where the land management agency is agreeable.[2]

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1 The type of trail access is to be determined by the land management agency in conjunction with the La Plata County Planning Department, to protect the interests of affected landowners.

2 The type of trail access is to be determined by the land management agency in conjunction with the La Plata County Planning Department to protect the interests of affected landowners.

Appendix 7 -- Discussion of Proposed Regulations for Trail Development to Comply with ADA

Resources and Library

back to main resources directory
--ACCESSIBLE TRAILS--

Discussion of Proposed Regulations for Trail Development to Comply with ADA

From: REGULATORY NEGOTIATION COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY GUIDELINES FOR OUTDOOR DEVELOPED AREAS, FINAL REPORT, SEPTEMBER 1999

Following is the portion of the report dealing with trails:

TRAILS

Definitions.

Trail. A route that is designed, designated, or constructed for recreational pedestrian use or provided as an pedestrian alternative to vehicular routes within a transportation system.

A trail designed, designated, or constructed for pedestrian use may also have other uses, such as bicycling or in-line skating. It is recognized that pedestrians use all trails. However, these guidelines apply only to trails where travel on foot is one of the designated uses for which the trail was created. For example, a trail designated for mountain biking will not be considered a "pedestrian trail" whether or not pedestrians actually use the trail. However, a multi-use trail specifically designed and designated for hiking and bicycling would be considered a pedestrian trail. Trails include (but are not limited to) a trail through a forested park, a shared-use path, or a back country trail. Trails do not include pathways such as sidewalks, pathways in amusement parks, commercial theme parks, carnivals, or between buildings on college campuses. These exterior accessible routes are already covered by ADAAG 4.3.

The accessibility guidelines for trails apply to those which are designed and constructed for pedestrian use. These guidelines are not applicable to trails primarily designed and constructed for recreational use by equestrians, mountain bicyclists, snowmobile users, or off-highway vehicle users, even if pedestrians may occasionally use the same trails. People use these categories of trails by means of transportation other than foot travel or personal mobility device. Design and constructed requirements for equestrians, mountain bikes, OHVs, and snowmobiles are based on the specific requirements for the intended mode of transportation. For the safety of trail users, pedestrian use may not always be permitted on these trails in order to minimize conflicts between motorized and non-motorized recreation. These trails do not preclude use by a person with a disability since it is planned that all trail users would be using the one or more alternative means of transportation for which the trail is designed and constructed. The design and construction of pedestrian trails without consideration of these proposed guidelines, by contrast, could present barriers to some trail users because the intended use is by foot or personal mobility device. For these reasons, the committee intentionally limited the application of the proposed guidelines to pedestrian use trails.

It should be noted that the definition used in these proposed guidelines is not the only definition used by trail designers and manager. Rather, it was developed to specifically define the scope of these guidelines. Additionally, it is intended that trails and side trails leading to elements related to the trail, such as campsites and restrooms should meet the accessibility guidelines for trails not outdoor recreation access routes.

ACCESSIBLE TRAILS

The proposed accessibility guidelines apply to all newly constructed and altered trails connected to accessible trails or designated trailheads. Since departures from certain technical provisions are permitted, it is important to clarify what is considered an "accessible trail." "Accessible trails" include those newly constructed and altered trails that meet all of the provisions of section 16.2. This includes the exceptions provided within each provision. It does not, however, include those exceptions within some provisions that allow for the provision to not apply due to one of the conditions in 16.1.1. Furthermore, only those trails that meet the provisions are required to be signed, indicating that they are accessible.

Designated trailhead: designated point of access that may contain a parking area, information kiosks, restrooms, water hydrants, and may be reached by vehicular or pedestrian access.

A designated trailhead is a "point of access" to a trail intended for public use where information may be provided. It may include a parking area, water hydrant, restroom, information kiosk, or other outdoor recreation elements. The designated trailhead may include vehicle a parking area for the public to access the trail or may connect from a sidewalk, or from a street or road in an area where pedestrian access from a nearby neighborhood may be expected. It does not include a junction between trails where there is no other access or a location where a trail crosses a road and public access from the road is not expected or is discouraged. It also does not include an access point not open to the public.

Tread Width: The clear tread width of the trail is the width of the useable trail tread measured perpendicular to the direction of travel and on or parallel to the surface of the useable trail tread. The minimum clear tread width is the narrowest measurement on the useable trail tread with respect to a specific trail segment. Clear tread width differs from clear width in that the latter is the amount of land potentially available for the trail.

