

A Framework for Wayshowing

West Elk Loop Scenic and Historic Byway

Pitkin, Garfield, Gunnison, Delta, and Montrose Counties
Colorado



July 2016

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*Cover photo: Paonia Reservoir, looking east from Highway 133
Photo by Jon Schler*

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Executive Summary: A Framework for Wayshowing West Elk Loop Scenic & Historic Byway

Wayshowing is a collection of maps, signs and electronic media that have been developed to aid travelers in their journey. This document reports the results of a formal wayfinding assessment that was conducted in July 2016 to evaluate how easily travelers new to the region both navigated the West Elk Loop (the Byway) and understood the significance of its extraordinary natural, cultural and historic assets.

The West Elk Loop Scenic and Historic Byway stretches 205 miles through the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park, Curecanti National Recreation Area, Gunnison National Forest, Blue Mesa Reservoir, two state parks, Paonia Reservoir, and Kebler Pass, and McClure Pass. Three byway communities serve as gateways to these public lands: Carbondale, Gunnison and Hotchkiss.

Directional signage to locations on public lands is generally excellent. These are sites managed by the National Park Service, the United States Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and Colorado State Parks and Wildlife. Generally, directional signage on public lands is more consistent for displayed campgrounds than trailheads. There are fewer navigational signs directing travelers to historic and cultural attractions. The plan outlines these sites with little or no signage and recommends that the byway work with each byway community craft a local wayfinding plan to make sure first-time visitors can easily locate every historic and cultural site in their community.

The content of interpretative panels is excellent. Taken together, the collection of panels tells a rich collection of stories about the Byway's natural, historic and cultural assets. Two additional interpretive themes would expand travelers' understanding of the region's rich natural resources. Those interpretive themes are water and geology.

With preservation as its priority, the Byway Organization has a collective value of maintaining minimal signage in this stunning natural landscape. This study suggests information additions would help improve the quality and enjoyment of the visitor experience while creating no additional impact on the scenic viewsheds. These improvements in visitor information would all occur within city limits of byway towns, and would provide.

The unevenness of cell service and Internet connectivity makes a printed map and brochure critical for navigation the Byway. The wayfinding assessment team found very few maps or other print materials to help navigate. The Steering Committee is in the process of updating the byway brochure and obtaining funding from byway partners to assure that print brochures will be available for the 2017 travel season.

This byway organization, true to their stewardship mission, has been reluctant to market the byway, expressing concern about the impact of increased tourism on intrinsic resources. Maintains a minimal Internet presence has been part of that low profile strategy. The plan recommends that the group consider a new proactive role, and build their website into a robust source of environmental education. This West Elk Loop Byway Organization, strong and well organized, could take on the next challenge of stewardship and utilize electronic information to help manage travelers who plan to recreate or traverse through these precious protected lands.

West Elk Loops Scenic Byway



Redstone Coke Ovens

Photo by Jon Schlier



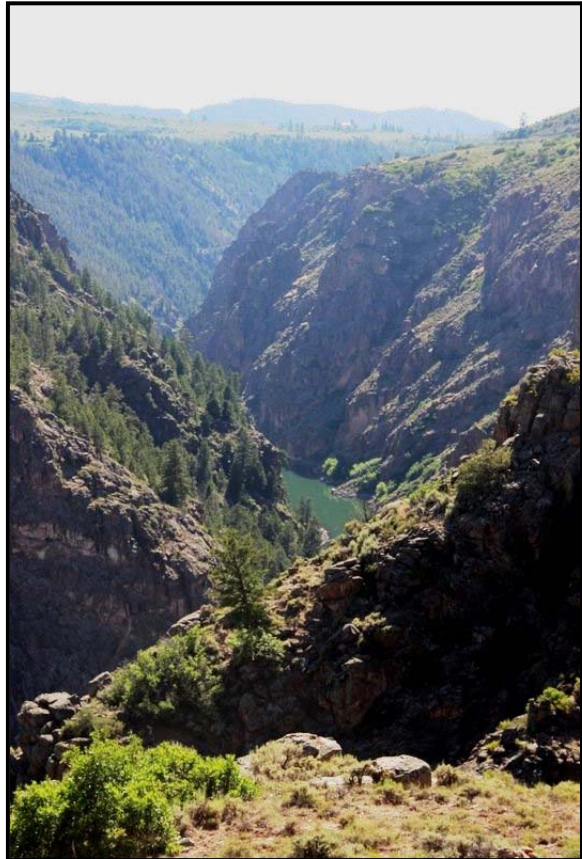
West Elk Loop Scenic Byway sign near Hotchkiss

Photo by Jon Schlier



Crystal River Valley, Redstone (looking north-east on the east side of McClure Pass)

Photo by Jon Schlier



Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park

Photo by Jon Schlier

Introduction

The deployment of an effective system of wayshowing is an essential component of successful regional tourism strategies. Wayfinding and wayshowing are related but distinct concepts. **Wayfinding** is the mental process performed by travelers in identifying and locating their travel destinations. **Wayshowing**, on the other hand, is the communication in the form of maps, signs, and other media intended to aid the traveler in their wayfinding.

The purpose of this document is to provide a preliminary plan for an enhanced wayshowing system along the West Elk Loop Scenic & Historic Byway. In achieving this purpose, the plan aims to:

- Provide an outline of key concepts of wayshowing and wayfinding
- Assess the inventory of existing directional signage to key sites along designated routes.
- Provide recommendations for enhancing directional signage to key sites.
- Provide an outline for subsequent action.

Keys to Effective Wayshowing

An effective system of wayshowing responds to the needs of travelers at all stages in their journey. At a minimum, effective wayshowing for the traveler must:

- Support how people find their way in unfamiliar travel environments
- Provide a guidance system of reliable and consistent components on the byway
- Respond to the unique characteristics of the byway
- Integrate pre-visit, visit, and post-visit stages of the byway experience
- Contribute to a safe roadway and travel environment

With the assistance of an effective wayshowing system, successful travelers should be able to:

1. Identify origin and destination
2. Determine turn angles
3. Identify segment links and directions of movement
4. Recognize on-route and distant landmarks
5. Mentally embed or visualize the route in a larger reference frame to form a cognitive map.

Stages of Wayshowing

Effective wayshowing is essential not only to ensuring good experiences for the visitor, but also in attracting that visitor in the first place. While wayshowing may seem to begin and end with the traveler on the road, it also plays an important role in attracting visitors, assisting in their trip planning, and in enhancing their recollections with others after their trip is complete. Consider the travel experience as five distinct stages:

Choose

The point at which the traveler decides his or her travel destination or destinations. *Wayfinding Needs: What are the travel routes? What is there to see and do and where are these activities located? How much time is required for the trip?*

Prepare

This is the stage in which the prospective traveler plans and prepares for their trip, including making reservations or other advance travel arrangements. *Wayfinding Needs: How will we get there? Where will we stay, eat and stop? How much time should we allot to travel to and on the travel route? Where are the heritage, recreational, and cultural attractions of the area?*

Go/Do

This stage is the event itself as the visitor makes his or her way to or around their destination. *Wayfinding Needs: Where are the entry points to the route? How do we get back on track if we get off the route? Where are the attractions along the route? Where can we get information along the route? Where do we get gas, food, or lodging?*

Recall

This is the stage in which the memories of the trip extend its enjoyment beyond the time spent away from home. With travel completed, visitors typically want pictures, maps, souvenirs or other items to assist their recollection of a memorable trip. *Wayfinding Needs: What will help us recall the good times we had on the trip? Where were the sites we really enjoyed?*

