

THE ALPINE LOOP SCENIC AND HISTORIC BYWAY

INTERIM BYWAY MANAGEMENT PLAN

Background - The back country roads between the towns of Lake City, Silverton and Ouray have attracted recreationists for decades. Visitors come from all over the country to enjoy the spectacular scenery, the historical remnants of the mining boom from the late 1800's and a wide variety of recreation opportunities. The U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), who manages over 90% of the area has the primary responsibility for protecting this outstanding resource. The main road system is comprised of county roads and maintained by the respective county. Other landowners/managers include the U.S. Forest Service, Hinsdale County, San Juan County, Ouray County and a variety of private landowners.

These various groups had worked together on occasions in the past but it wasn't until 1987 that the BLM tried to draw them together into a formal partnership. The group was eventually called the Alpine Triangle Recreation Task Force. It was comprised of representatives from the federal agencies, county government, city government, chambers of commerce, historical societies and anyone else who had an interest in this special place. The agreed upon goal for the group was to bring the federal land managing agencies together with the local communities to work cooperatively to ensure the continued availability and desired management of diverse recreation opportunities in the Alpine Triangle.

In 1989 the BLM started their National Back Country Byway Program as part of the National Scenic Byway effort. The Alpine Triangle seemed like a natural for this designation and the Recreation Task Force was contacted for their ideas. A number of discussions went on and the final decision was to recommend the primary road net in the area be submitted as the Alpine Loop Back Country Byway. The BLM approved the nomination the same year. At the same time the State of Colorado was forming their system of State Scenic and Historic Byways. Since the Alpine Loop had just gained national recognition it was also designated as a State Byway.

Both the state and national byway programs emphasized the importance of partnerships in managing these areas. The Alpine Loop was in the comfortable position of having a cooperative group up and running with some solid accomplishments already under their belt. This group logically expanded its role to also serve as the advisory group for the byway.

Planning Framework - As stated above, the Alpine Loop area was receiving heavy recreation use long before it was designated as a Byway. As a result a variety of plans and strategies had been developed to manage that use.

The most specific of these was the BLM's Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP) completed in 1986. This plan, which was developed with significant public involvement, contained a detailed description of the resources in the area, management objectives and constraints, major issues or problems and the management actions necessary to reach objectives and resolve problems. The Byway was designated 3 years later. The BLM felt that this designation would not significantly alter the amount of use in the area or the validity of the existing plan so the RAMP was considered an appropriate planning framework for the Byway. This RAMP has been included as an appendix.

Still, the Byway raised some questions and concerns that were not covered in the RAMP. So the BLM and other Recreation Task Force partners developed an action plan that addressed those concerns. It addressed facility development, information brochures, on site dedication of the Byway, marketing and public relations, education and interpretation, partnerships and future needs. This action plan has been included as an appendix.

Other management plans or actions that affect the Byway area include:

- the BLM's travel management plan, done in 1981, which limits traffic in that area to designated roads to protect the fragile alpine and subalpine ecosystems from indiscriminate vehicle impacts.
- the BLM's Scenic withdrawal along the Loop, done in 1966, which restricts development on public lands adjacent to the road that would degrade the scenic quality of the area.
- the Forest Service's Forest Management Plan (amended in 1991) which sets general guidelines for some land along the Byway and in the viewshed of the Byway.
- the BLM's Gunnison and San Juan Resource Areas have completed their Resource Management Plans that include this area in 1993 and 1984 respectively. These are general guidelines for all resource management issues but both recognized the heavy visitation and recreation values around the Alpine Loop. Both plans maintained the majority of OHV designations for the area.
- The BLM's Alpine Triangle Cultural Resource Management Plan (ATCRMP), done in 1994, focuses specifically on the Alpine Loop area. It describes archeological and historic values in the area, identifies management problems and concerns and puts forth the management actions necessary to allow public enjoyment and certain levels of recreation development in the area while protecting the integrity of the cultural resources. It also calls for the assessment of cultural sites for use categories.

- The American Flats Wilderness was designated as an addition to the Uncompahgre Wilderness in 1993. About 1.5 miles of the southern boundary for this area runs near the Alpine Loop. Its management as wilderness helps assure the scenic integrity of the viewshed along the Loop. In addition, the BLM has recommended wilderness designation for about 46,000 acres in the Redcloud Peak and Handies Peak Wilderness Study Areas. Both of these areas border significant portions of the Loop. If they are designated by Congress these areas will also protect large areas of the Byway's viewshed.

Taken together we feel these documents provide an adequate planning framework for current management of the Byway. Our Recreation Task Force continues to meet periodically to discuss problems and coordinate activities as a group. Thus current challenges are handled within the framework of existing plans. In addition, the partnership has been very successful in encouraging our stakeholders to communicate and collaborate among themselves on smaller projects and day to day activities.

Still, we recognize that the RAMP will be in its 10th year of implementation in 1995 which was the anticipated life of that plan. There is a need to update this plan within the next few years. This update will likely take place in the context of a Coordinated Resource Management Plan which will outline management actions for all the resources in the Alpine Triangle. This plan will have a section specifically focusing on a management strategy for the Alpine Loop Byway. It will be an excellent opportunity to reexamine our vision, goals and objectives for the Byway. All of our partners in the Recreation Task Force as well as other members of the communities and the public will be a part of this process.

Before we start on this plan, though, we are hoping to replicate a visitor use survey first done in 1984. The original survey focused specifically on the Alpine Loop even though it had not yet been designated as a Byway. It provided baseline data on numbers of visitors, trip characteristics and visitor preferences for activities, settings and experiences. This information was vital in guiding management actions in the RAMP. By repeating this survey we can update our use figures for the area, reassess visitor preferences, evaluate the effects and changes brought on by Byway designation and form the basis for management actions in the new byway plan.

Essential Plan Elements - Both the State and National Byway Programs have developed suggestions concerning appropriate contents for Byway or Corridor Management Plans. Obviously every Byway is different and these guidelines need to be flexible enough to adapt to this variety. Clearly there are considerations we need to have on a 4 wheel drive Back Country Byway that would be different from those of a 4 lane state highway. The purpose of this section is to focus on these guidelines, indicate where in the existing RAMP or Byway Action Plan the topic is discussed and, if appropriate, update the information in these plans.

This is not meant to be a new planning process but instead a consolidation of existing plans. From there we will be able to see how well the existing plans cover the desired elements of the State guidelines. Any elements not adequately dealt with will be addressed in the new Alpine Loop Byway Management Plan discussed above.

- 1) **VISION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES** - Visioning was not a common process when the Recreation Task Force was formed. Still we spent a lot of time discussing what the group felt were values and desired future conditions along the Byway. Those discussions could be summarized in the following vision:

The Alpine Loop Byway will provide a variety of recreation opportunities to local, regional and national visitors in a relatively natural alpine environment. It will be managed to properly balance recreation use and resource protection to ensure the area's outstanding values are not diminished. It will also be managed to ensure that tourism continues to provide significant contributions to the economies of Lake City, Silverton and Ouray.

The group did establish their goals and objectives as follows:

Goal: To bring federal land managing agencies (BLM & FS) together with the local communities to work cooperatively to ensure the continued availability of diverse recreation opportunities in the Alpine Triangle.

Objectives:

- To make the public aware of the opportunities available.
- To encourage a diversity of recreation opportunities.
- To coordinate the road maintenance efforts of all parties to ensure visitor safety and resource protection.
- To encourage historic preservation efforts on public and private land to provide for the continued enjoyment and protection of these important resources.
- To serve as a sounding board to mitigate conflicts among the various user groups in the area.
- To enhance and build upon the existing recreation opportunities to meet the future needs of our visitors.
- To maximize the motorized and non-motorized recreation opportunities for the area within the framework of the Recreation Area Management Plan.

Since it has been 9 years since these items were developed we feel it is necessary to reexamine the vision, goal and objectives for the group and the Byway. This will be a major topic of discussion at a Task Force meeting in the spring of 1995. These new visions will be incorporated into the new Byway Management Plan.

- 2) **DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCES, ATTRACTIONS, SERVICES** - A detailed description of the area, its resources, values, uses, problems etc. is found in the RAMP on pages 5 - 26. In addition, the ATCRMP provides descriptions of most known cultural sites in the area. These sections focus primarily on natural resource values and do not specifically examine the full array of visitor and commercial services in the surrounding communities. This topic should be further examined when the plan is updated.
- 3) **MANAGEMENT ISSUES, OBJECTIVES, CONSTRAINTS AND ACTIONS** - These items are covered in the RAMP on pages 26 - 46 and in the Action Plan on pages 2 - 3. Anticipated projects are discussed by the byway partners each year before the field season to look for opportunities to pool resources and ensure compatibility with our management objectives. A recent development that is not reflected in our plans is that over 90% of our restroom and campground facilities in the area have been upgraded and now meet handicap accessibility standards.
- 4) **PUBLIC INFORMATION, INTERPRETATION AND MARKETING** - This is discussed primarily in the Action Plan on pages 3 - 10. In addition the group has been working on an Interpretive Master Plan for the Byway. The beginning steps have been taken but our lack of interpretive expertise has hampered our progress. We are currently preparing grant proposals to secure funding to help us finish the plan, design and produce the materials and implement or install specific projects on the Byway. The outstanding resources along the Byway have sparked a storm of media attention in the form of books, maps, brochures, magazine and newspaper articles, TV coverage etc. These usually come from private sources that rarely coordinate with the Byway group to be sure their information is accurate. This has led to a variety of problems. The Alpine Loop has also been affected by the promotion going on along the adjacent San Juan Skyway. The Loop is often promoted as a good side trip from the Skyway whose potential designation as an All American Road will only promise to increase this use.
- 5) **FUNDING AND FINANCING** - This is at least partially covered in the Action Plan on pages 10 - 11. In the past we have been successful in receiving funding from ISTEPA and other sources. Funding sources and availability are constantly changing. The Recreation Task Force regularly discusses these changes in light of our perceived needs. The partnership itself provides an excellent forum to make the most efficient use of the funding available to us from a variety of sources.

6) **KEEPING THE PARTNERSHIP ALIVE** - The Recreation Task Force has maintained its identity as a group for 9 years. The various participants change as people come and go. This is another reason that it is important to reexamine our vision and goals periodically. Probably the most important factor in the group's success is a solid record of on the ground accomplishments that have been the direct result of our collaboration. Our members feel that they are equal partners in a group working toward a common goal, that their concerns are heard and that actions are taken to resolve these issues and concerns. In addition to our core group we have enlisted the assistance of a variety of volunteers and other partners over the years. A partial list of these partners is found on page 11 of the Action Plan.

7) **FUTURE NEEDS** - Some of our identified future needs are listed below (most have already been mentioned in this report):

- Finish and implement the Interpretive Master Plan
- Complete a sign plan for the Byway
- Conduct a detailed visitor preference survey
- Complete an inventory of cultural sites in the area and assess these sites for appropriate use.
- Reexamine visions, goals and objectives with the group
- Update our Byway Management Plan within the context of a Coordinated Resource Management Plan.

As with any venture, the long term success of the Alpine Loop Byway will depend on our ability do the appropriate planning and consistently implement those plans on the ground. The partners must stay committed to working toward a common goal. Recognizing that participants are constantly changing the federal agencies must stay committed to working within the partnership to set management priorities in the area. All partners must remember that getting improvements on the ground is only half the battle. There must be an ongoing commitment to maintain the roads, facilities, signs, historic structures etc. in a condition that supports or enhances the visitor experience.

ALPINE TRIANGLE

Summary

Interpretive Media & Objectives

DRAFT

This document is a place-by-place catalog, applying the Alpine Triangle interpretive themes (developed in 1993) to the resources on the ground. In each instance, there is a brief description of the facility or physical development needed (some of which are already in place) as well as the media recommended for the interpretive message(s). For each medium, there is a brief statement of the objective to be achieved, sometimes with a suggestion of graphics that could be incorporated.

In addition to the place-by-place listing, the last portion describes interpretive products with broader application, covering either the entire Alpine Triangle or a broad topical aspect of the area's resources (history, birds, geology, etc.).

After this summary has been reviewed and approved in final form, someone will need to accomplish the following steps to make each interpretive product a reality...