BACKGROUND ON APPROACH TO TRAIL ACCESSIBILITY

The committee considered many different approaches to developing accessibility guidelines for newly constructed and altered trails. Each approach balanced accessibility with the uniqueness of the outdoor environment. The following are examples of the approaches considered for trails throughout the committee's deliberations.

Requiring a percentage of the miles of trails provided to be accessible. Using this approach, it was agreed that some trails, such as paved urban and suburban transportation routes, should usually be accessible. But the committee could not agree on the types of trails, other than the type mentioned above,

that should be accessible and to what percentage. The committee determined that this approach would be too arbitrary and too difficult to follow. Requiring a percentage of the total number of trails to be accessible. The committee could not agree on a percentage. A significant issue was the difficulty in separating existing trails and new trails when determining the total number of trails. Dividing trails into different categories (i.e. front country, back country) and requiring certain accessibility guidelines to be followed. The committee could not agree on the categories, nor could it agree that a trail in one category would always be different than a trail in another category. A fear in this regard was that only "easy" trails would be accessible, thereby eliminating the option for people with disabilities who can use more difficult trails, the opportunity to do so.

Requiring a certain level of access dependent on the location (i.e. highly developed, moderately developed, minimally developed) of the trail in terms of the type of setting. Definitions must be agreed to and understood by the trails community, people with disabilities, and land management agencies that are a part of the Federal government, States, and local entities. The committee could not find acceptable definitions for a "settings" approach.

Committee members evaluated each approach through extensive discussion and analysis. Within each proposal, the committee weighed the balance between accessibility and the uniqueness of the outdoor environment. Trails are often designed for a certain experience, or for the user or types of use within the setting. Primitive or back country trails for example, are usually found in remote locations or in a natural state with limited development. Throughout the discussions, committee members were concerned that providing access would change the experience or result in a significant environmental impact. Even providing accessible trails in a highly developed setting raised concerns that all trails would begin to look alike. Committee members did not want the proposed guidelines to impede the creativity of planners or designers.

As this discussion evolved, some concerns common to each approach arose regarding the potential impact on the natural environment. The committee attempted to clarify and define these concerns so that all involved (land managers, groups representing people with disabilities, and the trails community) could agree on these concerns. The result in 16.1.1 defines four specific conditions where trail construction projects can depart from the technical provisions. This departure is allowed for the duration of the existence of the condition, or unless that condition is such that it makes it impractical to make the remainder of the trail accessible.

When designed and constructed, an accessible trail is a trail that meets the technical provisions included within these proposed guidelines. It is also considered accessible where it one of the exceptions within the technical provisions are used to address a specific condition. This is limited to certain exceptions, and does not include those that allow for departure from the entire provision based on the conditions in 16.1.1

CONDITIONAL DEPARTURES

Where specified, the presence of these conditions included in 16.1.1 may also prevent full compliance with some of the technical provisions for elements in picnic, camping, and beach facilities. While the conditions for departures may be more limited with these outdoor elements, the committee included the option for departure in several provisions. In most cases, these are limited to technical provisions for clear space, surface slope, and accessible surfacing.

Where designers or operators depart from a specific technical provision because of one or more of the conditions previously identified, the other technical provisions should be applied. For example, a significant cultural feature may prohibit a 36 inch trail tread width. However, all other provisions could be met because they would not be affected by the condition.

The committee realized that there may be situations where the combination of factors and conditions may make it impractical to make the entire portion of the trail to be constructed accessible according to the technical provisions. The two general exceptions of 16.2 were developed to address these situations.

While the proposed accessibility guidelines address the special circumstances where designers and operators may not be able to achieve accessibility, they are encouraged to always provide access to the greatest extent possible.

Proposed 16.2 includes two general exceptions. First, where one or more of the conditions in 16.1.1 applies and where one or more of the conditions in this general exception applies, 16.2 shall not apply after the first point of departure. The segment of the trail between the designated trailhead and the first point of departure is required to comply with 16.2 unless the trail segment is 500 feet or less in length. If the trail segment connects to a prominent feature less than 500 feet from the designated trailhead, it is required to comply with 16.2 between the trailhead and the prominent feature.

The general exceptions are based on these parameters:

(a) The combination of running slope and cross slope exceeds 40 percent for over 20 feet; or,

(b) A trail obstacle 30 inches or more in height across the full tread width of the trail; or,

(c) The surface is neither firm nor stable for a distance of 45 feet or more; or,

(d) A clear trail width is less than 12 inches for a distance of 20 feet or more.