Do Again

It is hoped that with an enjoyable and memorable trip, many visitors will return. *Wayfinding Needs: Where are those good maps from our last trip? We need to show our friends and family what they might like.*

The Components of Wayshowing

A successful wayshowing system includes multiple components that not only direct the traveler, but also provide interpretive information. Wayshowing does not start and stop on the road, but exists to provide the traveler with information to plan their trip and assist in the recollection of it afterwards through maps, websites and other media that can be accessed away from the physical roadway. Essential elements of a wayshowing system include the following:

- Entrances, Exit and Gateway Signage. Identification of where to enter and exit a route or byway so that travelers know their position relative to accessing and leaving a byway or other route.
- Orientation Stops. Pull-offs, turn-outs and other places for motorists to stop and help them create, refresh, and expand their mental maps of a byway or other route, its intrinsic qualities, and overarching interpretive theme with exhibits, maps, and other means of communication.
- Repetitive Route Markers. A sequence of visual cues for motorists to follow along a byway or other route.
- Directional Signage to Planned Destinations. Signs that alert and guide motorists to featured stops and attractions along or near a byway or other route.
- A Portable Map. A carry-on map of a byway corridor or travel region and its various attractions and amenities.



Photo by Jon Schlier

West Elk Loop Information kiosk next to Town Hall on Highway 92, Crawford

History of Wayfinding on the West Elk Loop Scenic & Historic Byway

The West Elk Loop Scenic and Historic Byway was established on July 26, 1991 by the Colorado Scenic and Historic Byway Commission. It is administered by the commission and a volunteer Steering Committee with representatives of three local regions comprising the Byway Committee. The byway route is a loop, located in west-central Colorado that includes portions of the following roadways: State Highway 133; Gunnison County Road 12 (Kebler Pass); State Highway 135; US Highway 50; and State Highway 92.

The West Elk Loop Scenic and Historic Byway crosses a mixture of private and public lands. Public land jurisdictions include two National Forests (White River and Gunnison), three BLM Resource Areas (Glenwood Springs, Uncompahgre and Gunnison), two National Park Service properties (The Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park and Curecanti National Recreation Area), two State Parks (Crawford and Paonia), and scattered tracts of State School Board Lands and Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) lands. (*West Elk Loop Scenic and Historic Byway Corridor Management Plan 2000.*)

Peaks, mountaintops, mountain passes and canyons create dominant impressions as travelers navigate this byway. Forested areas, agricultural land and other open areas afford other spectacular scenic views. Directional signage that gives travelers the ability to safely pull off the roadway to contemplate or photograph these magnificent views is a prime function of wayshowing. Directional signage also helps travelers locate information centers, restrooms, camping locations, trailheads and cultural/ historical locations.

Interpretive tools are another aspect of wayfinding that help travelers make decisions regarding their path of travel and include maps, brochures, signs, and Internet resources.

“Interpretation is a communication process designed to reveal the meanings and relationships of our cultural and natural heritage to the public through first-hand involvement with objects, artifacts, landscapes and sites.”

September 12, 2015
US Forest Service

The Corridor Management Plan (CMP) that has guided the West Elk Loop Steering Committee since 2000 described six existing wayside exhibits that fell under the overall byway interpretive theme, “Cultural History and the Natural World.” Exhibit topics were place-based (taken from the immediate site context) and covered subjects ranging from agriculture ranching, to the history of the Utes, mining and the railroad, the Dominguez-Escalante expedition, building of dams, geologic processes, and wildlife. The CMP also noted two National Historic Districts on the byway Crested Butte (designated in 1974) and Redstone (designated in 1989).

The 2000 CMP also recommended that for future interpretative materials continue to reflect the Byway Committee’s broad concern for preservation, protection, and traveler ethics. Suggested topics included the respect for private property, the impact of recreation on western ranching lands and culture, sensitivity of mountain environments, wildlife management, and wilderness management.

It noted that in printed brochures, only the Crystal River brochure mentioned respect for land and place, and there were no other mentions in written materials of specific environmental sensitivities or traveler etiquette.

Finally, the CMP recommended that the Steering Committee reconsider their previous decision not to provide pre-notification signage for wayside exhibits, as “many of these exhibits likely go unnoticed by many travelers.” The 2016 wayfinding assessment team noted that pre-notification signage for these established wayside information sites is still not present. The underlying principle of keeping signage to a minimum to reduce visual impacts on the landscape continues to guide the decisions of the Byway Steering Committee and the larger Byway Committee.

In support of projects undertaken by the West Elk Loop Byway Committee, eight grants were received from the National Scenic Byway Grant Program.

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Name</u> | <u>Funding Amount</u> |
|-------------|--|-----------------------|
| 1994 | West Elk Loop Interpretive Facilities | \$53,486 |
| 1996 | West Elk Loop Historical Tour Guide | \$60,000 |
| 1997 | West Elk Loop Corridor Management Plan | \$60,000 |
| 2002 | West Elk Loop Crested Butte to Carbondale Trail Plan | \$52,000 |
| 2005 | West Elk Loop Byway Wayside Exhibit Panels | \$32,000 |
| 2007 | West Elk Loop Byway Conservation Easement | \$43,000 |
| 2008 | West Elk Loop Byway Visitor Center Interpretation and Amenities (Paonia, CO) | \$124,000 |
| 2009 | West Elk Loop Redstone Coke Ovens Restoration | \$113,100 |

One grant was received from the Colorado Tourism Office.

| | | |
|------|------------------------------------|---------|
| 2012 | Printing of West Elk Loop Brochure | \$2,000 |
|------|------------------------------------|---------|

These grants listed above funded improvements in visitor information, interpretation, printing of brochures, and wayside exhibits – all aspects of wayfinding. The remaining projects funded historic restoration, land conservation and planning.

Organizational Development

West Elk Loop Scenic and Historic Byway has proven to have one of the strongest and most stable organizations of the 26 byways in the Colorado Byways program. The group has a full roster of officers that provides leadership, a core group that forms the Steering Committee, and 125 partners and partner organizations that are kept informed of byway issues projects in progress.

Leadership from the three regions of the Byway has risen from public land agencies and local citizens, and been augmented by long serving volunteers who are elected officials, representatives of local partner organizations, and concerned citizens. Meetings are scheduled well in advance and are well attended. The 2000 Corridor Management Plan guides the direction of the organization. This plan is reviewed and kept up to date, one chapter at a time, during regularly scheduled meetings. In short, this organization functions very effectively.

Method of Assessment

Often the difficulty in providing effective wayshowing lies in understanding where travelers require assistance and in what form. Additionally maps, signs and other information sources can provide conflicting information for the traveler. In June 2016, an on-the-road experience was conducted along the West Elk Loop Scenic and Historic Byway and sought to assess the wayfinding experience by:

- Identifying gaps in navigational clues presented to travelers by recording points of certainty, and points of confusion; and
- Identifying points of disconnect between what travelers see through the windshield and what they read on mobile devices, maps, and websites

The eighty-nine sites below were identified by The Steering Committee, and then assigned to one of three on-the-road wayfinding assessment teams.