- △ Find the funds for further planning, design, and implementation;
- △ Lay out the general design of the product in accordance with the objective(s);
- △ Locate or produce the graphics needed;
- △ Draft the text;
- △ Finalize the specifications for production;
- △ Manufacture the product;
- △ Install or distribute the result, and...
- △ Maintain & revise the product as needed.
(**This is the most important step; if there is no commitment to keep the product accurate, relevant, and attractive after it is created.....don't even start the process! It's better to do nothing at all than to be represented by a shabby, run-down, outdated, or obviously inaccurate product.**)

Hopefully, the various media products will bear a family resemblance and meet a few minimal overall standards for recognizability and interpretive excellence. Suggestions for these standards include:

- △ Use a distinctive font that is easily readable and not inconsistent with the character of the resources. I suggest using "New Century Schoolbook," the font used in this document. It fits the typography style used in the heyday of the San Juans.

- △ Use type sizes that conform to the recommendations set forth in Suzanne Trapp's book on waysides (standards appended to this document). This mainly has to do with readability from various distances as well as visual accessibility; always use at least 18 point type for texts that will not be held in the hand for reading.
- △ While choice of inks for background, graphics, and text should be adaptable to specific situations, a high level of visual accessibility must be maintained throughout. This requires constant attention to contrast, size and clarity of texts and graphics, positioning of outdoor installations with respect to glare and shadow, etc.
- △ Strive to achieve a "zero defect" standard with regard to spelling and grammar in all products available to the public.
- △ Develop a logo for the Alpine Triangle...one that will be an identifying feature of each interpretive product, either as a prominent symbol or as a background "watermark." Transforming the letters of the word "alpine" into a peaks and valleys design was one suggestion.

Summary Code: Interpretive Themes and Subthemes

M = Management

M1 = Resource Protection
Authority of resource
Appropriate activity

M2 = Visitor Services
Matching visitors to
resources
Levels of presentation

M3 = Safety

M4 = User Compatibility
Multiple use
Guidelines
Private property

M5 = Partnerships
BLM role, staff
Partners
Opportunities

G = Geology (Structural Evolution)

G1 = Economic Minerals

F = Flora & Fauna

F1 = Economic Uses

F2 = Biodiversity

C = Cultural Resources

C1 = Indians in the San Juans

**C2 = Non-Indian exploration and
settlement**

**C3 = Mining development,
1870 - 1920**

C4 = Modern era

STOIBER MANSION

THEME: C3 = Mining development, 1870 - 1920

Facility:

Pullout overlooking the setting where the Stoiber Mansion was.

Media:

Identifying sign.

Objective: Identify this point of interest and set it in its context.

Graphic: Metalphoto of Stoiber Mansion in historic & geographic context.

Text: "Site of Stoiber Mansion, 18XX - 19XX"

Passage in Alpine Triangle history guide.

Objective: * Set mansion in context of other buildings nearby, natural setting.

* Show example of economic success.

Graphic: Photo of mansion, but not the same as that on the sign.

Text: Brief (one paragraph) description of Stoiber, his times, and his family.

SUMMARY CODE
Interpretive Themes & Subthemes
Alpine Triangle

DRAFT

M = MANAGEMENT

- M1 = Resource protection
 - M1A = Authority of resource
 - M1B = Appropriate activity
- M2 = Visitor services
 - M2A = Matching visitors to resources
 - M2B = Levels of presentation
- M3 = Safety
- M4 = User compatibility
 - M4A = Multiple use
 - M4B = Guidelines
 - M4C = Private property
- M5 = Partnerships
 - M5A = BLM role, staff
 - M5B = Partners
 - M5C = Opportunities

**PLEASE RETURN
TO RICK RYAN**

**PLEASE RETURN
TO RICK RYAN**

G = GEOLOGY - Structural evolution

- G1 = Economic minerals

F = FLORA & FAUNA

- F1 = Economic uses
- F2 = Biodiversity

C = CULTURAL RESOURCES

- C1 = Indians in the San Juans
- C2 = Non-Indian exploration & settlement
- C3 = Mining development, 1870-1920
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INTERPRETIVE THEMES & SUBTHEMES
ALPINE TRIANGLE

The following themes and subthemes provide direction and topical focus for all interpretive presentations offered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and its partners to visitors and other users of the Alpine Triangle.

- All presentations relating to the Triangle should be based on one or more of these themes.
- Carefully crafted messages may incorporate more than one theme in the same presentation.
- When and where possible, partners will be consulted during the refinement and implementation of interpretive themes.

MANAGEMENT

1. Resource protection: Foster appreciation of, & pride in, the resources of the Alpine Triangle, instilling an ecosystem management ethic.
 - A. Authority of the resource: Let visitors know their role (& responsibilities) in perpetuating the resource values that attracted them to the Alpine Triangle.
 - B. Appropriate activity guidelines: Visitors will have information identifying appropriate & inappropriate activities, along with the rationale for that determination.
2. Visitor services: Help visitors discover & pursue recreational opportunities suiting their interests and abilities.
 - A. Matching visitors to resources: Balanced information will enable all potential users to locate resources appropriate to their preferences.
 - B. Levels of presentation: Interpretation will be available at the neophyte level as well as at the advanced amateur and professional levels.
3. Safety: Adequate & timely cautions about hazards & dangers will prevent injuries during visits to the Alpine Triangle,
including:
 - Vehicular safety
 - Altitude & environment
 - Old buildings
 - What to do in an emergency

4. **User compatibility:** Promote understanding and validity of all appropriate uses of resources.
 - A. **Multiple uses of public lands:** Foster understanding of diverse resource uses & respect for the validity of each,
 - including: Grazing
 - 4-wheeling
 - Other recreational uses
 - Mining
 - B. **Guidelines for getting along:** Describe etiquette appropriate to differing uses.
 - C. **Private lands:** Promote awareness of, & respect for, private property,
 - including: Land
 - Structures
 - Equipment

5. **Partnerships:** Show how BLM links its multiple use role with a variety of partners to protect, preserve, & provide information about the resource values of the area.
 - A. **BLM role:** BLM staff & media will project unified understanding of agency multiple use policy as it applies to area.
 - B. **Partners:** Recognition of individuals, groups, corporations, & agencies sharing a common vision for the Alpine Triangle & actively participating in implementing that vision.
 - C. **Opportunities:** Ways in which visitors can join this partnership,
 - including: Personal involvement & responsibility
 - Corporate opportunities

GEOLOGY

- Structural evolution:** Promote visitor comprehension of the geologic processes that produced the features visible around the Alpine Triangle,
- including: Pre-volcanic (550 turnoff @ Mineral Creek)
 - Vulcanism
 - Glaciation
 - Erosion
 - Mass wasting (inc. rock glaciers)
 - Climate & weather

1. Creation of economic minerals: Describe geologic processes specific to formation of economic minerals, especially gold & silver,
including: "Hard rock"
"How prospectors read the rocks"
Minerals mgmt. today

FLORA & FAUNA

Identify & describe life zones, including characteristics, origins, variability, & functional dynamics of each,

including: Life histories & adaptations
Climate & weather

1. Economic uses: Foster understanding & appreciation of historic & current economic uses of floral & faunal resources,
including: Grazing
Timber-cutting (NOT logging)
Hunting
Fishing
Other recreational pursuits
2. Biodiversity: Promote understanding that changes in ecosystem dynamics affect biodiversity,
including: T. & E. species
Management practices
Biodiversity: definition & value
Pollution
Exotic species

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Describe how, & why, the Alpine Triangle has been visited, inhabited, & utilized from the earliest cultural evidence to the present.

1. Indians in the San Juans: Foster understanding of Indian visitation, occupation, & resource use & adaptation in the Alpine Triangle,
including: Defined cultural groups & periods
2. Non-Indian exploration & settlement: Promote understanding of activities paving the way to the economic development era,
including: Spanish expeditions
Trapping
Prospecting
3. Mining development, 1870-1920: Communicate the dominance of gold & silver mining in the San Juans from ca. 1870 (small-scale recovery) to ca. 1920 (decline) & how it influenced all other economic activity in the region,

including: Transportation
 Macro-economics
 Regional impacts - ranching
 Communications
 Technology
 Mines, trams, mills, smelters
 Facets & development
 Social life in the San Juans
 Family life
 Gender & ethnicity
 Social classes
 Government & politics
 Religion & education
 Tourism

4. Modern era: How people adapted to the diminished role of mining in the regional economy, leading to an increase of tourism,
 including: Comparisons w/topics listed in
 '3' above

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ALPINE TRIANGLE
Proposed Interpretive Products
(Priority [H, M, L], media rec., comments underlined)

GENERAL PRODUCTS

(Covers all of the Triangle, may cover one or many themes)

- General guide (Exists)
(a la Alpine Explorer)
 - All (or major/most) points of interest
 - All themes dealt with generally
 - Keyed to relative distances
 - Sale item
- Comprehensive guide (Low priority)
 - All of the above, in more detail
- Thematic guides (& activity guides) (High)
 - Family of activity-based guides
 - Family of theme-based guides
 - Free (preferably)
 - All or most of Triangle
 - Few or single theme, but management always included as relevant
- Pre-visit information sheet (Exists)
 - Brief, basic overview
 - Free
 - References for further info
- User ethics pub. (H)
 - Free
 - Management themes (Local rules & regs.)
 - Mailed out and at portals
 - Widest possible dist. (Among visitors)
- Off-site talks (M)
 - Portal & other locations
 - Free
 - One or several themes (include management)
- Commercial guide training (M)
(and hospitality training for community)
 - Focused audience
 - Free
 - Multi-theme, esp. mgmt.
- Staff training (H)
 - Focused
 - Free
 - Multi-theme, esp. mgmt.
- Audio tour program (L)
 - Sale item

- All or most of area
- Multi-theme

SITE-SPECIFIC PRODUCTS

- Lake City V. C. (H)
 - All print media (general product) available
 - Personal contact (info-recept.)
 - A-V presentation
 - Exhibits
 - M
 - C
 - F
 - G
 - Emphasize Lake City portal
 - Partnerships
- Lakeshore site (L)
 - C4
 - G - Slumgullion
 - (Gen. Print only)
- Red Mountain Gulch kiosk (H)
 - M1, M2, M3, M5
 - C1-C4
 - G
 - F
 - (Wayside exhibit)
- Williams Creek trailhead (M)
 - M1, M2, M3, M5
 - (Register. Info. Bd. Trailguide)
- Bent Creek toilet (L)
 - M1
 - (Info. bd. on toilet)
- Mill Creek CG (H)
 - M1-M5
 - (Attended station [C. G. Host])
 - Evening programs: BLM &/or USFS
 - General print products (free)
 - Informal contacts. Information board.
- Cataract Gulch trailhead & toilet (M)
 - M1, M2, M3, M5
 - Info. board. Trailguide. Register box.
- Sherman Townsite overlook (H)
 - C3
 - F1, F2
 - G?
 - Wayside, pullout

- Burrows Park trailhead, cabins, toilet (H)
 - M1, M2, M3, M5
 - C3
 - Sign, brochures, register box, info, board on toilet
- Argentum (M)
 - M1
 - C3
 - Wayside, pullout.
- White Cross (M)
 - M1
 - C2, C3
 - Print only, nothing at site
- American Basin parking (H)
 - 2-wheel drive accessible
 - M1, M2, M4, M5
 - F1, F2
 - Wayside, pullout
- Am. Basin trailhead (M)
 - M1, M2, M3, M5
 - G
 - Trailguide
- Upper Tabasco pullout (L)
 - (ca. 1/4 mi. below C. Pass sum.)
 - C3
 - Print only
- Cinnamon Pass (H)
 - C3
 - G - elevation
 - Sign, print
- Pass intersection (H)
 - (above A. Forks)
 - M2
 - Sign
- Eclipse smelter (M)
 - (and memorial marker)
 - C3
 - Print only
- Snowshed (M)
 - C3
 - Print only
- Eureka (H)
 - (2-wheel drive)
 - M1, M3, M5