Second, where one or more of the conditions in 16.1.1 are met resulting in departures from the technical provisions in 16.2 for over 15 percent of the length of the trail, 16.2 shall not apply after the first point of departure. The segment of the trail between the designated trailhead and the first point of departure is required to comply with 16.2 unless the trail segment is 500 feet or less in length. If the trail segment connects to a prominent feature less than 500 feet from the designated trailhead, it is required to comply with 16.2 between the trailhead and the prominent feature.

The 15 percent threshold is a compromise, negotiated to balance the resources and environmental impact with the practicality of providing meaningful access on trails. The committee recommends that trail designers and managers attempt compliance with all technical provisions throughout the full length of the trail.

Proposed 16.2 also requires elements provided on trails to comply with these provisions. For example, if a bench is provided along a trail complying with 16.2, the bench shall meet the applicable provisions of 16.12. Where elements are provided along trails, they are not required to be connected by an outdoor recreation access route.

Question 4. Where pedestrian trails are not accessible, the committee could not agree on whether elements such as; benches, picnic tables, toilet rooms, etc., located on the trail, should be required to be accessible. For example, an element such as a picnic table may be located on a trail too steep to be accessible. The committee considered how future and existing technology will allow assistive devices to get over more difficult terrain. If required, they discussed options to

minimize scoping (e.g. one of each elements) requirements or limit the requirement to certain elements such as sanitary facilities. The committee is requesting comment and/or options on this issue and whether elements located on inaccessible trails should be required to be accessible.

TRAIL TECHNICAL PROVISIONS

Proposed 16.2.1 requires the surface of accessible trails to be firm and stable. The "slip resistance" requirement was dropped from the accessible surface requirements of ADAAG 4.5 because slip resistance cannot be guaranteed in the outdoor environment. Weather conditions (rain, snow, ice) will affect slip resistance. For example, natural or non-hardened surfaces may not be slip resistant. Slip resistance may also be difficult to control when leaves and other surface debris caused by natural erosion accumulate on the surface.

The means and materials used to establish accessible exterior surfaces are plentiful. Crushed stone, fines, packed soil, and other natural materials can provide a firm and stable surface. Natural materials bonded with synthetic materials can provide the required degree of stability and firmness. An appendix note has been added to provide designers and operators with additional information concerning accessible exterior surfaces. An exception permits departure from this provision where one or more of the conditions in 16.1.1 exists.

Proposed 16.2.2 requires the clear trail tread width to be 36 inches minimum. This is consistent with the clear width requirements for an accessible route in ADAAG 4.3.3. Exception 1 permits the clear trail tread width to be reduced to 32 inches minimum where one of the conditions in 16.1.1 applies. Exception 2 permits departures from 16.2.2 where a 32 inch minimum width can not be provided because one of the four conditions in 16.1.1 exists.

Proposed 16.2.3 requires openings in trail surfaces to be of a size that does not permit the passage of a * inch diameter sphere. Elongated openings shall be placed so that the long dimension is perpendicular or diagonal to the dominant direction of travel. Exception 1 permits elongated openings to be parallel to the dominant direction of travel where the opening does not permit passage of a 1/4 inch diameter sphere. This is necessary to allow trail managers to place boards lengthwise along a boardwalk trail to reduce the environmental impact such as on a wetland area. Exception 2 permits openings that do not permit passage of a 3/4 inch diameter sphere where at least one of the conditions in 16.1.1 apply. Exception 3 allows departure from the provisions of 16.2.5 where openings that do no permit passage of 3/4 diameter sphere are not feasible because at least one of the four conditions in 16.1.1 apply.

A 3/4 inch spacing is permitted through an exception since many trails use wood plank decking or boardwalks to cross wet, sandy, rocky, or environmentally sensitive areas. The planks expand and contract because of weather conditions. The boardwalks may need more than * inch spacing between the planks to permit expansion and to allow water to drain.

Proposed 16.2.4 requires protruding objects on trails to comply with ADAAG 4.4.1 and shall have 80 inches minimum clear head room. Where the vertical clearance of a trail is reduced to less than 80 inches because one of the four conditions specified in 16.1.1 applies, an exception provides that a barrier to warn blind and visually impaired persons shall be provided. This allows a trail to pass through narrow, winding corridors, under ledges or through caves to provide these experiences. This provision represents a compromise reached by committee members, and is essentially what is required by ADAAG 4.4.2. Some committee members saw the need for a departure from a minimum 80 inches overhead clearance, while others felt that permitting this could present barriers to people with visual impairments.