Scenic Overlooks and Pull offs Identified by Steering Committee

- Janeway Meadows pull off
- McClure Pass pullout
- Crystal Valley pullout
- Erickson Springs overlook
- Kebler Pass pullout
- Crawford Needle Rock overlook
- Black Canyon North Rim Road, 6 overlooks
- Pioneer overlook
- Blue Mesa Reservoir overlooks



Photo by Jon Schlier

Directional sign to McClure Pass, Paonia & Redstone on Hwy 133 at Marble turn off

Recreation, Trails and Campgrounds Identified by Steering Committee

- Avalanche Creek trailhead
- Avalanche Creek Campgrounds
- Broderick Gulch and the Dutchman Coal Mine trailheads
- McClure Campground
- Huntsman's Ridge trailhead
- Chair Mountain trailhead
- McClure Pass Campgrounds
- Hawsapple and Spruce Campgrounds
- Anthracite Creek trailhead
- Erickson Springs Campground
- Trout Creek trailheads
- Lost Lake Campground

- Ruby Anthracite Trail and CB Wagon Road Trail trailheads
- Jumbo Mountain Trail System (for bikes) trailheads
- Crawford State Park Reservoir & Campground
- Lake Irwin Campground
- Roaring Judy Campground
- Signal Peak (Lost Canyon Trail System) trailhead
- North Rim Campground
- Chasm View Nature Trail trailheads
- Black Canyon of the Gunnison Campground
- Curecanti National Recreation Area
- Curecanti Creek Trail trailheads
- Blue Mesa Reservoir Campgrounds (5 campgrounds)
- Elk Creek Campgrounds
- Elk Creek Marina
- Dillon Pinnacle/Neversink Trail trailheads
- Gunnison, Signal Peak (Lost Canyon Trail System) trailheads



Photo by Jon Schler

Hawsapple Campground sign, Paonia Reservoir

Nature and Natural Assets Identified by Steering Committee

- “Watchable Wildlife” interpretive exhibits
- Crystal River Fish Hatchery interpretive exhibits
- “On the way to Janeway” interpretive exhibits
- Carbondale Interpretive exhibits
- “Placita” interpretive exhibit
- “Local Geology” and placement panel interpretive exhibits
- “Crystal History” interpretive exhibits
- Hawsapple and Spruce Campground Interpretive exhibits
- Paonia Reservoir Interpretive exhibits
- “Almont Triangle” placement panel & interpretive exhibits
- Roaring Judy Fish Hatchery
- “River Ecology” and “Orientation Panel” interpretive exhibits
- Hotchkiss Fish Hatchery & interpretive exhibits
- “Orientation Panel” interpretive exhibits
- Blue Mesa Dam Interpretive Exhibits
- “River Ecology” and “Orientation Panel” interpretive exhibits



Photo by Jon Schler

“Muddy Slump” interpretive exhibit sign on west side of McClure Pass

Cultural Heritage Sites
Identified by Steering Committee

- Carbondale Historical Society Museum (Jail & Historic Log Building)
- Thompson House Museum
- Crystal River Fish Hatchery/Museum
- Redstone National Heritage District
- Redstone Inn
- Cleveholm Manor/Redstone Castle
- Elk Park Placita
- Coke Ovens
- “Mining on the North Fork” interpretive exhibits
- Gunnison Pioneer Museum
- Gunnison Art Center
- Western State College Museum
- Escalante-Dominguez mural
- Miner’s Memorial Statue
- Old Curtis Hardware Building (now Blue Sage Center for the Arts)
- Paradise Theater
- Escalante-Dominguez Trail interpretive site marker
- Bross Hotel
- Mathews House
- Paonia First Christian Church
- Hotchkiss/Crawford Historical Museum
- Hotchkiss Creamery Art Center
- Hotchkiss Hotel
- Hotchkiss Methodist Episcopal Church
- Hotchkiss Homestead/Barn
- Crawford Historic School/Town Hall with interpretive exhibits
- Historic School and Town Hall with interpretive exhibit
- Crested Butte National Historic District
- Crested Butte Mountain Heritage Museum
- Old Rock School House/Library



Photo by Jon Schler

Original Jailhouse and Historic Log Building, house the Carbondale Historical Society Museum

Visitor Centers
Identified by Steering Committee

- Carbondale Chamber of Commerce
- Gunnison Visitor Center
- Redstone Visitor Center
- Crested Butte Visitor Center
- Elk Creek Visitor Center
- North Rim of the Black Canyon of the Gunnison Visitor Center



Photo by Vicky Nash

Gunnison Visitor Center on Hwy 50

A four-member team was assembled to travel the byway using a “front seat, back seat” approach. In the front seat were neophytes, new to the region with no knowledge of the area. They were given the list of stakeholder-identified attractions and sites to locate using highway signage, verbal directions and printed materials such as brochures and maps available at Visitor Centers and other public outlets. The “front seaters” were also allowed to use any mobile devices available to them.

Transportation and tourism specialists occupied the backseat. The “back seaters” recorded the experience of the “front seaters” in detail. “Back seaters” recorded the exact locations where the “front seaters” encountered confusion or uncertainty in navigating the region. They also recorded any disparities between written information in maps, brochures and other media and actual conditions as observed through the windshield.

While the neophytes in the front seat navigated their way through unfamiliar territory, the specialists in the back seat were given the following assignment:

- Observe the actions and discussions of the “front seaters”
- Record locations where “front seaters” expressed uncertainties and confusion and note apparent reasons
- Quiz “front seaters” on effectiveness of signs, maps and other driving instructions
- Note which wayshowing tools “front seaters” are using most often, and which they are not
- Resist giving any travel or driving advice unless an immediate safety issue warrants
- Conduct post-trip discussion with “front seaters”

After the conclusion of the wayfinding exercise, participants were asked to record observations and make recommendations based on their on-the-road experience. Full documentation of the comments and observations by team members is found in the Appendix.

Location Specific Findings

CARBONDALE

The information kiosk on Highway 82 would be an excellent location to place an orientation map of the full West Elk Loop. This visitor information would assist the travelers without adding any additional visual impact to the landscape. There is currently only one small byway plaque on 82 and it needs maintenance.

Two different teams noted that they needed advanced notification for the 82/133 intersection with a “start byway” plaque followed by another byway plaque on Highway 133 that would provide confirmation that they have arrived at the beginning of the Byway.

Entering Carbondale, the driver who was new to the region was unable to locate a visitor information center (Chamber of Commerce, 520 South Third) using street signage, but she did find the USFS Ranger Station to ask for navigation assistance. Carbondale has good cell phone service and all Carbondale’s “most important sites for travelers” on the assessment checklist were located through Google searches. Thompson House and Museum (jail and log building) were located through a directional sign on the southbound side of Highway 133; however, there is no directional sign to notify northbound traffic.

Interpretive signs at the Historic Museum need to be replaced. They were described as “in awful shape” and “unreadable.”

CRYSTAL RIVER

Although there is one directional sign for the Crystal River Fish Hatchery and Museum, two teams reported that they came upon it too fast to turn in. A pre-notification sign is recommended for this excellent facility. Our travel team found Avalanche Creek Road, but found no indication of either Avalanche Creek Trailheads or Avalanche Creek Campground. The USFS campground turnoffs need signage regarding the levels of access, grades and turnarounds, i.e. posted information regarding the requirement for four-wheel drive, ability of RVs to maneuver, etc.

REDSTONE

Redstone Campground has good pre-notification signage. The coke ovens preservation project is located right on Highway 133 and includes multiple interpretive panels. The panels are attractive and in excellent condition, but the tiny font makes the text extremely difficult to read. Space for vehicles to pull off is plentiful.