C3, C4
Print, wayside

- Middleton/Maggie Gulch toilet (L)
M1
C3
Print
- Howardsville (H)
C2, C3, C4
Sign(s), print
- Cunningham Gulch (H)
(Ancillary, not main Alpine Loop; includes Old 100 Mine, Highland Mary, Stony Pass, etc. Needs more study)
M1-M5
F1, F2
Print; wayside, pullout
- Mayflower Mill/Arrastra Gulch (M)
(Silver Lake)
M1, M3, M5
C3, C4
Print; wayside, pullout
- Stoiber Mansion (L)
C3
Pullout, print
- Silverton kiosk (H)
(See Lake City [Red Mountain Gulch] kiosk)
- Silverton V. C. (H)
(See Lake City V. C., w/Silverton flavor)
- Cement Creek, Corkscrew Gulch,
Lake Como, Picayune Gulch, Treasure Mountain
(Ancillary, needs more work)
- Placer Gulch
 - Upper gulch mine/mill complex (L)
M1, M2, M3, M5
C3
G1
Print
 - Sound Democrat & Mastodon Mills (H)
M1-M5
C3
G1
Register box, int, walk w/print guide
- Flowers at junction w/Cal. Gulch (L)
M1

F2
Print only

- Frisco-Bagley (L)
M1, M3, M5?
C3
Print only

- Animas Forks (H)
(Toilet, trailhead, road Junct., tram term.,
mills, town. 2-wheel drive)
M1-M5
G? (G1)
F
C3, C4
Print, wayside, walking tour, exhibits

- Alpine (Denver) lake/tundra (M)
(Private - keep out)
M1, M4
G
F2
Print, sign

- Mineral Point toilet & overlook (H)
M1, M2, M3
F2 - alpine
C3
Print, wayside, bull, board on toilet

- Junction signing (H)
(Foot of E. Pass, clearer directions)
M2
Sign, print

- Engineer Pass summit (M)
G
Print, sign?, wayside

- Palmetto (Hough?) powder house (L)
M4c (private lands)
C3
Print only

- Palmetto/Alpine tundra, cabin (L)
(End of 2-wheel)
M1, M3, M4c
F2
C3
Wayside, print

- Golconda, Shaefer Gulch, Hurricane Basin (L)
(Ancillary to A. Loop)
M1, M3, M4c?

- G (rock glacier)
C3
Print
- Rose's cabin toilet (L)
M1 &/or M2
Print
- Rose's cabin (M)
M1, M4c
C3 (trans.)
Print
- Bonanza/Empire Chief (M)
M1, M4c
C3
Print only
- Rose lime kiln (H)
(Hinsdale Hist. Soc. doing wayside)
C3
Pullout/wayside, print
- Whitmore Falls (L)
M3
G (water)
Print, wayside; "pullout" & possible trail
- Capitol City corral/toilet (L)
M1, M2, M4a
Print
- Capitol City post office (& coke ovens) (H)
M1, M2, M4c, M5
C3, C4
Print, wayside; possible hiking trail to ovens
- N. Henson Ck. (M)
(Ancillary)
M2, M4c
Sign, print
- Lee's smelter (L)
M4c
C3
Print

- Pike Snowden cabin (M)
M1, M2, M4c, M5
C3, C4
Wayside, print
- Nellie Ck. toilet (L)
(Includes roadhead)
M1, M2, M4c
Info board, print
- Henson townsite/Ute-Ulay (M)
M4c
C3, C4
Pullout, wayside
- Alpine Gulch trailhead (M)
M1, M2, M3, M4c
Sign, register box
- Henson Ck. kiosk site (H)
(See Red Mtn. Gulch kiosk)
ATV parking area
Kiosk/wayside
- Ouray Vis. Center (H)
(See Lake City VC)
- Mineral Creek turnoff (M)
M1, M2, M3, M5
Print, kiosk; partner w/FS
- Corkscrew access at Ironton (H)
Sign, print, info board?

POINTS OF INTEREST

CHIEF OURAY. . . ROSE'S CABIN. . . CAPITOL CITY. . . ALFERD PACKER. . . STONY PASS. . . ANIMAS FORKS. . .
All are names from the past; and all are part of the history of the San Juan Mountains.

Today, you can follow the pioneers' own paths in a four-wheel drive vehicle. Imagine their hardships and marvel at

their successes as you travel the historic roads and trails in the Alpine Triangle.

The Alpine Loop Back Country Byway, a 65-mile circle jeep tour can be made in one day from Ouray, Lake City or Silverton. Two days would even be better to really see and enjoy the area. The road is open most of the summer and early fall (July-October.)

The following Points Of Interest will

help you enjoy your journey. The points are numbered along main routes beginning at Mineral Point, going over Engineer Pass to Lake City then south and west over Cinnamon Pass through Animas Forks to Silverton before heading north back toward Ouray. Numbered side road attractions are also interspersed for those with the time and energy for more exploring.

① **MINERAL POINT**, just above treeline, was established in 1873. The mining camp once boasted a population of 100.

② **ENGINEER PASS** is a major saddle along the Alpine Loop at 12,800 feet. The views are spectacular. To the west is Mt. Sneffels (14,150'); northeast is Uncompahgre Peak (14,309'); and east is the extinct Lake City volcanic caldera, which the Loop Road encircles. Otto Mears, noted for his railroads, was also instrumental in building many southwestern Colorado toll roads like the one over Engineer Pass, where the first stagecoach crossed in 1877.

③ **FRANK HOUGH MINE** was owned by John S. Hough, a good friend of Kit Carson. Hough ran for Governor of Colorado in 1880.

④ **PALMETTO GULCH POWDERHOUSE** is a rock structure built in the 1880s.

⑤ **ECOLOGICAL TRANSITION**. Notice the change from alpine tundra to spruce/fir forest.

⑥ **PALMETTO GULCH MILL**. Here the Palmetto Gulch Mining and Milling Company produced 25 tons of ore per day during the late 1800s.

⑦ **ROSE'S CABIN**, named for Corydon Rose who built it in 1875. It was an overnight stage stop. Rose's Cabin included a bar, restaurant, and 22 small rooms on the second floor. There was a 60 - mule stable nearby. (A restroom is available 1/4 mile downstream.)

⑧ **LEE'S SMELTER SMOKESTACK** is a last remnant of the Lee Mining and Smelter Company, which operated in the 1870s.

⑨ **WHITMORE FALLS** is visible from an overlook point at the end of a short trail. It's a good place to stretch your legs.

⑩ **CAPITOL CITY**, founded in 1877, was named by George Lee, who owned a smelter and mill near town. He believed the setting to be so ideal that it was destined to become the state capitol of Colorado. In its heyday, Capitol City had a population of 400 people. Today remains of the old post office and some kilns can be seen, as well as several vacation homes. No camping is permitted. (A restroom is located 1/4 mile west of the townsite.)

⑪ **MATTERHORN CREEK TRAIL** leads seven miles up Matterhorn Creek, past

Engineer Pass



Matterhorn (13,589') and Wetterhorn (14,017') Peaks to Uncompahgre Peak (14,309').

⑫ **NELLIE CREEK**. Just east of the creek is a rough four-wheel drive road that will take you to the boundary of the Big Blue Wilderness. Hikers often use this route to the trailhead for Uncompahgre Peak. (A restroom is available near the main road just west of the creek.)

⑬ **UTE-ULAY MINE** was one of the first to open in the area in 1871. Nearby is the Hidden Treasure Mine. Henson Townsite was laid out in 1880 near Henson Creek; nothing remains of the town today. The 118-foot-high Henson Creek Dam, now breached, was



Slumgullion Slide



Sheep grazing along Henson Creek

built in the 1890s near Alpine Gulch to power the mine tramway and mill. The entire Henson area is private land; please do not trespass among buildings.

14 **ALPINE GULCH TRAIL.** There is a new bridge across Henson Creek; the trail connects over the mountains with the Williams Creek Trail.

15 **CRYSTAL LAKE TRAIL** starts at the OOF cemetery north of Lake City and ends at Crystal Lake after a four-mile hike.

16 **ALFERD PACKER HISTORIC SITE.** In the Spring of 1875, five miners who had been Packer's companions were found massacred here. Nine years later, Packer was found in Wyoming and brought back to Lake City to stand trial for murder and cannibalism. Although sentenced to hang, Packer was reprieved and sentenced to 40 years of hard labor. Serving 15 years in Canon City, he was paroled in 1901 and died in Littleton in 1907.

17 **LAKE SAN CRISTOBAL** is the second largest natural lake in Colorado, formed by the landslides described below.

18 **SLUMGULLION EARTHFLOW,** a National Natural Landmark, is named

major landslides that occurred 700 and 350 years ago.

19 **LAKE CITY SNOWMOBILE TRAILS** include 80 miles of groomed trails and many open areas. Six loop trips and several destination rides can be made. Parking is available at Lake City or along Highway 149 at Slumgullion Overlook. Slumgullion Pass,

Service Slumgullion campground is located 3/4 mile further east on Highway 149.

21 **WUPPERMAN CAMPGROUND** (Hinsdale County), on the east shore of the Lake, was named after Hildegard Wupperman, a long time area resident. It has 23 camp units and a wastewater dump station. A fee is required.

OURAY is named for Chief Ouray of the Ute Tribe, who was known as the "peacemaker" for restraining the Utes from attacking early day miners. A treaty was worked out with Chief Ouray in 1874 that allowed the United States to buy back the mineral-rich San Juans from the Utes. Soon after, 2,000 prospectors poured into the San Juans. With its hot springs, Ouray was sacred ground for the Indians, and is now a trail hub for four-wheelers and visitors to the San Juan Mountains.

Spring Creek Pass, and the Continental Reservoir turnout.

20 **WINDY POINT OVERLOOK** offers a

22 **RED MOUNTAIN GULCH PICNIC AREA** (Hinsdale County) has a covered group barbecue area and restrooms. No overnight camping is allowed. No fee is

23 WILLIAMS CREEK CAMPGROUND (FS) has 21 camp units, restrooms and drinking water. A fee is required.

24 CARSON TOWNSITE is one of the better preserved historic towns in the area. It's about four miles from the Alpine Loop Road along rough, steep four-wheel drive

30 SHERMAN SUSPENSION FLUME. The remaining cables and planks of a suspended water flume are upstream a half mile from Sherman. It can be seen from the Shelf Road.

31 SILVER CREEK TRAIL leads north from the trailhead to Redcloud and Sunshine Peaks. (A restroom is near the trailhead.)

38 ANIMAS FORKS TOWNSITE, originally named La Plata City, was laid out in 1877 and was abandoned in the 1930s. In 1884, it suffered a blizzard that lasted 23 days and dumped 25 feet of snow on the town. (Restroom available.)

39 GOLD PRINCE MINE, east of Hanson Peak, was connected to the mill in Animas Forks by a 12,600-foot wire rope tramway that carried 50 tons of ore per hour. A boarding house was also built at the mine.

LAKE CITY was established in 1874 just after the discovery of the Golden Fleece Mine, which made it a boomtown. Its fortunes came and went as the mining industry flourished and crashed several times. Today, Lake City is the county seat and concentrates on helping visitors enjoy the high country.

40 LAKE COMO is the headwaters of the Uncompahgre River. The road along the river is boggy and difficult to travel.

41 EUREKA TOWNSITE was laid out in 1874 after ratification of the Ute Treaty, but prospecting in Eureka Gulch dates back to 1860. The town's existence depended on the Sunnyside Mine near Lake Emma. The railroad was completed by Otto Mears from Silverton to Eureka in 1896. By 1904 the railroad stretched on from Eureka to Animas Forks.

road; or it's a moderately difficult day hike. Carson started as a mining camp in 1882 and flourished in the 1890s. Much of the area is privately owned; please respect miners' property and equipment and obey no trespassing signs.

32 GRIZZLY GULCH TRAIL leads four miles up Grizzly Gulch to Handies Peak (14,048').

33 COOPER LAKE TRAIL (four miles) starts here and climbs above timberline to Cooper Lake, which is stocked with cutthroat trout.

42 SUNNYSIDE MINE was first located in 1873 and produced rich gold ore in the early years. The mine changed hands many times, but remained in production until 1938, when it closed until the 1960's after completion of the 6,233-foot American Tunnel from Gladstone to the mine. In 1978, the bottom of Lake Emma broke through and flooded the mine.

25 BENT CREEK ACCESS A restroom is just south of the road; a path leads to the Lake Fork of the Gunnison River.

34 AMERICAN BASIN is one of the most scenic valleys in the San Juan Mountains. Mid-summer wildflower displays are spectacular.