Question 5. The committee could not reach consensus on allowing a complete departure from this provision if the minimum overhead clearance could not be provided along a trail. After some debate, the committee agreed to propose the requirements of ADAAG 4.4.2. Providing such a warning along a trail in the outdoor environment may have the effect of creating a barrier for all trail users. The committee is requesting comment and/or other options available on trails, specifically where there is a lack of sufficient space to move around an obstruction without significantly impacting the natural environment or setting.

Proposed 16.2.5 replaces ADAAG 4.5.2 (changes in level) and requires that any tread obstacles shall not to exceed 2 inch maximum in height. Exception 1 permits a 3 inch obstacle where the running and cross slopes are 1:20 or less. Exception 2 permits obstacles greater than 3 inches where at least one of the conditions in 16.1.1 apply. The committee recognized that natural features such as rocks, roots, and ruts may require a greater obstacle height than what is permitted in the indoor environment. Some wheelchairs used in an outdoor environment are designed to handle obstacles of these heights. However, trails used by bicyclist or in-line skaters or which serve as alternate transportation routes for sidewalks should be smooth with no abrupt changes in level.

Proposed 16.2.6 requires passing space where the clear tread width of the trail is less than 60 inches. Passing space is required at intervals of 1000 feet maximum. Either a T-shaped or a turning circle is permitted. An appendix note states that the passing space may be located to one side of the trail. An exception permits departure from this provision where passing space cannot be provided because at least one of the four conditions in 16.1.1 exits.

The committee negotiated various intervals for passing space, ranging from 200 feet (current ADAAG 4.3.4) to no requirement. Those favoring longer intervals or no requirement explained that the outdoor environment often allows users to move off the trail tread without involving trail construction (as opposed to being restricted by walls within a building). There was concern about having an unrealistic construction requirement in a natural setting, and concern that requiring a constructed passing space at more frequent intervals may be unnecessary where few users are on the trail at the same time. An appendix note is added recommending that trails expected to have higher use and trails with long sections where it is not possible to move off the trailhead (e.g. boardwalk in wetland) should consider more frequent passing spaces, especially close to the trailhead.

Proposed 16.2.7 addresses both the cross slope and the running slope of the trail. This provision was the result of significant compromise among committee members. Exception 1 addresses open drainage structures. For open drainage structures, a running slope of 14 percent is permitted for 5 feet maximum with a cross slope of 1:20 maximum. Cross slope is permitted to be 1:10 at the bottom of the open drain, where the clear tread width is 42 inches minimum. Exception 3 permits departure from 16.2.7 where one or more conditions of 16.1.1 exists.

Proposed 16.2.7.1 requires that the maximum cross slope of trail segments not exceed 1:20. Committee members recognized that cross slopes, or the side-to-side slope of a trail, can be difficult to traverse. At the same time, trails need to be designed to provide sufficient drainage to prevent ponding and water damage to the trail. Non-paved surfaces generally require more than a minimum of 1:50 cross slope.

Proposed 16.2.7.2 addresses the maximum running slope of trail segments.

Proposed 16.2.7 permits no more than 30 percent of the total trail length to exceed a 1:12 slope. The committee debated various slope ratios for this provision. Committee members advocating steeper slopes were concerned that requiring unrealistic slopes in natural areas which could significantly alter the natural terrain. Members advocating less slopes were concerned that steeper slopes would not be accessible, and could be a potential safety hazard.

Proposed 16.2.7.2 requires that trails comply with one or more of four separate provisions. Designers may choose which provision to apply.

Proposed 16.2.7.2.1 permits running slope at 1:20 or less for any distance.

Proposed 16.2.7.2.2 permits a running slope of 1:12 maximum for 200 feet maximum. Resting intervals complying with 16.2.8 shall be provided at distances no greater than 200 feet apart.

Proposed 16.2.7.2.3 permits running slope to be 1:10 maximum for 30 feet maximum. Resting intervals complying with 16.2.8 shall be provided at distances no greater than 30 feet apart.

Proposed 16.2.7.2.4 permits running slope to be 1:8 maximum for 10 feet maximum. Resting intervals complying with 16.2.8 shall be provided at distances no greater than 10 feet apart.

Because the terrain in outdoor environments is often steep, the committee realized that applying current ADAAG slope and ramp requirements was not feasible. The proposed running slopes and maximum distances represent a compromise reached among committee members and balances accessibility with the constraints imposed by natural topography.

Question 6. Proposed 16.2.7 permits departure from the technical provisions for cross slope with open drainage structures. A cross slope up to 10 percent is permitted at the bottom of the open drain, where the clear tread width is 42 inches minimum. Are open drainage structures the only drainage structures where cross slopes up to 10 percent should be permitted? If not, what other areas should be identified.