Across the highway there is a parking area designated for Elks Park Open Space, but there is no signage on Hwy 133 to direct travelers to the park itself or to the river trail. One driver noted that an arrow underneath the Redstone National Heritage District sign would make it clearer to travelers that the town is located on the other side of the Crystal River. Clustering the existing signs at this location would be a service to travelers. An overgrowth of trees along the river obstructed the view of the Redstone Castle from the road.

“Today, people who call Redstone home come from near and far for what binds them in their love of the arts, the outdoors and the history of this small Colorado town.”
-Interpretive panel in Elk Park, Redstone

Local brochures had no directions to the Redstone Museum, the Cleveholm Manor/Redstone Castle, or the Redstone National Heritage District. The National Historic District did not appear on the city walking tour map. There was no findable reference for the “Placita” and none of the teams located the coalmine trailheads. In short, finding locations within the town of Redstone proved very difficult.

MARBLE

Directional and interpretive signs for Marble were easily seen from Highway 133, and all byway plaques are in good condition. Ground maintenance is needed around the History Colorado interpretive panel.

The stretch of Highway 133 south of Redstone offers an extraordinary example of context-sensitive design. Signs blend nicely into the landscape, with directional posts and the backsides of signs painted dark brown, and the guardrails are painted a shade of brown that blends into the surrounding environment. This context-sensitive stretch of road ends at the border of the National Forest, where once again signs and guardrails are standard issue.

“...the West Elk Loop Scenic Byway, ...includes one of the prettiest stretches of road anywhere. A section of CO-133 along the Crystal River near Hays Creek Falls is literally my favorite scenic drive in Colorado.”

Vicky Nash, *EnCompass* by AAA Colorado, July/August 2013

McCLURE PASS

The team located the McClure Campground sign from Highway 133, although there was no advanced warning sign. One team was unable to find either directional or interpretive signs, but another team reported that USFS campgrounds were well marked, as were Huntsman’s Ridge trailhead and Chair Mountain Trailhead. No team found the “Crystal History” interpretive exhibits.

McClure Pass has several pullouts with stunning views that would provide a good location to install information about the geology of this beautiful area. Signage for Somerset reads, “Coal Mining Town Since 1896.”

PAONIA RESERVOIR

Paonia Reservoir had good directional signage and the team easily found Hawsapple and Spruce Campground entrance. No interpretive signage was found. Off-road parking is steep for the Ruby Anthracite Trail and CB Wagon Trails.

KEBLER PASS

At the intersection of Highway 133 and Kebler Pass, there is a nice collection of byway and history-themed panels. The interpretive site was littered with trash, and there were no trashcans in the area. As the team proceeded across Kebler Pass, there was no phone signal, and no interpretive signage. Only a few small USFS trailheads were marked.

“Campgrounds in the National Forest were better marked than trailheads... Our team had difficulty finding most of the trailheads on our list.”

Vicky Nash, Resort Trends (Assessment team member)

A sign displaying a camera, the symbol for a photo opportunity, directed travelers to a very large overview with panoramic views. There is ample room and good opportunity for interpretive signage covering the geological history. This location would also be an excellent midway point for an orientation map.

The Lost Lake campground was easily located, but no directional signage was found for Lake Irwin Campground. Interpretive signs were found at the turn for the campground, but the driver and her teammate did not realize they had arrived at Irwin Lake.

CRESTED BUTTE

Crested Butte was designated a National Historic District in 1974, and has retained its rich historic character. It is also now a well established travel destination, known primarily for its recreational assets of wildflowers, fat tire bicycles, and winter skiing.

An excellent town welcome sign sets a colorful tone, and prominent signs identify the information center. Teams entering town from both north and south found adequate navigation signs. Both teams, however,

reported uncertainty about how to depart the town of Crested Butte to rejoin the byway. The team exiting to the north found the placement of byway plaques in town misleading.

“Our driver got very frustrated (with the lack of directional signs), so pulled over to ask how to get to Gunnison.”

Vicky Nash, Resort Trends (Assessment team member)

ALMONT

One team found The Roaring Fork Fish Hatchery was well marked with both directional and interpretive signs, the other had to turn around.

GUNNISON

Using only signage as a navigation tool, one team passed the Gunnison Visitor Center, and then doubled back to find it. This same “signage only” team also had difficulty finding the Gunnison Pioneer Museum and the Gunnison Art Center.



Photo by Vicky Nash

Almont Triangle State Wildlife Area

The other team arrived in Gunnison after closing hours and more easily found all locations, including bicycle trailheads, using a smart phone. All locations on the Western State University were found using orientation signs on campus. This team discovered the Gunnison River White Water Park on the west side of town with the interpretive panels that describe river ecology and the man-made rapids for recreation (rafting, kayaking, and fishing). They termed this discovery “dumb luck” as they had seen no directional signage. Neither team found the Signal Peak trailhead, although one team had gotten verbal directions to the trailhead from a local.

The Visitor Center is easily found by visitors entering town from the east on Highway 50. Our teams entered from the west on Highway 50 and from the north on 135. For travelers entering town from the west or the north, the Gunnison Visitors Center is very difficult to locate.

PAONIA

North Fork Valley Creative Coalition has an excellent web site, although cell service is intermittent, and visitor information in short supply. The team found most of historic sites on their navigation check list by randomly driving through town. Paonia has the feel of a real authentic downtown with hardware store, drug store, grocery store, retail shops, insurance agencies, and art galleries, but this was a pleasant surprise to travelers, as the north entry to Paonia offers only an aging State Historical sign planted in a weedy turnaround. This fine downtown deserves a more positive entry.

HOTCHKISS

Directional and interpretive signage in Hotchkiss was excellent. The museum, hotel and art center were easily located on Main Street. Directional signage and byway plaques were excellent to the Fish Hatchery, the Byway and Crawford. The Delta County Fairgrounds (one and a half blocks off the byway) have restrooms and a shaded park, and the fish hatchery also offers a rest area and good interpretive signage. Only the Hotchkiss Homestead/Barn lacked directional signage.



Photo by Jon Schlier

Escalante-Dominguez Expedition Route follows Hwy 133 to Hotchkiss

CRAWFORD and CRAWFORD STATE PARK

Crawford Town Hall/Community Center is a beautiful historic building in the middle of town.

Next to it is an outdoor interpretive kiosk with an interpretive panel featuring West Elk Loop and additional panels highlighting Delta County activities. The panels are in fine shape, but the exterior of the kiosk is fading and needs to be replaced. The directional sign to this site is almost completely hidden by tree limbs.

Crawford State Park Reservoir is two miles south of town, and both directional and interpretive signs are excellent. Boating, fishing, hiking trails and camping are located around the reservoir, and several of the pullouts offer fine views of Needle Rock Formation.

BLACK CANYON OF THE GUNNISON NATIONAL PARK (North Rim)

The turnoff to the Black Canyon is just south of the Crawford Reservoir and enters an access road to the National Park that is approximately 11 miles long. The surface on the last 6 miles turns to well-maintained gravel. Overlook pull-offs on the Black Canyon North Rim Road include The Narrows, Balanced Rock, Big Island, Island Peaks, and Kneeling Camel. The interpretive sign at Kneeling Camel was fabricated with very old embedded fiberglass and needs to be replaced.

There are a number of primitive campgrounds (with signage in trees), a small visitors center and the Chasm View Nature Trailhead, a walking trail with well-marked interpretive sites. Here the visitor is offered incredible views of steep canyons. Sites are well signed and a print brochure was available with additional information.