35 SLOAN LAKE TRAIL leads one mile to Sloan Lake (stocked with cutthroat trout) continues to Handies Peak.

26 MILL CREEK CAMPGROUND (BLM) has 22 camp units, restrooms and drinking water. A fee is required.

36 TOBACCO MILL is a prominent feature. Ore was carried by tram 1.7 miles to the mill from the mine at Cinnamon Pass. Tram supports can still be seen.

27 SHERMAN TOWNSITE was the site of a mining camp established in 1875. The town was destroyed by a flash flood that broke a dam above town and destroyed the water flume that ran from the dam to town. The meadow and a few collapsed cabins are private property. The narrow, steep "Shelf Road," heading uphill at the fork just east of Sherman, is the continuation of the Alpine Byway.

37 CINNAMON PASS is one of the highest passes in the San Juans at 12,620'. Grasses and flowers struggle for survival here in the harsh climate, short growing season, and fragile environment. Please stay on designated roads to avoid the fragile tundra. Looking east down the valley, see Handies, Redcloud and Sunshine Peaks, three of the "fourteeners" in the Alpine Triangle.

28 CATARACT GULCH TRAIL follows a scenic stream with many waterfalls. It leads five miles to Cataract Lake near the Continental Divide. (A restroom is at the trailhead.)

29 CUBA GULCH TRAIL links a network of trails offering alternatives for loop hikes.

Cataract Creek



Elk

④③ **MIDDLETON** attracted over 100 mining claims in nearby Minnie and Maggie Gulches by 1893. (Restroom at Maggie Gulch.)

④④ **HOWARDSVILLE** Townsite was settled at the mouth of Cunningham Gulch in 1874. It was the site of the first Sunnyside Mill, the largest in the United States when first built.

④⑤ **CUNNINGHAM GULCH** was named for Major Cunningham, leader of a group of miners from Chicago. It was the first main route into the San Juans in the 1870s. The trail came over Stony Pass to Cunningham Gulch and down the Animas River into Silverton.

④⑥ **OLD HUNDRED MINE.** Boarding houses were built at each tunnel entrance in the early 1900s. One, located 1,000 feet above the other, can be seen from the road.

④⑦ **HIGHLAND MARY LAKES TRAIL.** An old mine is located at the trailhead. The trail connects with Whitehead Peak Trail and also leads south into the Weminuche Wilderness.

④⑧ **STONY PASS**, at 12,588', is located on the Continental Divide. The four-wheel drive road over the pass leads east to Highway 149 and the town of Creede.

④⑨ **ARRASTRA GULCH.** Here, the first mine located in the San Juans was the Little Giant Mine (1871) and Millsite (1873), which used the first wire rope tramway. Nearby Silver Lake is listed in

the Guinness Book of Records for its record snowfall of 76 inches in a 24-hour period April 14-15, 1921. A fairly easy trail leads about a mile from Mayflower Mine to Silver Lake.

⑤⑩ **KENDALL MOUNTAIN** (13,451'), east of Silverton, is the site of the annual 13 mile

⑤② **WHITEHEAD PEAK TRAIL** leads to the Weminuche Wilderness area or connects with the Highland Mary Lakes Trail.

⑤③ **MOLAS LAKE CAMPGROUND** is managed by the Town of Silverton. A trail and footbridge offer an excellent view of the Animas River Valley and the D&SNG Rail-

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SILVERTON, first known as Baker's Park, was named for "silver by the ton," and established as the San Juan County seat in 1874. By 1883, the town's population peaked at 1,500. The Denver and Rio Grande Railroad, the first narrow gauge anywhere, was completed from Durango to Silverton in 1882. It allowed miners to ship lower grade ores economically and made Silverton a boomtown.

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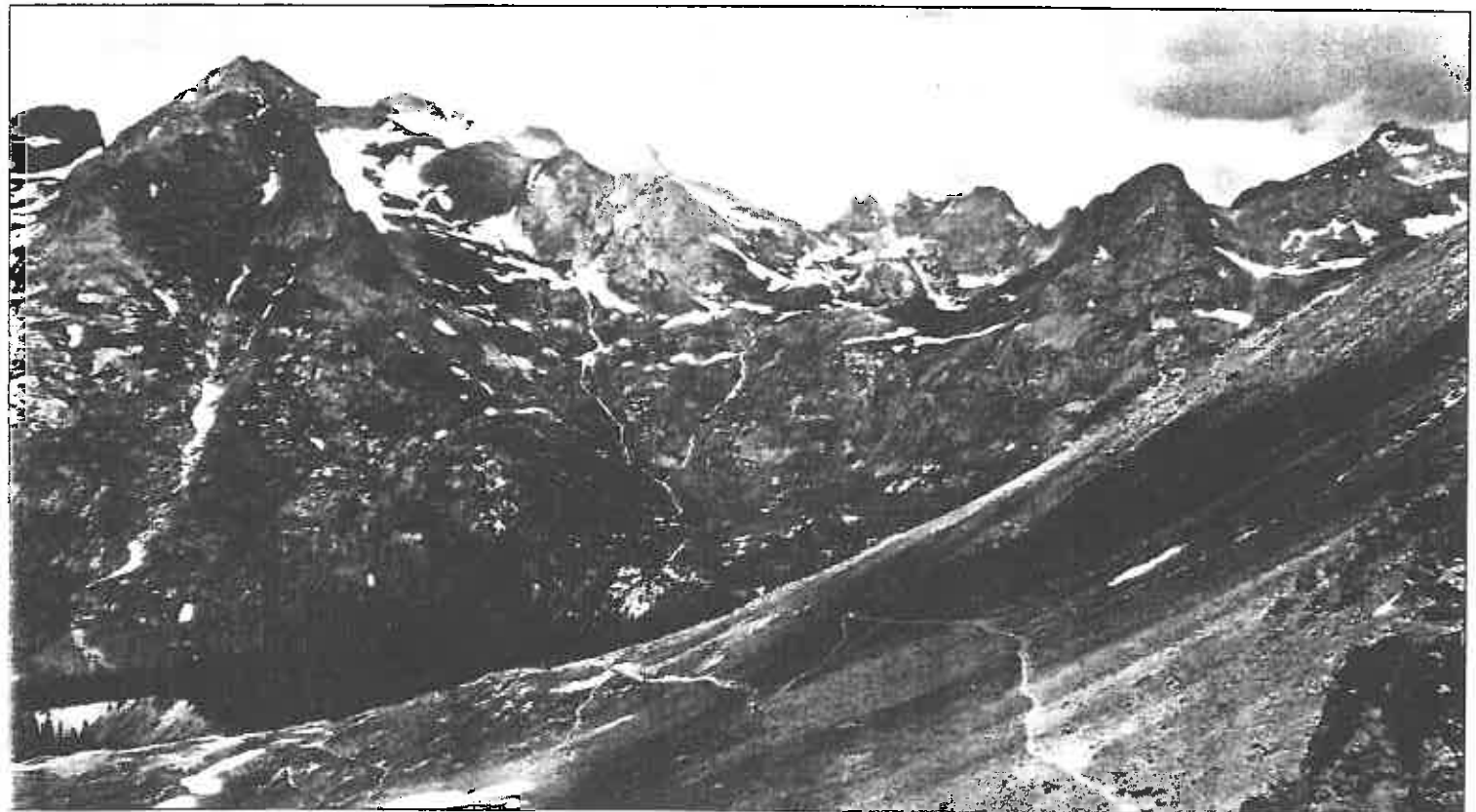
Kendall Mountain Run, which climbs 3,800 feet from Silverton to the peak.

⑤① **TITUSVILLE MINE** operated from 1886 to 1893 with a small mining camp and an 8,000-foot tramway to Kendall Gulch. The Titusville vein can be seen near the head of the gulch. The dark material near the mine is iron "hematite." Visitors can see a mined out area of the vein in a mine opening near the switchback where vehicles can park.

road, and provide access to the Weminuche Wilderness.

⑤④ **GLADSTONE** was connected with Silverton by railroad in 1899. The nearby Gold King, Sunnyside and Lead Carbonate mines were all prominent producers well into the 1900s. Nearby Storm Peak was the site of International Speed Skiing Championships in 1982 and 1983, where world records for men (129.3 mph) and women (120.3) were set.

Above Timberline



YESTERDAY & TODAY

► MINING HISTORY

Against the backdrop of alpine scenery are well preserved examples of 19th century mining structures and culture. Old mines, from which gold, silver, lead, and zinc were extracted, are scattered throughout the area. Many of the roads that recreationists enjoy today were access routes developed by miners a hundred years ago.

Eleven townsites served as centers for the miners. Founded between 1875 and 1885, these towns thrived while mining was successful. Rugged mountain terrain and climate required major engineering accomplishments such as roads and tramways for mining, transporting ores and supplies, and providing domestic goods. Many of these structures remain, providing recreationists with accessible and visible evidence of frontier resourcefulness and determination, as well as unfulfilled dreams and failures.

The Hidden Treasure, Ute-Ulay, Golden Fleece, Little Giant, and Pride of the West mines had a prolonged historic influence on the region, along with over 70 other mines with lodes that were often rich but smaller. Many still-visible exploration pits and tunnels are evidence of extensive prospecting.

► CULTURAL RESOURCES AWARENESS

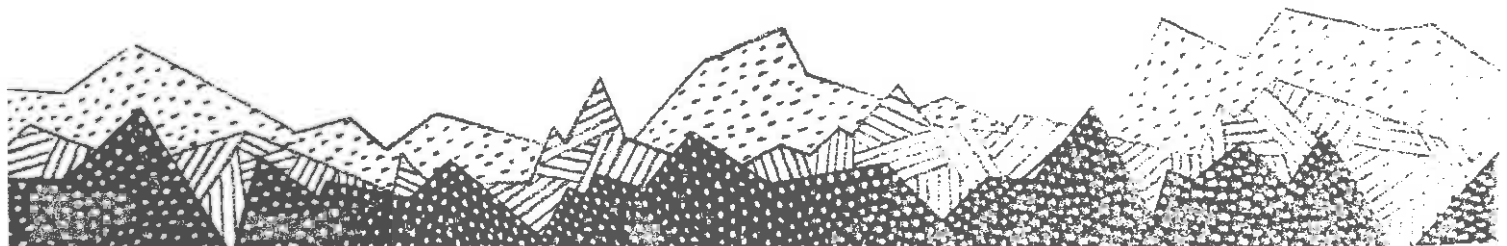
Little is known about the prehistory of the Alpine Triangle. However, high altitude areas further north have yielded many archaeological resources (5000 B.C. to 1850 A.D.); and similar sites have been recorded in the San Juans. Some sites are encased in the fragile tundra and susceptible to damage from human activity; others are exposed and subject to illegal collection of artifacts.

The condition of historic structures ranges from the intact Tom Moore Boardinghouse near Eureka to the barren Henson Townsite. Most structures are in various states of decay and destruction, including collapse and partial removal.

As with most unsupervised and accessible prehistoric and historic sites, vandalism, theft, and human intrusion are accelerating decay and loss. Mine shafts and unstable structures present hazards to recreational visitors; and many are on private property.