This section also modifies existing ADAAG with respect to the use of handrails, since trail slopes are addressed in this section and not by ADAAG 4.8. Handrails are not required on trails. The committee believed that handrails were impractical in this environment. In addition, steeper grades on trails are usually contiguous with the surrounding terrain rather than elevated above it as with a ramp to a building. Instead, the committee has limited the length of steep portions of trail segments and required resting intervals. It was believed that this was more practical in the outdoor environment.

Proposed 16.2.8 requires resting intervals to be 60 inches in length to accommodate wheelchair users, and at least as wide as the widest portion of the trail segment leading to the resting interval. The slope of the resting interval shall not exceed 1:20 in any direction. An appendix note recommends that the resting interval may be located to one side of the trail to allow other users to pass. An exception permits departure from this technical provision where one of the conditions in 16.1.1 exists.

Proposed 16.2.9 does not require edge protection on accessible trails, however, where it is provided, the height shall be a minimum of 3 inches. Natural trail surfaces are likely to have variations in the trail surface, and a 2 inch edge protection may not be obvious or detectable in the outdoor environment. In the outdoor environment, many people with limited vision who use canes will search higher than in an indoor environment to distinguish between the edge and variations within the trail.

Proposed 16.2.10 requires signs on newly constructed and altered trails and trail segments that comply with all the technical provisions of 16.2 to be designated with a symbol at the trail head or designated access points. An example of a potential sign to be used at accessible trails is included in the appendix. Signs identifying accessible trail segments shall include the total distance of the accessible segment and the location of the first point of departure from the technical provisions.

Signs for trails were extensively debated by the committee. While certain trail information is critical for users, there was concern about requiring too many signs with too much information. There were also concerns that the requirement may be too onerous in terms of providing detailed information about trail characteristics. As a compromise, the committee agreed to include a requirement for a symbol to identify those trails that are accessible. Additionally, where the symbol is used to identify accessible trail segments, the total distance of the accessible trail segment to the location of the first point of departure from the technical provision must be provided.

An extensive appendix note has been provided on the issue of trail information. The appendix note includes recommendations for the types of information which should be provided and examples of different formats for providing the information to users. Where trails are provided and conditions have required departure from some of the technical provisions, it is recommended that more detailed signs be provided to help users make informed decisions about trail use.

Question 7. A proposed sign to indicate accessible trails is included in the appendix of this report. The committee is requesting specific comment on this sign and/or other options. This sign would be required on trails that meet the provisions and exceptions of 16.2.

OUTDOOR RECREATION ACCESS ROUTES

Definitions.

Outdoor Recreation Access Route. The outdoor recreation access route is a continuous unobstructed path designated for pedestrian use that connects accessible elements within a picnic area, camping area, or designated trailhead. Examples include the paths connecting parking spaces to a picnic or camp unit, or a picnic unit to a toilet building, or those connecting accessible picnic tables to other accessible camping elements. Outdoor recreation access routes do not include pathways such as sidewalks, pathways in amusement parks, visitor center, commercial theme parks, or carnivals and between buildings on college campuses already addressed by ADAAG 4.3.

Outdoor recreation access routes are required to connect elements required to be accessible in this section. For example, where a cooking grill and a picnic table are provided in an accessible camp site, the outdoor recreation route is required to connect these elements. Elements such as benches, picnic tables, etc. located along a trail, however, are not required to be connected by an outdoor recreation access route.

Proposed 16.3.1 requires the surface of the outdoor recreation access route to be firm and stable. This is consistent with the surface provision proposed for trails and other outdoor elements.

Proposed 16.3.2 requires the clear tread width of the outdoor recreation access route to be 36 inches minimum. An exception permits the width to be the minimum necessary or 32 inches for a distance of 24 inches where one or more of the conditions in 16.1.1 exists.

Proposed 16.3.3 addresses openings and does not permit passage of a * inch diameter sphere. Elongated openings shall be placed so that the long dimension is perpendicular or diagonal to the dominant direction of travel. An exception permits the openings to run parallel so long as the opening does not permit passage of 1/4 inch diameter sphere.

Proposed 16.3.4 requires protruding objects on outdoor recreation access routes to comply with ADAAG 4.4.

Proposed 16.3.5 requires that tread obstacles not exceed 1 inch high maximum. Exception 1 permits a 2 inch high obstacle where it is beveled and where at least one of the conditions in 16.1.1 applies. Tread obstacles may occur where surface material changes, such as asphalt surfaces leading up to a concrete slab.