Our assessment team members all reported that both The Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park and North Rim Campground need additional interpretive signage. Suggested locations for additional interpretation are the North Rim Campground and the Black Canyon of the Gunnison Campground.

CURECANTI RECREATIONAL AREA

The assessment team noted that additional directional signage was needed for the Curecanti Creek Trail trailheads. The first main pull off was Hermits Rest, which provided two interpretive signs, a picnic shelter, restrooms, and an RV parking loop. This location offers wonderful views of the San Juan Mountain and Morrow Point Reservoir, and is the trailhead for the three-mile Hermits Hiking Trail.

The second large pull off is Pioneer Point which also offers restrooms, picnic areas and a looped parking lot. Amazing views are offered along the canyon rim and the Curecanti Creek Trail.

BLUE MESA RESERVOIR AND DAM

The Blue Mesa Reservoir and Dam vehicle pull off (just before one crosses the dam) offers an unobstructed view of the Blue Mesa Dam, an interpretive installation and a small vault toilet. The West Elk Loop sign is in good shape, but the other interpretive signs that describe the dam and the hydropower plant are seriously faded and sprayed with graffiti, and one panel is missing.



Photo by Jon Schler

Curecanti National Recreation Area
Interpretive exhibit

Additional directional signage is needed for Pioneer Overlook, which “came up too fast on a curve” for the driver. On the other side of the dam are Lake Fork Boat Marina, an information center, and a camping area. This area has excellent directional signs. Dillon Pinnacle pullout has new interpretive signs that are in excellent condition, as does Blue Mesa Campground.

Recommendations and Action Plan

The Steering Committee works to preserve, protect, interpret, and enhance the intrinsic qualities of the West Elk Loop Scenic and Historic Byway for the enjoyment of the public.

West Elk Loop is designated as both a National Forest Scenic Byway and a Colorado State Scenic and Historic Byway. Since its inception, the leadership of this Byway Committee has made conservation and preservation its mission, and has actively worked to maintain the corridor’s intrinsic landscape aesthetics. To this end, the group has adopted a minimalist approach to the quantity of directional signage needed to safely guide travelers along the Byway.

In this formal assessment, the Steering Committee was asked to identify the list of attractions most likely to be sought out by the traveling public. Categorized below is the Committee’s list of eighty-nine locations (pages 11-13), with 59 percent of locations falling in the first three categories of scenic, natural and recreational.

| No. of Locations | Visitor Locations by Category | % |
|------------------|------------------------------------|-------------|
| 9 | Scenic Overlooks and Pullouts | 10% |
| 28 | Recreation, Trails and Campgrounds | 31% |
| 16 | Natural Assets | 18% |
| 30 | Cultural Heritage Sites | 34% |
| 6 | Visitor Centers | 7% |
| 89 | Total Visitor Locations | 100% |

The majority of the eighty-nine sites were located by using directional signage, as Byway maps and brochures were out of stock and mobile devices were useful only in towns where cell reception was available. Missing directional signage to trailheads or campgrounds may be part of strategies employed by public land managers to reduce or eliminate visitor traffic to specific locations. Listed below are recommendations only for those locations on the attractions list that were difficult to locate or were not found at all. All other locations were adequately signed.

Directional Signage, Recommendations

The assessment teams failed to locate directional signs for the following locations that were identified by the Steering Committee as attractions most often sought out by the traveling public.

| Location | Directional Signs Missing or Inadequate | Notes |
|---|---|---|
| Carbondale (Gateway) | Pre-notification on Hwy 82, "Start Byway" on Hwy 133, Historical Society, Thompson House | "Start Byway" sign with arrow needed on Hwy 82 and confirmation plaque on Hwy 133 after the turn. The Historical Society (jail and log building) has no signage on northbound 133. The only directional guidance to the Thompson House Museum is one banner mounted on a light post. |
| Crystal River | Avalanche Creek Campground, Janeway Meadows Pull off, Pre-notification for Crystal Ridge Fish Hatchery | Directional signage was not found for Avalanche Creek Campground, nor the Janeway Meadows pull off. The Crystal River Fish Hatchery had one directional sign; recommend that pre-notification signage be added |
| Redstone (National Historical District) | Elk Park Open Space sign, Add arrow to Redstone NHD, Cleveholm Manor, Broderick Gulch, Dutchman Coalmine, Placita | No directional signage to Elk Park Open Space that offers a performing facility, interpretive signage, bridge to downtown and river trail. Recommend that an arrow be added beneath existing Redstone National Heritage District sign. In town, Cleveholm Manor (Redstone Castle), Broderick Gulch the Dutchman Coalmine Trailhead, and Elk Park had no directional signs apart from one sign next to river in park |
| McClure Pass | Huntsman Ridge, Chair Mountain, McClure Pass Campground, Crystal Valley | No signage to locate Huntsman Ridge Trailhead, Chair Mountain Trailhead at top of the Pass, McClure Pass Campground, Crystal Valley pullouts. The only signage on McClure Pass is the summit sign |
| Paonia Reservoir | Anthracite or Trout Creek Trailheads, Lost Lake or Erickson Springs Campgrounds | No signage for Ruby Anthracite Creek Trailhead, Lost Lake Campground, Erickson Springs Campground, or Trout Creek Trailhead |
| Kebler Pass Road | Lake Irwin | No sign for Lake Irwin Campground |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Crested Butte | Exiting downtown | Byway plaques with arrows “to byway” exiting town toward Kebler Pass, and to south toward Gunnison |
| Almont | Roaring Judy Campground, Almont Triangle | No signage to Roaring Judy Campground. Almont Triangle has one directional sign, but it was inadequate. Add a second directional sign and a directional sign to interpretive exhibits. Reposition byway plaques |
| Black Canyon of the Gunnison | On access road leading to entry of National Park | Sign low to the ground on the left. Weeds covered sign which “Looked like a rock.” |
| Black Canyon of the Gunnison Campground | NPS Ranger Station, Black Canyon of the Gunnison Campground | No signage to NPS Ranger Station or to the Black Canyon of the Gunnison North Rim Campground |
| North Rim Campground | Campground entrance | North Rim Campground sign covered by trees |
| Pioneer Overlook Point | Safety issue | Pioneer Overlook has one directional sign, but cars come came up too fast on the curve; existing sign needs to be repositioned or a pre-notification sign added |
| Blue Mesa Reservoir and Dam | Chasm View Trail, Add arrow | Chasm View Nature Trail is visible, but needs additional sign directing travelers to the overlook |
| Dillon Pinnacle/ Never Sink Trail | Safety issue | Dillon Pinnacle/ Never Sink Trail trailheads are on a curve before Blue Mesa and Elk Creek and present a potential safety issue |
| Kneeling Camel Overlook | NPS Ranger Station | No signs to restrooms No signs to Ranger Station where Deadhorse Trail begins |
| Gunnison | Visitor Center | Improve signage for the Visitor Center for travelers entering town from the West and the North |



Photo by Jon Schlier

Six miles of the access road to Black Canyon of the Gunnison North Rim Road has a gravel surface

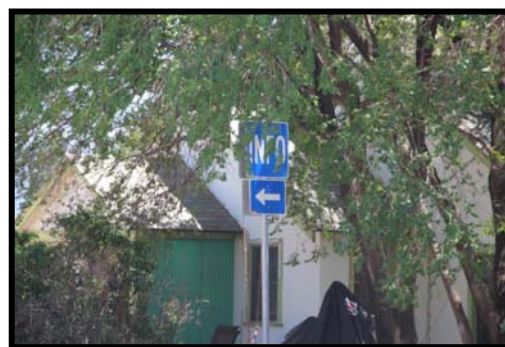


Photo by Jon Schlier

Directional sign partially blocked by trees, Crawford

Interpretive Signage, Recommendations

The quality of interpretive signs along the Byway is excellent. A few locations, however, are deteriorating or damaged and need replacement. The following short list describes those interpretive panels that need immediate attention, and specific locations that require grounds maintenance.