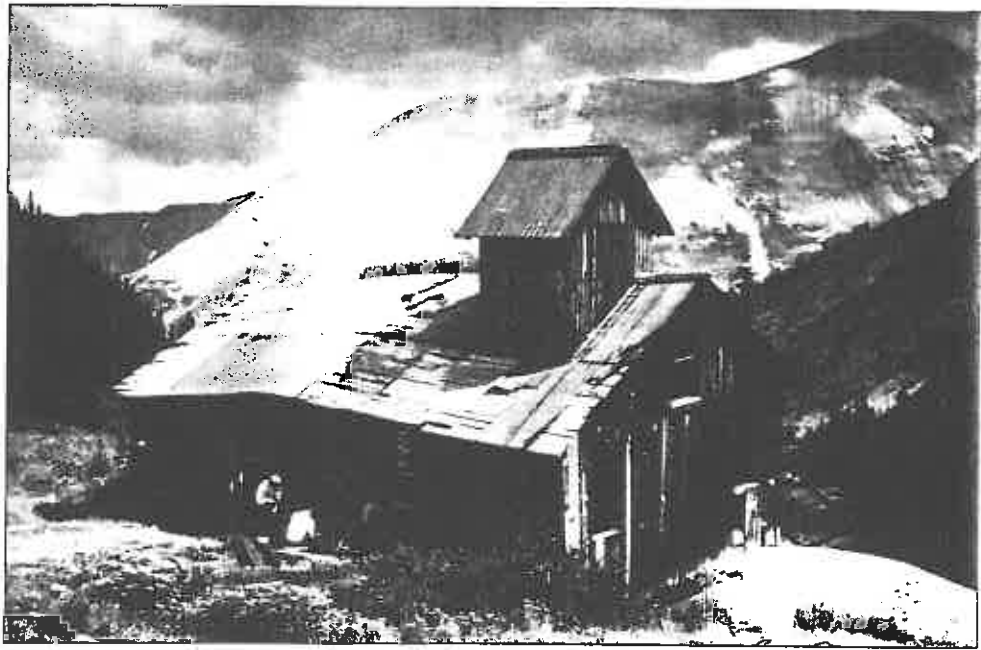
Trespassing on private land, as well as the removal or disturbance of any prehistoric or historic cultural resource on public land is unlawful. Please treat all historic sites and structures with caution and respect, so that your trip will be safe and others can continue to enjoy the cultural history of the Alpine Triangle.

Charcoal kiln





Early prospector



Old Mine in Hinsdale County

► GEOLOGY AND MINERALS

The San Juan Mountains are one of the richest and most intensely mineralized regions in the southern Rocky Mountains. They have produced more than \$750 million worth of base and precious metals over the last 110 years.

Volcanic activity dominated the San Juan Mountain region during the Tertiary period (20-35 million years ago). Mountains rose and great accumulations of volcanic rocks were deposited. Doming and subsequent collapse of the volcanic vents created the Lake City and Silverton Calderas split by many faults and fractures. The faulting, fracturing, and rock alterations created an ideal environment for the deposition of ore as mineral bearing solutions squeezed into the spaces. Subsequent erosion of these volcanic mountains, primarily due to glacial activity within the last two million years, created the rugged mountainous topography you see today.

Erosion of these faulted and fractured zones initially created V-shaped valleys. Subsequent glacial erosion scoured out many of these drainages to form U-shaped valleys such as American Basin and Cunningham Gulch. The last major glacial activity may have occurred about 10,000 years ago.

The mining operations within the San Juans mainly produced gold and silver with lesser amounts of copper, lead, and zinc from some of the largest and deepest veins in Colorado. Much of the productive mineralization appears to have occurred 6-10 million years after caldera formation, or about 28 million years ago.

Other geologic features you see in this area include talus slopes, alluvial fans, landslides, and rock glaciers. Talus slopes are accumulations of loose rock found at the base of most cliffs. Alluvial fans are formed at the mouth of intermittent drainages where reduction of slopes and loss of energy cause rock debris to be

deposited. A widely known landslide in the area is the Slumgullion Earthflow south of Lake City. In this monumental event supersaturated soils slipped off of Mesa Seco and "flowed" four miles downslope to block the Lake Fork of the Gunnison River and form Lake San Cristobal, the second largest natural lake in Colorado.

Rock glaciers are composed of the same materials as ordinary talus; however, they display entirely different features. Viewed from a high vantage point they resemble small ice glaciers, stretching outward and downward from the foot of a cliff. Rock glaciers are most often found in either glacial cirques or on slopes that have been oversteepened by glaciers. Protection from direct sun is required to maintain the ice core which binds the rock fragments together. American Basin, Horseshoe Basin, and Kendall Gulch contain good examples of rock glaciers.

Old Mine along Henson Creek



► HIGH COUNTRY WILDLIFE

Wildlife often seen in the high country include marmots, squirrels, chipmunks and rabbits. Beaver are common residents along Henson Creek, the Lake Fork of the Gunnison and their tributaries. Elk and deer migrate into the area as snow melts each year, seeking summer ranges high above areas of human use. Bighorn sheep range between Cottonwood Creek and Handies Peak, using remote slopes in the summer and south facing slopes above timberline in the winter. Every now and then, a mountain goat has been spotted east of Silverton. Black bears have also been seen on occasion, although a lack of forest cover limits bear use of the area.

Marmot



► ALPINE TUNDRA

The alpine tundra is a very fragile environment found above timberline. It is a special plant community of grasses, sedges and wildflowers. Here, the soil is thin, temperatures are cold, and growing seasons are very short. Snow covers the tundra for much of the year; yet during July and August, when conditions are right, it explodes in a display of colorful flowers.

The delicate environment is easily disrupted when man treats it carelessly. The scars made by a thoughtless driver venturing off the road will take many decades to heal.

Protect these special areas by avoiding shortcuts between road or trail switchbacks. Enjoy the wild flowers, but leave them for others to see as well. Please, never drive through meadows or across the alpine tundra. Stay on the road, even when you encounter wet or boggy places in the roadway. Your four-wheel drive vehicle will usually make it through. Use your best judgement.

OPERATION RESPECT is a program to promote safety and respect for miners' property and equipment. The foundation of the program is this "Mining Property Protocol":

Return home with only memories
Exercise good judgment
Safety is most important
Protect lives and property rights
Enjoy without destruction
Concern for private property
Trespassing is unlawful

This is a cooperative public service program developed by Women in Mining and the Colorado State Office of the Bureau of Land Management.

The Window
to Yesterday~
Our Heritage~
Preserve It.



► TAKING PRIDE IN AMERICA

When visiting public lands, forests, parks and recreation areas, you will feel a sense of pride in the beautiful scenery and diverse history that is America.

While hiking, camping, or sightseeing remember to use the lands carefully so that future generations may also enjoy them. As you visit historic landmarks and buildings like those found in the San Juan mining country you will learn about events that help make up America's past. Remember that the historic resources are irreplaceable and must be treated with care and respect.

TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA is a national campaign supported by the people who manage and use federal lands. It encourages everyone who visits these lands and historic sites to take pride in them and leave them better for those who follow.

You can help! Prevent litter and vandalism by setting a good example. Pack out what you pack in, and even pick up more. Leave plants, artifacts and structures as you found them.

Join with others to encourage good outdoor manners or even to maintain, clean up or restore a park, trail, or historic site. Share in protecting public property by reporting unlawful activity such as vandalism or violation of vehicle use rules.

The toll of time and numerous visitors does not have to diminish the beauty and history we are able to enjoy in places like the San Juan Mountains.





Powderhorn Lake

To the north, streams drain into the Uncompahgre River and the Lake Fork which find their way to the Colorado River at Grand Junction. The southern portion of the area drains into the Animas River, a tributary of the San Juan, which also flows into the Colorado at Lake Powell. BLM has the responsibility for managing these watersheds — preventing soil erosion, protecting trees and vegetation, and maintaining fish and wildlife habitats — all while protecting the wilderness values and providing for public recreation, too! Conflicts are inevitable; and your cooperation is always needed in order for us to do the job well.

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► NEARBY ATTRACTIONS

The **Durango and Silverton Narrow Gauge (D&SNG) Railroad** is an internationally-known tourist attraction drawing 200,000 riders annually. This privately owned railroad, which is on the National Register of Historic Places, runs May to October. It offers spectacular views of the Animas River Canyon and alpine vistas.

The BLM-administered **Powderhorn Primitive Area** lies east of the Alpine Triangle area and offers a variety of backcountry opportunities in a natural setting.

Adjacent federal lands include the **Uncompahgre, San Juan, Gunnison and Rio Grande National Forests**, which provide more recreational opportunities, camping and picnic areas, roads and trails. The 467,000-acre **Weminuche Wilderness Area**, southeast of the area, is one of the largest in the National Wilderness System. It contains three "fourteeners" and nearly 250 miles of trails. **Big Blue Wilderness** covers 98,000 acres north of the area and offers 75 miles of trails and two more "fourteeners." Both areas are administered by the U.S. Forest Service.

The **Curecanti National Recreation Area**, between Montrose and Gunnison, surrounds Crystal, Morrow Point and Blue Mesa Lakes and provides numerous boating, fishing and swimming opportunities along with camping, picnicking and hiking. The National Park Service office at Elk Creek manages the area.

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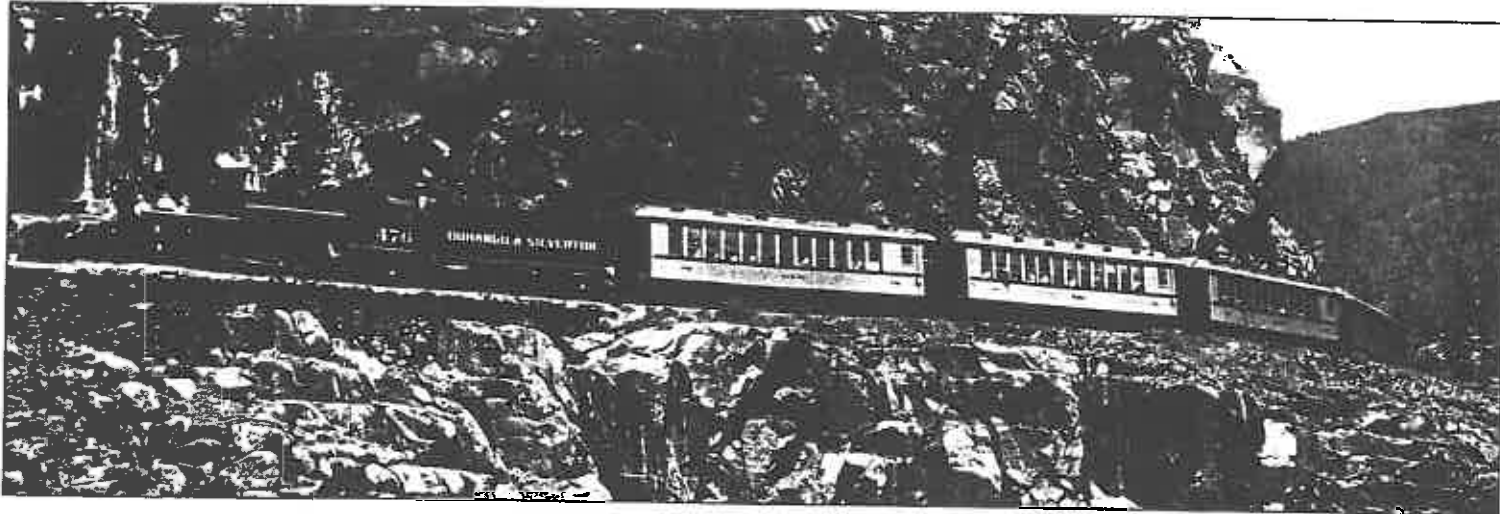
► MULTIPLE USE BENEFITS

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) operates under the philosophy and legal mandate of multiple use. Public lands are managed for the benefit of many resources and uses. These include wildlife, grazing, soils, watersheds, fisheries, minerals, forestry, wilderness, cultural resources, and recreation. It is BLM's job to deal with conflicts and carefully balance the uses, while protecting the long term values of the land and its resource potential.

Although recreation is a major attraction in the Alpine Triangle, evidence of other uses can also be seen. For about eight weeks every summer, bands of sheep graze on the high mountain pastures above timberline. Mine operations, past and present, are commonly seen along almost any road. Many old mining towns, mills and tramways are now declared historic sites.

The Alpine Triangle contains two major watersheds.

Narrow Gauge Railroad



ARDEN - your copy

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
MONTROSE DISTRICT OFFICE
2465 SOUTH TOWNSEND AVENUE
MONTROSE, COLORADO 81401

In Reply Refer To:
8300 (130)

FEB 23 1990

Memorandum

To: State Director, Colorado (CO-931)
From: District Manager, Montrose
Subject: Action Plan for San Juan Triangle/Alpine Loop Byway Showcase
Project

In response to CO Instruction Memorandum 90-68, we are submitting our Action Plan for the San Juan Triangle/Alpine Loop Byway Showcase Project. We appreciate the extra few days we were given to complete this project. Any questions concerning this action plan can be addressed to Arden Anderson on our Gunnison Resource Area staff (303) 641-0471.