Proposed 16.3.6 requires passing space where the clear width of the outdoor recreation access route is less than 60 inches. Passing space are required at intervals of 200 feet maximum. This is consistent with ADAAG. Committee members determined that outdoor recreation access routes were more like an indoor accessible route than a trail. The passing space shall be either a 60 inch by 60 inch space or an intersection of two walking surfaces which provide a T-shaped spaces complying with ADAAG 4.2.3, provided that the arms and stem of the T-shaped space extend at least 48 inches beyond the intersection. An exception permits the passing spaces to be at intervals not to exceed 300 feet. This was added to address settings where it may not be possible to provide passing space within a 200 feet minimum interval, such as environmentally sensitive areas.

Proposed 16.3.7 addresses both the cross slope and the running slope of the outdoor recreation access route. Proposed 16.3.7 permits a 1:33 maximum cross slope for outdoor recreation access routes. An exception permits a 1:20 cross slope where necessary to ensure proper drainage. Natural or naturally appearing surfaces often require greater than 1:50 cross slopes to ensure proper drainage. Committee members agreed that water ponding on an outdoor recreation access routes may make the route inaccessible, therefore a greater cross slope than permitted by ADAAG is proposed.

Proposed 16.3.7.2 addresses running slope. Designers have a choice of applying one or more of the technical provisions in this section.

Proposed 16.3.7.2.1 permits running slope to be 1:20 or less for any distance. Proposed 16.3.7.2.2 permits running slope to be 1:12 maximum for 50 feet maximum. Resting intervals complying with 16.2.8 shall be provided at distances no greater than 50 feet apart.

Proposed 16.3.7.2.3 permits running slope shall be 1:10 maximum for 30 feet maximum. Resting intervals complying with 16.2.8 shall be provided at distances no greater than 30 feet apart.

Question 8. The committee was unable to decide whether there should be an option to depart from the technical provisions for outdoor recreation access routes. Currently, departures from the technical provisions are permitted for specific elements, (e.g., picnic tables, camp sites) but not for the outdoor recreation access routes that connect those elements. Specific comment is requested on whether the departures permitted for specific elements should also be permitted on the outdoor recreation access routes leading to those elements.

Question 9. The committee also discussed potential departures from the provisions for slope on an outdoor recreation access route, unrelated to whether or not the elements themselves complied with the technical provisions. The committee considered two options. One option provided a maximum for the total length of the outdoor recreation access route that could exceed a 1:12 slope. The committee considered that either 10 percent or 15 percent of the total length of the outdoor recreation access route could exceed a 1:12 slope. The second option was to apply the use of the departures in 16.1.1 to the technical provisions for the slope of an outdoor recreation access route. Specific comment is requested on this issue.

Proposed 16.3.8 requires resting intervals to be 60 inches minimum in length and have a width of at least as wide as the route connecting it. The slope shall not exceed 1:33 in any direction. Where the surface conditions require slopes greater than 1:33 for proper drainage, a 1:20 slope is permitted.

Proposed 16.3.9 requires edge protection, where provided, to be 3 inches minimum in height. This is consistent with the proposed provision for trails.

Thank you for visiting the American Trails website: http://www.AmericanTrails.org

Home - News and Action Alerts -*Trail Tracks* Newsletter - Resources and Library - Your Comments - Membership Form - Member Groups - Board of Directors - Trails State by State

Appendix 8 – La Plata County Planning Commission Resolution 2000 – 5, adopting the Trails Plan

Resolution 2000 – 5

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF LA PLATA COUNTY, COLORADO ADOPTING THE LA PLATA COUNTY TRAILS PLAN

WHEREAS, C.R.S. Section 29-20-102 states that "The General Assembly hereby finds and declares that in order to provide for planned and orderly development within Colorado and a balancing of basic human needs of a changing population with legitimate environment concerns, the policy of this State is to clarify and provide broad authority to local governments to plan for and regulate the use of land within their respective jurisdictions"; and

WHEREAS, C.R.S. Section 30-28-106 states that "It is the duty of a county planning commission to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the unincorporated territory of the county" and that the "Master plan of a county ... shall show the county ... planning commission's recommendations for the development of the territory covered by the plan and may include: the general location, character and extent of streets or roads, viaducts, bridges... and other public ways..."; and

WHEREAS, C.R.S. Section 30-28-109 states that "The county planning commission shall certify a copy of its master plan, or any adopted part or amendment thereof or addition thereto, to the board of county commissioners of the county" and further provides that "The county ... planning commission shall certify such copies to the planning commissions of all municipalities within the county...; and