| Community | Interpretive Signage Maintain or Replace | Notes |
|--|--|---|
| Carbondale | Replace two panels | Historical Museum has two seriously damaged panels, "Wildlife on the Loop" and a blank panel |
| Kneeling Camel Overlook | Replace one panel | Interpretive sign made of embedded fiberglass needs to be replaced |
| Blue Mesa Reservoir and Dam | Replace two panels | Blue Mesa reservoir and Dam signs need to be replaced. One is missing, the other is covered with graffiti. |
| Kebler Pass intersection 133 and CR 12 | Maintenance | Excellent panels are in good shape. Area needs trash pickup, a trashcan and weeding |
| Crawford Historic School and Town Hall | Maintenance and replace south-facing exterior sign | "West Elk Loop Information" (south facing sign) has been reclaimed by nature. Exterior of kiosk adjacent to building needs painting. Interpretive panels themselves are fine. |
| Marble | Turn from Hwy 133 | Weeding needed around History Colorado sign |
| 7 miles north of Crested Butte | Replace both panels | Just before town there is a beautiful little meadow with two panels. 1) one map is starting to fade, 2) panel is deteriorated completely, unreadable |

The following locations were identified as prime locations for additional interpretive signage. Themes of geology or water could be covered in these locations: McClure Pass pullout, Chasm View Nature Trail, North rim Campground, and Black Canyon of the Gunnison Campground.

As interpretive signs are replaced, content will need to be updated to reflect changes in the landscape as well as the evolution of communities. Two current developments taking place along this byway will be very interesting to cultural heritage travelers. The first is the evolution of local agriculture to include organic and farm-to-table local cuisines and wines, available in Hotchkiss, Paonia, Crested Butte and Carbondale. The second development is the designation of three Creative Districts 1) Carbondale, 2) Crested Butte/Gunnison, and 3) Hotchkiss/ Paonia / Crawford.



Photo by Jon Schlier

Deteriorating interpretive panel, Carbondale



Photo by Jon Schlier

Faded interpretive panel, Kebler Pass

The Internet and Other Information Tools, Recommendations

The West Loop Byway currently maintains a very minimal website www.westelkbyway.com. Colorado's tourism portal, colorado.com, lists a single page of information, as does codot.gov/travel/scenic/byways, the website of the Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways Program. Build an extensive website. Protecting the fragile resources on the Byway from too much human activity has been a conscious stewardship strategy.

Meanwhile, other groups are targeting new kinds of travelers to the byways. The US Forest Service has been directed to engage younger visitors, diverse visitors and visitors from the inner cities. The National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management are working toward similar goals. The Governor of Colorado is actively pursuing projects that will shape Colorado into the number one state in the country for bicycle riding, and the Colorado Tourism Office has set a goal to help move visitors from Denver and the Front Range into rural areas that desire more visitors. Meanwhile officials on the Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests have announced that they will soon begin implementing restrictions to disburse camping in several areas, including on the Gothic and Kebler Pass Corridors.

A website dedicated to environmental education about these specific natural resources could serve to manage travel, not market travel. It would speak to those high value travelers who appreciate the value of public lands, and who come determined to contribute—or at least do no harm.

West Elk Loop could utilize the power of the Internet to build a more robust site, one that outlines how these irreplaceable resources are currently being managed, and that provides directives that set expectations for visitors, especially travelers inexperienced in remote or wilderness areas. Traveler ethics and Environmental Education sections could address these questions: What are the rules in a wilderness area? If one is not experienced in the outdoors, how does one behave? How can one minimize the impacts of primitive camping?

Recommendations for Byway Communities

Gateway (Carbondale, Gunnison, and Hotchkiss) for Traveler Information

As the two assessment teams traveled the byway, absent both a map and Internet access, all participants felt a need for orientation. It is recommended that the three Gateway communities—Carbondale, Gunnison and Hotchkiss—install outdoor “You are Here” orientation maps that provide a visual of the full byway displaying mileage between cities, elevations, and significant natural and historic attractions.

Currently, none of the three gateway communities visually present the byway as a whole, nor do they point out the intrinsic qualities that the public can enjoy at different locations. Placement inside city limits or at the edge of these gateway towns would furnish information that travelers need while avoiding the intrusion of signage onto the natural landscape. These orientation installations could also present local cultural and historical information, and identify what makes each community distinctive. Messages that communicate respect for land, for place and for local culture can be expressed prominently at these in-town orientation locations. Placement of these signs will require consultation with the CDOT, municipalities as well as byway partners.

Gateways Orientation Signage

| Community | Interpretive Signage | Notes |
|--|----------------------------------|---|
| Carbondale Gateway | Orientation Map with side panels | On Highway 82 in the established overlook near the intersection of 82/133, place a full map of West Elk Loop byway for traveler orientation; add a byway plaque for confirmation after making the turn onto Hwy 133 |
| Hotchkiss Gateway | Orientation Map with side panels | In front of Hotchkiss/Crawford Historical Museum Provide full map of Byway |
| Gunnison Gateway | Orientation Map with side panels | Downtown, possibly locate the small park at West Virginia Ave. and Main Street, or the Gunnison Visitor Center |
| Kebler Pass “Photo Opportunity” pull off | Orientation Map with side panels | This location could provide not only a directional map at a midway point on the byway, but take advantage of a large pull off where an interpretive installation could be installed and not interfere with the panoramic view |

Byway Communities (Carbondale, Redstone, Marble, Paonia, Hotchkiss, Crawford, Gunnison, and Crested Butte)

In general, travelers will find the majority of the byway’s tangible cultural/heritage assets in or very near byway communities. The byway asset list page 11-13 represents 34% of the primary assets identified by the Steering Committee. These include historic theaters, art centers, museums, murals, hotels, churches, schools, and historic industries (mining, timber, ranching).

Communities containing National Heritage Districts: Redstone and Crested Butte

Two downtowns have been designated as National Historic Districts. Designations were earned by Crested Butte in 1974 and by Redstone in 1989. In general, Crested Butte has exceptionally good directional signage for travelers who are entering town or navigating through the downtown area. It is recommended that byway plaques (with arrows “to West Elk Loop”) be installed to guide travelers who want to rejoin the byway either to north on County Road 12 or to the south on Highway 135. In addition, consider installing additional byway plaques between Gunnison and Crested Butte, a section of the road that brought up navigational uncertainties from both teams.

It is recommended that directional signage outside of Redstone be a priority action item for the Byway: 1) add an arrow to the National Historical District sign to indicate to travelers that they must turn off 133 to reach the town, and 2) add a sign pointing to Elk Park Open Space (across the road). The West Elk Loop Byway has made a considerable investment in the Elk Park amphitheater, interpretive center and trailhead, and should make sure travelers are fully alerted to its availability. Clustering together existing signs in the coke ovens pullout

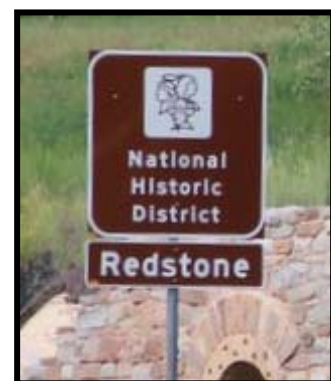


Photo by Jon Schler

Redstone National Historic District sign needs an arrow to direct travelers across the river

would be an improvement; consolidating information onto a single directional sign would be very helpful to travelers.