Alan L. Kester

San Juan Triangle
Alpine Loop National Backcountry Byway
Action Plan

A. BACKGROUND

The San Juan Triangle Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) covers about 200,000 acres in the highly scenic San Juan Mountains of southwest Colorado. The area is extremely popular with recreationists pursuing motorized recreation, hiking, fishing, camping, sight-seeing and photography in a spectacular alpine setting. Annual visitation is estimated at 600,000 user days. The centerpiece of this SRMA is the new Alpine Loop National Backcountry Byway. This 63 mile route was established as a wagon road for miners in the late 1800's. Today the same route offers relatively easy access to outstanding recreation opportunities for visitors from around the country.

The San Juan Triangle has had an emphasis on recreation for many years and is among the highest recreation priorities for the BLM in Colorado. In 1984 a detailed visitor use survey was conducted to identify the preferences and needs of the public. In 1986 a Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP) was prepared for the SRMA. Inadequate funding has prevented the RAMP from being fully implemented but we continue to work on the priorities and projects identified therein. In 1987 we organized the San Juan Triangle Recreation Task Force to involve the local governments and other interested partners in the management of this area. The group continues to be an effective tool to generate partnerships and identify priorities. In that same year the BLM produced a comprehensive visitor guide to the area called the Alpine Explorer. This 12 page brochure was very well received and has been a very effective management tool. This action plan will focus primarily on the implementation of the Backcountry Byway program this year but will also mention some of the actions planned for the rest of the SRMA. Of course, recurring tasks such as facility maintenance, sign maintenance, trail maintenance, backcountry patrol and visitor contact would continue as in the past.

B. RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY OBJECTIVES

1. President's Objectives: Several actions in the SRMA address the President's objective of promoting responsible stewardship of Public Lands. Interpretive messages in the Alpine Explorer, trail guides, and displays all have components that promote responsible stewardship. In addition our marketing brochure will aim toward recreationists who are attracted to this area for its beauty and natural values and thus more likely to care for these values.

2. Recreation 2000 Objectives: The management of the SRMA and the Byway addresses many aspects of the objectives for the Bureau's Recreation 2000 initiative.

a. Visitor information and interpretation- the management presence of the BLM will be highlighted through our signing and personnel. Interpretive displays and brochures will better inform the public about recreation opportunities in the area. They will also serve to heighten visitor awareness about the need to care for these resources with the underlying theme of Use, Share and Appreciate. The existing BLM offices as well as cooperative visitor information centers will have a variety of interpretive

displays and informational brochures for the public. Eventually we hope to develop a major BLM visitor center in Lake City to serve and educate the hundreds of thousands of people who visit this area annually. The BLM is developing a variety of cooperative ventures to develop and distribute information for the public.

b. Resource Protection and Monitoring- the steps necessary to protect our recreation resources have been outlined in the RAMP and will continue to be implemented. Particular care will be exercised in developing the Backcountry Byway program. Our marketing will not be designed to attract as many people as possible to the area but instead to attract appropriate numbers while preserving and protecting the special nature of the area's resources. Interpretive efforts will focus on responsible use of the area to reduce the impacts of recreation activities. At present we do not have serious law enforcement problems. The new addition of a law enforcement ranger in the Montrose District will go a long way toward covering our needs in this area. We are continually monitoring the condition of the resources in the SRMA. It is hoped a follow up visitor use survey can be conducted in the mid 90's to monitor trends in visitor preference and assess the changes brought on by the creation of the Byway.

c. Land Ownership and Access Adjustments- While not a major aspect of our program here we are pursuing several realty actions that would improve manageability or increase recreation opportunities in this area. Private in-holdings in the Red Cloud Peak WSA are high on the statewide priority list for Land and Water Conservation Fund acquisition to improve manageability. Acquisition through exchange of the Ryan Ranch, along the Lake Fork of the Gunnison river, will increase visitor opportunities for fishing, camping, hunting and hiking. Other opportunities will be explored as they arise but limited personnel and the relatively low priority on exchange and acquisition in the state continue to slow progress.

d. Partnerships- A lot of effort is focused on the development of partnerships for this area. Some of the entities we are cooperating with include the Recreation Task Force, Hinsdale, Ouray and San Juan Counties, the Southwest Colorado Travel Region, the Historical Societies of Hinsdale and San Juan Counties, the Colorado Mountain Club, the Forest Service, the Student Conservation Association, Western State College, the Good Sam Club, the Hinsdale County road crew, the Western Colorado Interpretive Association, the Farmers Insurance Company, the Lake City, Ouray and Silverton Chambers of Commerce and the Colorado Center for Public and Private Sector Cooperation.

e. Volunteers- Many of the above organizations will be providing volunteers to help with a variety of tasks in the SRMA.

f. Tourism Programs- Several of the partnerships mentioned above involve the development and marketing of tourism.

C. PROJECT SCHEDULE

Management of the SRMA is an ongoing activity guided by available funding. This year many projects are focused on the development and dedication of the Backcountry Byway.

1. At present, the Alpine Loop is the only Backcountry Byway in the Montrose District. As a result the San Juan Recreation Task Force which has worked with us extensively on the Alpine Loop is serving as our District NBOB Committee. In the fall, when time permits we hope to establish a District Committee with wider representation to work with us on the nomination of other Byways if appropriate.

2. We have many partners for the Byway effort and are continually looking for more. Some of these partners will be entering into Cooperative Agreements and others will not. It is expected that Agreements with all major partners now identified should be developed by May of 1990. As other major partnerships are developed agreements will be instituted as appropriate.

3. Many on the ground facilities are in place. Those to be developed this year should be completed according to the following schedule:

- a. Alpine Gulch Bridge - Oct. 89 - minor touch up in June '90
- b. Red Bridge Handicap Access Restroom - May '90
- c. Highway, Entrance and Route Signs for Byway - July '90
- d. Burrows Park Interpretive Sign - July '90
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4. The schedule for completing brochures is as follows:

- a. Reprint Alpine Explorer - July '90
- b. Develop and print Marketing Brochure - Aug. '90
- c. Southwest Colorado Travel Region Brochure - April '90
- d. Coop Byway Video - May '90
- e. Inclusion in World Mt. Bike Championship Brochure - May '90
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5. The schedule for the onsite dedication is extremely dependent upon the participation and input from our partners. The event itself is scheduled for mid to late July. Timeframes for the specific tasks involved will be developed as arrangements are made with our partners and will be discussed in a specific public affairs plan for the dedication.

D. PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND MARKETING

For the purposes of this action plan, we have combined marketing as a sub-component of Public Affairs. These two components share objectives and audiences and often utilize the same techniques for achieving objectives. Public Affairs for the Backcountry Byway also encompasses interpretive efforts and facilities, media relations, community outreach, and the dedication. A separate public affairs plan is presently being developed for the dedication to be held in July of 1990.

1. Planning Framework

a. Objectives:

- 1) To inform visitors and potential visitors to SW Colorado of the opportunities along the Alpine Loop.
- 2) To enhance visitor enjoyment of BLM lands/Alpine Loop. This will be done through interpretive materials and facilities as well as quality recreational facilities established in accordance with the San Juan Triangle SRMA RAMP.
- 3) To encourage gentle and respectful use of the San Juan Triangle and Alpine Loop, as well as to encourage courtesy towards other visitors to the area.
- 4) To inform recreationists of the Scenic Byways program, BLM's Backcountry Byway Program, BLM's recreation programs, and Recreation 200C initiatives.
- 5) To develop long-term cooperative relationships with public/private partners in providing enjoyable recreational experiences in San Juan Triangle.

b. What is our product? What are we marketing?

The main products we will be marketing are recreational opportunities which include outstanding scenery, vehicle recreation, hiking, fishing, camping, climbing, mountain biking, wildflower displays, wildlife viewing, unusual ecosystems, fall colors, winter recreation and hunting. Other resources in the area which may be attractive for visitors and thus appropriate for marketing include the geology, mining history (and associated historic sites) and the BLM's multiple use mosaic.

c. What is our message or theme?

- 1) There are tremendously diverse recreational opportunities available along the Alpine Loop and in the San Juan Triangle.
- 2) These opportunities are there for the public to enjoy.
- 3) Recreational ethics: a respect for resources and other visitors
- 4) Discover a special corner of Colorado mountain country
- 5) BLM is in the recreation management business, we do it well, and we are here to provide for the public
- 6) Partnerships with local and regional groups in recreation and tourism
- 7) The National Scenic Byway program
- 8) BLM's Backcountry Byway program

d. Who are the clients and audiences?

- 1) Vehicle recreationists
- 2) Hikers, climbers, backpackers and mountain bikers
- 3) Wildflower and botany enthusiasts
- 4) History buffs
- 5) Fishing and wildlife enthusiasts
- 6) Families

2. Information, Education and Interpretation:

a. Existing Information Centers: There are already existing facilities along the accesses to the Byway which should be used to distribute information and orient new and returning visitors to the Alpine Loop. The first display will be placed in the town where the ribbon cutting portion of the dedication event is to be held. Following the first installation in 1990, one per year will be developed in the other two centers. We have discussed working jointly with the USFS on developing interpretive materials and displays in some of these locations. The Alpine Explorer would be distributed here as well as other BLM/USFS offices/outlets. The interpretive information, produced jointly, would provide visitors with a comprehensive idea of available opportunities and resources. These centers are located at:

- 1) Ouray Chamber of Commerce
- 2) Lake City Information Center
- 3) Silverton Visitors' Center (USFS is interested in producing a topographic relief display of the surrounding mountain area and sites along the San Juan Skyway and Byway. This type of display in Silverton would be a marvelous way to orient the visitor to the complex and overwhelming topography of the San Juans. USFS has estimated such a display to cost \$5000).

Completion Dates: Install one display in the town where the ribbon cutting is to be held (either Lake City or Silverton). Install by July 1990.
June 1991: install display in Silverton or Lake City.
June 1992: install display in Ouray Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center.

Task Assignments: Develop display panels for each information center that interpret the Alpine Loop. These panels should serve as orientation to the route, should describe opportunities along the Loop, include some photos, etc. Montrose District Office (MDO) personnel will work with San Juan Resource Area (SJRA) personnel on Ouray and Silverton; MDO and Gunnison Resource Area (GRA) personnel will work on the Lake City display. Assistance from MDO operations may be needed for the construction of displays and information panels. We will work with the USFS on the possible display in Silverton. Depending on display location we will look for partners to contribute time and/or dollars to the production and installation of the display.

b. Other existing or developing information centers: There are other ongoing activities which will also serve to inform the visitors and potential users of the Byway about the opportunities along the Alpine Loop. These include:

- 1) Spring Creek Pass information kiosk. This is a cooperative effort with the USFS which will include part of a panel on the Alpine Loop.

Completion Date: July 1990

Task Assignments: GRA and MDO working with USFS

- 2) Gunnison Chamber of Commerce display. We will be installing by spring a BLM display in the visitor information center in Gunnison. This display will include some information about the Byway.

Completion Date: June 1990

Task Assignments: GRA and MDO

c. New information centers or kiosks: The purpose of additional kiosks or information stations will be for orientation, general information on what opportunities are available along the Byway, and some background on the Scenic and Backcountry Byway Program. The information should be to assist the visitors in making choices, plans and decisions on their journey along the Alpine Loop. These stations will be located somewhere near the beginning of the three main access points. The locations should be such that they are inviting to visitors and are within the natural flow pattern along the Loop. Specific sites still need to be selected for these kiosks. Ideas include Animas Forks, Mill Creek campground, the Eureka townsite, near the outlet of Lake San Cristobal and near Capitol City.

Completion Dates: By July 1990 we hope to construct one introduction kiosk prior to the dedication. Site selection will be based on where the dedication is to be held. This kiosk will be placed near either Silverton or Lake City. If the main dedication event is to be held in Silverton, this kiosk will be placed near Lake City. This will balance out the placement of the display in an existing visitor center facility in one of these two towns (see previous section on existing visitor centers). By placing one display in one town, and another in the other town, we will cover more territory and provide more information for more visitors. July 1991: Construct one introduction kiosk along access leg (either near Silverton or Lake City). Develop site design; interpretive and information message; order signs by April 1990.

Task Assignments: MDO will contact interpretive planners from Anasazi Heritage Center and NPS in Denver (if necessary) to join on a tour to evaluate potential sites and assist in interpretive design. This may require paying travel for someone from Denver. (Estimated cost less than \$100).