WHEREAS, the mission of the La Plata County Trails Plan is to promote the ongoing development and maintenance of a strategic, well-designed network of trails that provide safe, convenient and enjoyable recreation and transportation experiences for all trail users; and

WHEREAS, trails are vital to safe, livable, neighborhoods and communities, and contribute to the overall health, safety and welfare of La Plata County residents; and

WHEREAS, the proactive identification of trail corridors prior to development and the cooperation and coordination of trail planning, development and management activities is prudent and responsible; and

WHEREAS, La Plata County seeks to coordinate and integrate the planning and development of trails and adequate bicycle and pedestrian accommodations along roads and highways in the County, and ensure adequate public access to public lands from public roads; and

WHEREAS, La Plata County seeks to increase its ability to obtain necessary financing and to identify trail needs and opportunities throughout the county; and

WHEREAS, The La Plata County Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing on June 29, 2000, which notice was published in the Durango Herald and is attached hereto as Exhibit 1, to receive evidence and testimony and to take action on the La Plata County Trails Plan.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF LA PLATA COUNTY, COLORADO, AS FOLLOWS:

1. Based upon the evidence and testimony presented at the public hearing, the La Plata County Planning Commission hereby finds that the La Plata County Trails Plan shall be adopted as part of the La Plata County Comprehensive Plan.

2. The La Plata County Planning Commission hereby adopts the Plan as part of the La Plata County Comprehensive Plan as set forth in exhibit 2 attached hereto.

3. The La Plata County Planning Commission hereby certifies the La Plata County Trails Plan to the Board of County Commissioners of La Plata County and to the Planning Commissions for the Cities of Bayfield, Ignacio, and Durango.

DONE AND ADOPTED IN DURANGO, LA PLATA COUNTY, COLORADO, this 29TH day of June 2000.

Chair, La Plata County Planning Commission

ATTEST:

Secretary, La Plata County Planning Commission

Approved as to Form:

La Plata County Attorney

PC Resolution 2000-5

Exhibit 1

Legal Notices

ings are $12 by special request and half-size drawings are $5.
Please refer all questions regarding this Bid to Rick Routh, Engineering Projects Manager, 970-247-2617.
There will be a PRE-BID CONFERENCE (Not Mandatory) at 2:00 pm on Friday, June 16, 2000 at the Road and Bridge Department at 26616 Hwy 160 South. A site visit may be arranged following the meeting.
The bids generally shall be awarded by the Board of County Commissioners or County Manager. It is the Bidders' responsibility to verify the exact date of the award. Bidders may, but shall not be required to, attend the award of bid and may be heard on said award if they so desire.
The La Plata County Board of Commissioners reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to waive any informalities and minor irregularities in bids, and to accept the bid deemed, in the opinion of the Board, to be in the best interest of La Plata County.
This bid will be conducted in accordance with the regulations set forth in the LA PLATA COUNTY PROCUREMENT CODE AND ADDENDUM.
Pub.: June 10, 11, 14, 17, 18, 21, 24, 25, 2000

17871

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS
Owner: **PURGATORY METRO DISTRICT DURANGO, LA PLATA COUNTY COLORADO**
Separate, sealed BIDS for the construction of the **0.75 MG STEEL WATER TANK IMPROVEMENTS** will be received by **THE PURGATORY METRO DISTRICT** at the offices of **GOFF ENGINEERING & SURVEYING, INC.** until **2:00 PM** (Mountain Daylight Savings Time) **June 29, 2000** and then at said office publicly opened and read aloud.
THE CONTRACT DOCUMENTS may be examined at the following locations:
1) **GOFF ENGINEERING & SURVEYING, INC. 126 ROCK POINT DRIVE, SUITE A, DURANGO, COLORADO 81301**
Copies of the CONTRACT DOCUMENTS may be obtained at the office of **GOFF ENGINEERING** located at **126 ROCK POINT DRIVE, SUITE A, DURANGO, COLORADO.** A non-refundable payment of **$35.00 (THIRTY-FIVE DOLLARS)** will be required for each set.
The **PURGATORY METRO DISTRICT** reserves the right to reject any and all BIDS, to postpone the award of the contract for a period not to exceed 30 days after the bid opening and to waive any informalities or irregularities which may be in the best interest of the **DISTRICT.**
Date: June 7, 2000
Jim Hards
Purgatory Metro District
Published: June 11, 15, 18, 22, 2000