Action Plan

Short Term Actions

- A. Work with local jurisdictions to accomplish maintenance of grounds that surround existing interpretative installations. Set up an annual inspection schedule to identify elements of the wayfinding system that needs repair or replacement.
- B. Replace interpretive panels that have deteriorated or been damaged. Update panel content and pursue funding for replacement panels in conjunction with local partners.
- C. Review with public land managers the list of missing or inadequate directional signs for trailheads, campgrounds, and restroom facilities. Work with partners and CDOT with a prioritized list of requested directional signs.

Long Term Actions

- D. Design and install orientation signage within inside the city limits of the three Gateway Communities of Carbondale, Hotchkiss, and Gunnison. Anchor each installation with map of the full byway, and provide additional panels that provide the traveler with an overview of the intrinsic assets of the byway. Design these gateways installations to communicate the byway's established goals of conservation, preservation and environmental education. Spell out traveler ethics—what behaviors the byway stewards expect from travelers.
- E. Design and install a cohesive wayfinding system by providing directional signage within each Byway town to insure that travelers don't miss the cultural and historic attractions in or near each town, and so that the towns also have the opportunity to provide visitor services that create economic gain for local businesses.
- F. Expand the existing website www.westelkbyway.com to become a robust source for in depth environmental education on the intrinsic resources of the West Elk Loop, and present detailed guidelines for traveler behavior in each ecosystem (traveler ethics).

Partnerships and Funding Resources

"I didn't feel traveler options along the Byway were identified via signage."

Robin Waters (assessment team member)

Projects to be developed through consultation with the regional office of the Colorado Department of Transportation

- Work with the CDOT Engineer for Region 3 to request directional signs and byway plaques on state highways
- Work with both county and CDOT to post seasonal road closures (electronically and on-site)

Projects to be developed in partnership with counties

- Work with county road departments to install directional signage and byway plaques where the Byway traverses county roads, i.e. Gunnison County Road 12 for Kebler Pass.

Projects to be undertaken in partnership with individual communities

- Develop gateway installations for the towns of Carbondale, Hotchkiss, and Gunnison that include orientation maps, and overview of intrinsic assets around the loop
- Work with for each individual town to develop in-town directional signage to assure that travelers are directed to public spaces: libraries, museums, historic sites, parks, restrooms, and traveler information. The byway can seek funding for a planning grant that would create a cohesive design for wayfinding signage inside each of the eight Byway communities.

Projects to be undertaken by the West Elk Loop Byway Organization

- Update and print the West Elk Loop Byway brochure (in progress)
- Develop electronic information that can be downloaded in a traveler's trip planning stage
- Expand the current website for West Elk Loop, dedicated to environmental education and in depth information on the Byway's intrinsic resources
- Develop in digital format historical information on sites along the Byway. This information should be more comprehensive than the abbreviated descriptions found in the West Elk Loop Brochure

Projects to be developed with National Park Service, US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Colorado Parks and Wildlife

- Expand watchable wildlife interpretive information beyond what is displayed at the three fish hatcheries
- Add interpretive themes that feature the region's major stories of water and geology

Funding Sources

| Source | Description | Funding |
|--|--|---|
| Scenic Byways Conservation Grant www.palmerlandtrust.org/news/palmer-accelerates-conservation-colorados-scenic-byways | This project is funded and currently underway, with West Elk Loop is in partnership with Palmer Land Trust and Gold Belt Tour Scenic Byway. The purpose of the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) grant (2012) is advance land conservation efforts along the state’s designated Scenic and Historic Byways. \$3,500 in match has been invested by West Elk Loop | \$14,000 is apportioned for West Elk Loop |
| Great Outdoors Colorado www.goco.org | GOCO-funded projects increase outdoor recreation opportunities in Colorado, preserve our open spaces, protect and manage our wildlife, and enhance our state parks. Planning grants and habitat restoration are available | \$ Varies |
| Colorado State Trails Grant cpw.state.co.us | Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) Trails Program administers grants for trail-related projects on an annual basis | Trails application due Nov 1 st |
| Colorado Department of Local Affairs www.colorado.gov/pacific | Includes Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) Grants (www.colorado.gov/pacific/dola/rural-economic-development-initiative) | \$ Varies |
| Environmental Protection Agency www.epa.gov/home/grants-and-other-funding-opportunities | Environmental Education grants in some years www.epa.gov/education/environmental-education-ee-grants | \$ Varies |
| Rural Business Development Grant www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-business-development-grants | RBDG is a competitive grant designed to support targeted technical assistance. Training Projects in rural areas may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and technical assistance, such as project planning • Acquisition or development of land, easements, or rights of way • Rural transportation improvement | Grants of \$10,000 up to \$500,000 for rural projects |
| USDA Community Development Grants www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-community-development-initiative-grants | This program provides funding to help community development organizations support community and economic development projects in rural areas | \$ Varies |

| Source | Description | Funding |
|--|--|---|
| The Conservation Alliance www.conservationalliance.com/grants | The Conservation Alliance is a group of outdoor businesses that supports efforts to protect specific wild places for their habitat and recreation values. Grant Criteria: 1. The project should seek to secure permanent protection of a specific wild land or waterway for its habitat and recreational values. 2. The campaign should engage grassroots citizen action in support of the conservation effort. Before applying for funding, an organization must first be nominated by one of the member companies, which then sends each nominated organization an RFP instructing them how to submit a full request. | The Conservation Alliance conducts two funding cycles annually, deadlines are Nov 1 st and May 1 st |
| Tom's of Maine 50 States for Good www.tomsofmaine.com/community | Tom's of Maine 50 States for Good is a national initiative to support the goodness behind grassroots community projects. Project applications will be accepted from nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations, for funding requests related to community events, project or program support. | Six organizations will share \$150,000, including one that will be awarded \$50,000 |
| Patagonia Environmental Grants Program www.patagonia.com/environmental-grants-and-support.html | Patagonia funds only environmental work. Supports multi-pronged campaigns to preserve and protect the environment | Accept one proposal per fiscal year (May 1 st - April 30 th). Grants up to \$12,000 |
| The Pew Charitable Trusts www.pewtrusts.org/program_investments_procedure.aspx | Arts, Culture, Environment Letter of Inquiry Processing | \$ Varies |
| The David & Lucile Packard Foundation www.packard.org/ | The Foundation has a longstanding commitments to land conservation in the American West | \$ Varies |
| The Lawrence Foundation General www.thelawrencefoundation.org/about/fact.php | Grants Environmental and human services and other causes. Moving towards making more multi-year program and operating grants. | Grants are awarded twice a year, applications are due by April 30 th and November 1 st |
| El Pomar www.elpomar.org Grants Department: 1-800-554-7711 | A private general purpose foundation, El Pomar accepts applications from 501(c)3 organizations serving the state of Colorado in the areas of arts and culture, civic and community initiatives, education, health, and human services. Emphasis on assisting those most affected by economic conditions. | If requesting capital support, request must be less than \$100,000. Grants accepted year round |

APPENDIX

Byway notes and observations from the Wayfinding Assessment Teams during their tour on the West Elk Loop Scenic and Historic Byway on July 15, 2016.