Site selection: Resource area personnel in SJRA and GRA, BLM working group needs to determine priorities).

Site design by RA personnel, MDO, CSO & AHC assistance.

Construction and installation: RA personnel, County assistance, MDO. Possible partners include the Counties for in-kind services for site preparation and manpower, the historical societies for interpretive information, commercial guides, vehicle rental companies and outdoor stores.

d. Interpretive sites along the Alpine Loop: (some already exist at the Pike Snowden Cabin near Lake City, Animas Forks, and in the Alpine tundra).

1) Interpretive Sign at Burrows Park structures: These structures were restored by BLM and the Hinsdale County Historical Society during the summer of 1989.

Completion Date: July 1990

Task Assignments: Work with Historical Society to research the buildings and develop wording for the display. BLM will order and install the sign.

2) Alpine Tundra signs above timberline

Completion Date: July 1990

Task Assignment: GRA has ordered and will install the signs.

e. Other interpretive display projects: We would continue working with the USFS San Juan Skyway steering committee on displays at the Mineral Creek access and in the vicinity of Silverton. The Forest Service has some dollars in a central account. If partners for this project can be found, this central account will match the partners' contribution.

Completion Date: Aim for September 1991. This is highly dependent on funding and finding partners to contribute.

Task Assignments: USFS has already drafted a co-op agreement among USFS, BLM, and State Dept. of Highways. They have also done some concept drawings of site and facility development. Cost estimates are \$50,000 to \$60,000.

1990: Look for funding partners (both USFS and BLM)

f. Brochures:

1) Alpine Explorer: Top priority will be placed on reprinting the Alpine Explorer. This will require some redesign to include the Alpine Loop byway and national byway program in the map and information. During this redesign we will re-evaluate photos and some of the information. This brochure will serve as our site-specific interpretive information, and will be distributed at existing information centers and BLM offices. We should consider working with a cooperating association for long-term production and distribution of the Alpine Explorer. At present, the Western Colorado Interpretive Association (WCIA), in the Montrose, Delta and Gunnison area, is trying to establish an inventory and some capital. BLM should consider printing 10,000 or so copies of the brochure, selling them to WCIA at cost, and allowing them to sell the brochure at a profit. This would enable WCIA to gain some revenues which they could re-invest in more printing of the "Explorer" or some other Byway project. WCIA would be responsible for distributing the brochure at appropriate locations and tracking the inventory. This would relieve BLM of the responsibility. We will also evaluate this option with the San Juan interpretive association and the association at the AHC (SNCHA). The Statewide Publications Committee has recommended that this brochure be a sale item, no matter who sells it. Sale price should include the cost of lay-out, production, printing and distribution. The revenues from the sales would be re-invested into further printing.

Completion Date: Re-design by March 1990. Re-print by June 1990.

Distribute by July 1990.

Task Assignments: GRA will be the lead on the Alpine Explorer re-design, etc. They will work with MDO and SJRA on this.

2) Marketing flyer for wide distribution: The general/marketing brochure will be a lesser priority during FY 90, and its production and distribution will depend on finding partners. If partners are found, we will produce a two-color, folded 8 1/2 x 11 brochure that gives general information. It will include photos and a map. It will be distributed to various Chambers, Visitor Centers, Welcome Centers, State and Federal Agencies, and BLM offices throughout the state and Four Corners region.

Completion Date: Find partners by April 1990

Design and print flyer by June 1990

Distribute flyer by July 1990.

If partners are not available during 1990, pursue partners and production during 1991.

Task Assignment: MDO lead, GRA and SJRA will assist, partners will help.

3) Working with the Southwest Colorado Travel Region: We are working with the Southwest Colorado Travel Region to incorporate BLM into the 1990 SW Colorado brochure. Included in the brochure will be a message about BLM as an agency, featuring the Alpine Loop, Anasazi Heritage Center, the Dolores River, and perhaps the Gunnison Gorge. This brochure can serve some of the purposes of the general marketing brochure. The SWCTR prints 405,000 of these, and distributes them more widely than BLM would have the capability to do.

Completion Date: Presently in printing. Will be distributed by April 1990. This will become a routine component of the SWCTR brochure.

Task Assignments: MDO

4) Southwest Colorado Travel Guide: We are working with Telluride Publishing to include information on the Byway in this detailed travel guide. It will be published annually and sold throughout the region.

Completion Date: April '90

Task Assignments: MDO

5) Incorporate the Alpine Loop into the World Mountain Bike Championship Magazine: In the fall of 1990, Durango will be the site of the first world mountain bike championship. This event will include the production of an 80+ page program. The program will include 30 pages specific to the event and 50 pages on mountain biking opportunities in the State of Colorado. BLM will be working with coordinators of this event and publication to incorporate BLM and the Alpine Loop into the 80 page program. Including the Alpine Loop in this program will target the mountain biking clients as well as those interested in backcountry driving and hiking.

Completion Dates: Provide text for the program by March 1 (estimate).

Task Assignments: Coordination will be done by SJRA.

6) Develop and produce brochure and video tour of historic resources along the Alpine Loop: This project is dependent upon finding partners, but would provide in-depth interpretation of the historic resources along the Byway. It would also interpret safety and site preservation concerns. BLM would develop the brochure, and we would seek partnerships with historical societies and mining companies for funding.

Completion Dates: Look for partners during late 1990. Develop interpretive materials by May 1991.

Task Assignments: MDO and Colorado State Office (CSO) specialists will seek partnerships for funding during FY90. Should funding become available, the same people, possibly working with student interns, will be responsible for development.

g. Video and Broadcast Media Productions: The Forest Service is producing a video on the San Juan Skyway. The Alpine Loop has been incorporated into that video in several places. The Loop is on the map in the graphics; there is a section on the Loop which shows where it is in relation to the Skyway and it highlights the opportunities and values available for public enjoyment.

Completion Date: The video will be available by May 1990

Task Assignments: MDO has coordinated this with the San Juan National Forest.

h. Poster: We would like to encourage partners to produce a poster on the Alpine Loop and the dedication in particular. This will serve as promotion for the dedication specifically and the Byway in general. Without a partnership the BLM could not afford to produce this piece but it may be a good opportunity for an interpretive association or other interest group to generate some revenue. These posters would probably be distributed for free prior to the dedication and then after the dedication, be made a sale item through an interpretive association.

Completion Date: Find partners by March 1990. Design poster by April 1990. Print by May 1990. Distribute during May, June, July.

Task Assignments: MDO and SJRA will take the lead on building this partnership for the funding, design and production of the poster. We would like to work with a fellow in Durango who does excellent pen and ink type drawings of historic structures to do the poster design.

i. Develop an Interpretive Plan: After the completion of immediate tasks during FY90, an interpretive plan must be developed for the Alpine Loop. This will identify and describe themes for interpretation, identify the best sites for interpretive displays and facilities, and describe specific interpretive materials that are needed.

Completion Date: February 1991

Task Assignments: Either GRA or SJRA will be the lead. Planning team will include MDO and the interpreter for the Anasazi Heritage Center.

3. Dedication: A separate Public Affairs Plan will be developed by Kate and CSO Public Affairs (Cindy McKee) for the dedication. Decisions on dates and locations will be guided by the San Juan Triangle Recreation Task Force. As soon as the Plan is completed, it will be submitted to CSO to be attached to this action plan.

a. Date: After July 4. Wildflower displays peak around the last week in July. Recommended dates: Saturday July 21 or 28; or August 4, 1990 (we need to insure that there will not be a conflict with sheep grazing in the area at the time). Make sure the date doesn't conflict with other events: Kendall Mountain Run, Hardrocker's Days, Ouray Culinary Festival. Date should be discussed with the Recreation Task Force.

b. Scale of the Event: Try for the Secretary of the Interior. Included with this should be the Director, State Director, Governor and Congressional representatives.

c. Invitations:

1) By CSO: Governor, Byway Commission, Congressionals, Director, Secretary, Media from front range and national representatives.

2) By MDO or RA: Other agencies (USFS, CDOW, DPOR) County Commissioners, Local state legislative representatives, Chambers of Commerce, Region 10, Mayors, City/Town Councils, tourism representatives, Club 20, Historical Society representatives., local special interest groups, San Juan Triangle Task Force members, Jerry Aboud (OHV rep.), Local, Regional and Western Slope Media invited by MDO.

d. Location: The site of the dedication still needs to be decided. Since three communities are involved we do not want to appear to favor one community over another. We may seek a centralized location such as Engineer Pass. Another option is to arrange several phases of the dedication which could include all three communities. Alternative locations would have to be identified in case of bad weather. Some options include the Sherman town site (will have to work with private landowner), Animas Forks, Eureka, Howardsville, Capitol City, Lake City, Silverton, Ouray, or the Mill Creek Campground. We will work closely with the Task Force to select an appropriate location.

e. Activities: These could include speeches, ribbon cutting, historic tours, barbecue (CDOW barbecue wagon), historic reenactment, tour of the byway, mountain bike race or ride (suggest the route follow the Alpine Loop with a finish in Ouray because of the hot springs).

f. Poster: We would like to work with partners to produce a poster for the dedication. This would depend heavily on contributions from our partners.
Completion Date: Complete Public Affairs Plan by March 1990. Find partners and coordinators by April 1990.
Task Assignments: The Recreation Task Force will aid in making choices for location and dates. MDO and CSO will develop the public affairs plan and coordinate the dedication with appropriate resource area personnel.

4. Community Outreach/ Projects: We would work with the Hinsdale County Historical Society to stabilize a historic structure during the summer of 1990. Following stabilization we would interpret the site to the public. This event will be covered by local and regional media.

Completion Date: August 1990

Task Assignments: MDO Archaeologist will coordinate with GRA assisting. Grant Houston and Gene Peterson will be the Historical Society contacts.

F. PROJECT FUNDING

The Montrose District has allocated 13 work months and \$12,750 in procurement to support the Byway project this year. In addition we are hoping to come up with contributed funds and in kind services at least to equal and hopefully double our procurement dollars. Until these commitments become more concrete it will be impossible to estimate the value of other contributions. So far we have commitments for 4 volunteers from the Student Conservation Association which would be equal to a contribution of 12 work months. This is worth \$11,520 if you assume a comparable pay level of \$6.00/hr. and \$36,600 at current work month costs of \$3,050. This program will cost the BLM \$7,600. These volunteers will work on the whole SRMA and some peripheral areas. We also have the commitment from the Colorado Mountain Club to provide 20 volunteers to work for a week on the Handies Peak Trail. This totals 800 hours of work with an estimated value of \$5,000. It will cost the BLM approximately 1/2 work month for trail design and supervision. The BLM has already contributed to the SW Co. Travel Region Brochure which will have information on the Alpine Loop and a print run of 400,000. This cost the District \$1000.

We have also contributed \$1000 to the Forest Service's \$12,000 Spring Creek ~~area~~ Kiosk which contains general information on the SRMA and more specific information about the Alpine Loop Byway. We have spent about \$3,500 for the Alpine Gulch Bridge project with another \$3,500 of contributed materials and services. A total of \$3,700 is budgeted to reprint the Alpine Explorer. It is hoped another \$4,000 to \$6,000 can be generated through partnerships to extend our printing of this popular brochure. Another \$2,000 was set aside for a marketing brochure and we hope to get help with design and layout from graphic arts students at Western State College. A total of about \$3,000 is set aside for signing. We are working cooperatively with the State Highway Department to produce and install some of those signs. Approximately \$2,500 is allocated for our dedication ceremony in July. We are exploring the possibility of a joint ceremony with the Forest Service for their San Juan Skyway and we expect the contribution of other partners to extend our capabilities on the dedication.

G. STAFFING

At present 13 work-months are allocated to work on the Byway spread between the District and 2 resource areas. The majority of the work will be carried out by the RA recreation planners, the seasonal and volunteers working with them and the District Public affairs officer. The rest of the work-months will go to managers and support staff. We are also hoping to receive significant support from our partners. Some will come in the form of labor to help us carry out a lot of work in a short timeframe. In some cases our partners will be able to provide skills or expertise that the BLM currently lacks such as graphic design or art. The extent of these contributions is difficult to estimate at this time. It is clear, however, that some of our accomplishments will be heavily tied to contributions from our partners.