17884

NOTICE OF CORRECTION OF VESTED PROPERTY RIGHTS
On Tuesday, May 30, 2000, the La Plata County Board of County Commissioners approved the following projects with conditions as stated on the permit:
PROJECT #2000-066, CUNDIFF CLASS I:
Permit for 2nd dwelling on 18.89 acres, located at 911 CR 326, Ignacio; Sec 18, T32N, R6W.
PROJECT #2000-017, GREEN ACRES MINI-STORAGE - CLASS II:
Storage unit complex of approximately 26,700 sq. ft. of space & a 600-sq.-ft. manager's office/residential unit located SW of the Hwy 160 &172 intersection; Sec 12, T34N, R9W.
~~**PROJECT #2000-031, UTE PASS ROAD SUBDIVISION PRELIMINARY PLAT:**~~
~~Preliminary Plat and boundary adjustment for 3 single family lots on 17 acres located at 4904 CR 240, Sec 18, T35N, R9W.~~
(Preliminary Plats do not received Vested Rights)
PROJECT #2000-024, AGRI-OLD GRAVEL PIT - CLASS II:
Proposal for a surface gravel mining operation located approx. 4 miles south of Hwy 172 & CR 307; Sec 35, T34N, R9W.
PROJECT #2000-027, LPEA - BENOIT POWER LINE RELOCATION CLASS II:
open to all qualified bidders. However, if a bid is received from at least one qualified Indian organization or Indian-owned economic enterprise and this bid is within 4 percent of the bid of the lowest responsible bidder, the contract will be awarded to the Indian organization or Indian-owned economic enterprise.
Bidders claiming Indian preference will be required to submit completed questionnaire/statement to the Owner in accordance with Section 5 of the attached Instructions to Bidders.
Bids will be opened on **Tuesday, July 18, 2000 at 1:00 P.M.** Bids may **not** be withdrawn for a period of 30 days following the opening of bids without the consent of the Owner.
Award of this contract is subject to a determination by the U.S. Department of House and Urban Development (HUD) that the contractor is eligible for contract for federally funded activities.
Name of Owner: Ute Mountain Ute Tribe
Name of Owner: Troy Ralstin
Title: Planning and Development Director
Date: June 16, 2000
Invitation for Bids: Clarification: Invitation for Bids, page 2, Item A, and General Conditions Section 43 Indian Preference: Delete reference to prior HUD approval. Submission must be forwarded 72 hours prior to bid to: Troy Ralstin, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe. The following must be submitted in order to qualify for Indian Preference on this project:
A. Census Role Certificate, stating individual is a recognized tribe member
B. Notarized Role Certificate, indicating contracting firm is an Indian-Owned Enterprise, naming the same individual as noted on Census Role Certificate.
Published: June 17, 18, 24, 25, July 1, 2, 2000

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Pursuant to 24-6-402(2)c, C.R.S., notice is hereby given to the members of the general public that the La Plata County Planning Commission will hold a public hearing at the following time and place:

NOTICE OF MEETING OF LA PLATA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA
Thursday, June 29, 2000 - 6:00 PM
Commissioners' Meeting Room, La Plata County Courthouse

I. Call to Order
II. Announcements
III. Approval of Minutes
IV. Public Hearing on the Following Request:
LA PLATA COUNTY TRAILS PLAN:
To discuss and possibly adopt the County Trails Plan. The Trails Plan has been under development for over a year, with input from trail users, property owners, Planning Commissioners, various agency and county staff representatives.
Due to the lengthy scheduled for the June 22, 2000 Planning Commission Meeting, some projects may not be heard that night and would therefore be continued to this hearing date. In the event that happens, those projects would be heard following the Trails Plan.
V. Other Business
VI. Adjournment
NOTICE is further given that all persons may appear and present oral and written testimony regarding these projects prior to or at public hearing and the Planning Commission may continue a project until a recommendation decision is reached. A study session concerning these projects will be held at 5:30 pm on the day of the above-mentioned meeting in the Commissioners' Hearing Room located in the County Courthouse in Durango, Colorado. The purpose of this study session is to review the technical aspects of these proposals; no public comment or testimony, will be received at the study session. Complete files for these projects are maintained and available for review at the La Plata County Planning Office located at 1060 E. 2nd Ave., Durango, CO 81301. Interested persons may visit the Planning Office during regular business hours to review the files or ask any questions (or call (970) 382-6263). The policy of La Plata County is to not discriminate against the disabled in the provision of service. For special assistance, call the Planning Office.
Published: June 18, 2000