H. PARTNERSHIPS AND VOLUNTEERS

As mentioned before we are working with a variety of entities on this project. The contributions of some have been specifically identified and still need to be worked out for others. Some of our partnerships include:

1. San Juan Triangle Recreation Task Force - balanced public input on our management of the area.
2. Hinsdale, Ouray and San Juan Counties - assistance with road maintenance, heavy equipment, special projects and the possibility of contributed funds.
3. The Southwest Colorado Travel Region - cooperative marketing efforts including Byway information in their regional travel brochure.
4. Historical Societies of Hinsdale, San Juan and Ouray Counties - Research, labor and materials to protect, stabilize and interpret the area's historic resources.
5. Colorado Mountain Club - specific trail maintenance project with approximately 20 volunteers.
6. The U.S. Forest Service - cooperation on the Spring Creek Pass Kiosk, Alpine Loop Byway, San Juan Skyway, proposed Silver Thread Byway, marketing video and brochures.
7. Student Conservation Association - provides volunteers for a variety of recreation and wilderness projects in the SRMA.
8. Western State College - potential to contribute graphic arts expertise for brochures.
9. Good Sam Club - assistance in locating a Campground Host for the Mill Creek Campground.
10. Farmer's Insurance Co. - BLM's national partner in the Byway program.
11. The Western Colorado Interpretive Association - non profit group that is starting to contribute to our interpretive efforts. They will help distribute and eventually print the Alpine Explorer.
12. Lake City, Ouray and Silverton Chambers of Commerce - possibility of services or contributed funds to help with marketing. Operation of Visitor Centers.
13. Colorado Center for Public and Private Sector Cooperation - will assist BLM in working with existing partners and developing new partnerships.
14. American Hiking Society - helps us advertize for volunteers through their Helping Out in the Outdoors publication.
15. Other potential partnerships we will be exploring in the future include: commercial guides & outfitters, vehicle rental firms, sporting goods stores, service businesses such as motels & restaurants, the San Juan Interpretive Association, the Colorado Division of Wildlife, Trout Unlimited, OHV clubs, mining companies, the Colorado Woolgrowers Association and conservation groups.

I. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTING

Few actions are anticipated that would require additional NEPA documentation. Any such actions that are proposed will be evaluated as appropriate through the CER, EA or EIS process.

J. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Informal monitoring of visitor use patterns and trends and resource impacts is on going. It is hoped in 1994 or 1995 we would be able to repeat our visitor use survey to formally assess recreation activities, settings and experiences, as they compare to results obtained in the 1984 survey. This would also give us enough time to assess the effect of the Byway designation.

K. FUTURE NEEDS

This area has been managed with a strong recreation emphasis before there was a Byway or a Showcase project. The Byway designation will undoubtedly focus more attention on the area but is not expected to significantly change the nature of recreation here. We must be sure that our marketing efforts are structured so that we don't attract too many people to the area. This could strain the existing facility infrastructure and the area's fragile resources. An increase in visitation of 20% or 30% could easily fit with existing capabilities but an increase of 100% to 200% would strain resources and alter the area's unique nature. Much effort should be focused on the development of the fall, winter, and spring seasons which are now under-utilized. This would result in more use without the associated impacts caused by crowding and provide more economic stability for our partners in the surrounding communities.

The San Juan Triangle SRMA offers the BLM an outstanding opportunity to reach a wide variety of people through a visitor information/interpretation center in Lake City. It is recommended in our Rec 2000 submission that such a center be constructed in the 1990's. The previously mentioned interpretive plan and sign plan would further help to offer clear and enjoyable information and education to the public.

Finally there is a need to maintain proper staffing to manage this high profile area. At least 10 and preferably 20 workmonths should be dedicated to on the ground presence, maintenance and management. It would be desirable to dedicate 6 of those workmonths to a WAE recreation technician position stationed in Lake City to supervise seasonals and volunteers working in the area. Such a position would attract well qualified candidates, reduce our need to constantly retrain new personnel, and offer some continuity to the seasonal workforce. We need to maintain a well qualified seasonal staff to deal with the increased visitation, work with our volunteers in on the ground projects and maintain a positive BLM presence. Without such a presence we risk deterioration of the area's outstanding resources. At the same time our credibility with our partners will be diminished and subsequent partnerships will be much more difficult to establish.

The recreational and scenic resources of the San Juan Triangle and Alpine Loop Byway are among the most outstanding in the BLM. This area offers a prime opportunity for the BLM to showcase its recreation program. A management plan and facility infrastructure are already in place. The main element that is needed now is a management commitment to do more than "keep the doors open".

Instead we need to aggressively manage this area to protect the resources, provide a wide diversity of recreation opportunities, offer appropriate information and education to the visitor and provide a memorable recreation experience on public lands.

San Juan Triangle
Alpine Loop National Backcountry Byway
Action Plan

A. BACKGROUND

The San Juan Triangle Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) covers about 200,000 acres in the highly scenic San Juan Mountains of southwest Colorado. The area is extremely popular with recreationists pursuing motorized recreation, hiking, fishing, camping, sight-seeing and photography in a spectacular alpine setting. Annual visitation is estimated at 600,000 user days. The centerpiece of this SRMA is the new Alpine Loop National Backcountry Byway. This 63 mile route was established as a wagon road for miners in the late 1800's. Today the same route offers relatively easy access to outstanding recreation opportunities for visitors from around the country.

The San Juan Triangle has had an emphasis on recreation for many years and is among the highest recreation priorities for the BLM in Colorado. In 1984 a detailed visitor use survey was conducted to identify the preferences and needs of the public. In 1986 a Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP) was prepared for the SRMA. Inadequate funding has prevented the RAMP from being fully implemented but we continue to work on the priorities and projects identified therein. In 1987 we organized the San Juan Triangle Recreation Task Force to involve the local governments and other interested partners in the management of this area. The group continues to be an effective tool to generate partnerships and identify priorities. In that same year the BLM produced a comprehensive visitor guide to the area called the Alpine Explorer. This 12 page brochure was very well received and has been a very effective management tool. This action plan will focus primarily on the implementation of the Backcountry Byway program this year but will also mention some of the actions planned for the rest of the SRMA. Of course, recurring tasks such as facility maintenance, sign maintenance, trail maintenance, backcountry patrol and visitor contact would continue as in the past.

B. RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY OBJECTIVES

1. President's Objectives: Several actions in the SRMA address the President's objective of promoting responsible stewardship of Public Lands. Interpretive messages in the Alpine Explorer, trail guides, and displays all have components that promote responsible stewardship. In addition our marketing brochure will aim toward recreationists who are attracted to this area for its beauty and natural values and thus more likely to care for these values.

2. Recreation 2000 Objectives: The management of the SRMA and the Byway addresses many aspects of the objectives for the Bureau's Recreation 2000 initiative.

a. Visitor information and interpretation- the management presence of the BLM will be highlighted through our signing and personnel. Interpretive displays and brochures will better inform the public about recreation opportunities in the area. They will also serve to heighten visitor awareness about the need to care for these resources with the underlying theme of Use, Share and Appreciate. The existing BLM offices as well as cooperative visitor information centers will have a variety of interpretive

1. At present, the Alpine Loop is the only Backcountry Byway in the Montrose District. As a result the San Juan Recreation Task Force which has worked with us extensively on the Alpine Loop is serving as our District NBCB Committee. In the fall, when time permits we hope to establish a District Committee with wider representation to work with us on the nomination of other Byways if appropriate.

2. We have many partners for the Byway effort and are continually looking for more. Some of these partners will be entering into Cooperative Agreements and others will not. It is expected that Agreements with all major partners now identified should be developed by May of 1990. As other major partnerships are developed agreements will be instituted as appropriate.

3. Many on the ground facilities are in place. Those to be developed this year should be completed according to the following schedule:

- a. Alpine Gulch Bridge - Oct. 89 - minor touch up in June '90
- b. Red Bridge Handicap Access Restroom - May '90
- c. Highway, Entrance and Route Signs for Byway - July '90
- d. Burrows Park Interpretive Sign - July '90
- e. Replacing Alpine Tundra Interpretive Signs - July '90
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- 2) Lake City Information Center
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June 1991: install display in Silverton or Lake City.

June 1992: install display in Ouray Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center.

Task Assignments: Develop display panels for each information center that interpret the Alpine Loop. These panels should serve as orientation to the route, should describe opportunities along the Loop, include some photos, etc. Montrose District Office (MDO) personnel will work with San Juan Resource Area (SJRA) personnel on Ouray and Silverton; MDO and Gunnison Resource Area (GRA) personnel will work on the Lake City display. Assistance from MDO operations may be needed for the construction of displays and information panels. We will work with the USFS on the possible display in Silverton. Depending on display location we will look for partners to contribute time and/or dollars to the production and installation of the display.

b. Other existing or developing information centers: There are other ongoing activities which will also serve to inform the visitors and potential users of the Byway about the opportunities along the Alpine Loop. These include:

- 1) Spring Creek Pass information kiosk. This is a cooperative effort with the USFS which will include part of a panel on the Alpine Loop.

Completion Date: July 1990

Task Assignments: GRA and MDO working with USFS

- 2) Gunnison Chamber of Commerce display. We will be installing by spring a BLM display in the visitor information center in Gunnison. This display will include some information about the Byway.

Completion Date: June 1990

Task Assignments: GRA and MDO

G. STAFFING

At present 13 work-months are allocated to work on the Byway spread between the District and 2 resource areas. The majority of the work will be carried out by the RA recreation planners, the seasonal and volunteers working with them and the District Public affairs officer. The rest of the work-months will go to managers and support staff. We are also hoping to receive significant support from our partners. Some will come in the form of labor to help us carry out a lot of work in a short timeframe. In some cases our partners will be able to provide skills or expertise that the BLM currently lacks such as graphic design or art. The extent of these contributions is difficult to estimate at this time. It is clear, however, that some of our accomplishments will be heavily tied to contributions from our partners.

H. PARTNERSHIPS AND VOLUNTEERS

As mentioned before we are working with a variety of entities on this project. The contributions of some have been specifically identified and still need to be worked out for others. Some of our partnerships include:

1. San Juan Triangle Recreation Task Force - balanced public input on our management of the area.
2. Hinsdale, Ouray and San Juan Counties - assistance with road maintenance, heavy equipment, special projects and the possibility of contributed funds.
3. The Southwest Colorado Travel Region - cooperative marketing efforts including Byway information in their regional travel brochure.
4. Historical Societies of Hinsdale, San Juan and Ouray Counties - Research, labor and materials to protect, stabilize and interpret the area's historic resources.
5. Colorado Mountain Club - specific trail maintenance project with approximately 20 volunteers.
6. The U.S. Forest Service - cooperation on the Spring Creek Pass Kiosk, Alpine Loop Byway, San Juan Skyway, proposed Silver Thread Byway, marketing video and brochures.
7. Student Conservation Association - provides volunteers for a variety of recreation and wilderness projects in the SRMA.
8. Western State College - potential to contribute graphic arts expertise for brochures.
9. Good Sam Club - assistance in locating a Campground Host for the Mill Creek Campground.
10. Farmer's Insurance Co. - BLM's national partner in the Byway program.
11. The Western Colorado Interpretive Association - non profit group that is starting to contribute to our interpretive efforts. They will help distribute and eventually print the Alpine Explorer.
12. Lake City, Ouray and Silverton Chambers of Commerce - possibility of services or contributed funds to help with marketing. Operation of Visitor Centers.
13. Colorado Center for Public and Private Sector Cooperation - will assist BLM in working with existing partners and developing new partnerships.
14. American Hiking Society - helps us advertize for volunteers through their Helping Out in the Outdoors publication.
15. Other potential partnerships we will be exploring in the future include: commercial guides & outfitters, vehicle rental firms, sporting goods stores, service businesses such as motels & restaurants, the San Juan Interpretive Association, the Colorado Division of Wildlife, Trout Unlimited, OHV clubs, mining companies, the Colorado Woolgrowers Association and conservation groups.

Instead we need to aggressively manage this area to protect the resources, provide a wide diversity of recreation opportunities, offer appropriate information and education to the visitor and provide a memorable recreation experience on public lands.