BACK SEAT OBSERVATIONS

1. Volunteer, Vicky Nash – Resort Trends (Carbondale, Redstone, McClure Pass, Kebler Pass, Crested Butte, and Gunnison)

- The following resources were used to research or navigate the Byway: GPS, West Elk Loop map, brochure, visitor centers, and retail shops
- Directional signs were excellent for Crystal River Fish Hatchery and Museum, Crystal River Fish Hatchery interpretive exhibits, Redstone National Heritage District, Redstone Inn, Coke Ovens, town of Marble turnoff and interpretive sign, Paonia Reservoir Hawsapple and Spruce Campgrounds and interpretive exhibits, Erickson Springs Campground and overlook, Lost Lake Campground, Ruby Anthracite Trail or CB Wagon Road Trail trailheads and Gunnison visitor Center
- Directional signs were adequate for Roaring Judy Fish Hatchery
- There were not enough directional signs for Thompson House Museum and pullout, McClure Campground, “Almont Triangle” placement panel and interpretive exhibits, Gunnison Pioneer Museum and Western State College Museum
- No directional signs were found for Historic Society Museum (Jail & Historic Log Building), “Watchable Wildlife” interpretive exhibit, Janeway Meadows pull off, “On the way to Janeway” interpretive exhibit, Avalanche Creek trailhead and campgrounds, Cleveholm Manor/Redstone Castle, Broderick Gulch and the Dutchman Coal Mine trailheads, town on Redstone Elk Park Placita, “Placita” interpretive exhibit, Huntsman’s Ridge trailhead, McClure Pass “Local Geology” placement panel and interpretive exhibits, Chair Mountain trailhead, McClure Pass Campgrounds, McClure Pass Crystal Valley pullout, McClure Pass “Crystal History” interpretive exhibit, Anthracite Creek trailhead, Trout Creek trailheads, Kebler Pass pullout, Kebler Pass “Mining on the North Fork” interpretive exhibits, Lake Irwin Campground, Gunnison Art Center, John Gunnison monument, town of Gunnison Signal Peak trailhead, and “River Ecology” and “Orientation Panel” interpretive exhibits
- There were interpretive signs at Historic Society Museum (Jail & Historic Log Building), Carbondale’s “Watchable Wildlife” interpretive exhibit, Crystal River Fish Hatchery, Redstone’s Coke Ovens, town of Marble (turnoff), and Gunnison Visitor Center
- No interpretive signs were found at Redstone National Heritage District, and “Almont Triangle” placement panel and interpretive exhibit
- Carbondale’s “Watchable Wildlife” interpretive exhibit was in very poor condition
- Saw one banner on light post for Thompson House Museum and pullout
- Crystal River Fish Hatchery and Museum had a great sign
- Crystal River Fish Hatchery interpretive exhibit – “very nice – no”
- Redstone National Heritage District sign on Hwy 133
- Unsure if saw sign for “Placita”
- Redstone Coke Ovens obvious on Hwy 133; great signs
- No prior notice of McClure Campground; sign at entrance only

- Hawsapple and Spruce Campgrounds clearly marked
- Unable to locate "Mining on the North Fork" interpretive exhibit; "Was it North Fork Coal Country at the turnoff?"
- Found Western State College campus and map, but was unable to locate museum
- Saw West Elk Loop sign and turn off to Carbondale
- Looked for (but did not see) another West Elk Loop sign on Hwy 82, before roundabout. Confusing, did not know if Byway went towards downtown.
- Saw tiny blue "Tourism Info" sign; didn't see "tourism info" office anywhere
- Stopped at Forest Service, ranger provided map and verbal instruction to Historic Society Museum
- Identification of Thompson House very confusing ("Is it the cabin?"); finally saw plaque on building
- Asked "Siri" for information – not found
- No sign on Hwy 133 to Historic Museum
- Used Google to get information
- Scenic Highway sign on Hwy 133 across from high school
- Found Fish Hatchery – good!
- Asked "Siri" for information again – not found
- Did not find Avalanche Creek trailhead on Google maps, did find Avalanche Creek Campground
- Avalanche Creek Road sign did not have campground nor trailhead on sign
- GPS worked intermittently
- Redstone Campgrounds sign
- Unable to locate "Placita", asked at General Store; we were told Placita is a ghost town
- Across street from General Store is "Redstone Park" (on sign)
- Located "Elk Park" sign – no mention of "Placita"
- Never ever and driver did not see Redstone Castle
- Drove right by Marble first interpretive display; no signs indicating it was on the left side
- At the town of Marble turn off, located interpretive sign
- No GPS on McClure Pass
- Summit sign on McClure Pass; no other signs
- At mile marker 37 on McClure Pass, "Saw pull out with sign, but why would we stop?"
- West Elk Loop sign by Collbran turn off
- "Scenic Overlook 1 mile" sign – then nothing; saw a pull out, but no indication it was Scenic Overlook
- Good West Elk Loop sign to Crested Butte
- Three good West Elk Loop interpretive signs; needs trash can; lots of weeds
- Stopped at Paonia State Park to use restroom
- No GPS on Kebler Pass
- "Trailhead Parking has moved – 1 mile ahead" sign
- Brown "Camera" sign with arrow; big parking area with pretty view
- No directional sign to 2 West Elk Loop interpretive signs; faded "Wildlife on the Loop" interpretive sign
- Missed Irwin Lake
- Did not get to Crested Butte Visitor Center because our travelers did not see it
- When leaving Crested Butte drivers kind of felt their way (no directional signage)
- West Elk Loop Byway sign with arrow pointing back to Kebler

- Driver got very frustrated so pulled over to ask how to get to Gunnison
- Asked "Siri" – not found
- In Almont – did not see "Triangle"
- In Gunnison – primarily looked for signs; no map; looked for Visitor Center
- Asked "Siri" for information – not helpful
- Called Gunnison Chamber; stopped at Chamber – nice brochure racks; helpful staff; asked where things were; didn't take a map however, they did provide a West Elk Loop map
- Drove to Western State College – museum not depicted on campus map; also couldn't find trailhead
- Spotted Almont Triangle on return trip to Crested Butte; drove past and returned; looked like a ranch entrance; called for information

2. Volunteer, Ken Brubaker – CDOT Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities Engineer (Carbondale, Redstone, McClure Pass, Kebler Pass, Crested Butte, and Gunnison)

- Directional signs were excellent for Redstone coke Ovens, Erickson springs Campground and Overlook, Lost Lake Campground and Roaring Judy Fish Hatchery
- Directional signs were adequate for Crystal River Fish Hatchery, Museum and interpretive exhibits, Avalanche Creek trailhead, End of Avalanche Creek Road trailhead, Redstone National heritage district, McClure Pass pullout, McClure Campground, Hawsapple and Spruce Campgrounds and interpretive exhibits, Anthrocite Creek trailhead, Erickson Springs Campground and overlook, Ruby anthracite Trail or CB Wagon Road Trail trailheads, Gunnison visitor Center, Wester State College/Museum
- There were not enough directional signs for Historic society Museum (Jail & Historic Log Building), "Watchable Wildlife" interpretive exhibits, Thompson House Museum and pullout, Cleveholm Manor/Redstone Castle, Elk Park Placita, "Placita" interpretive exhibit, "Local Geology" and placement panel interpretive exhibits, "Almont Triangel" and placement panel interpretive exhibits, Gunnison Pioneer Museum, Gunnison Art Center, John Gunnison monument
- No directional signs were found for Janeway Meadows pull off, "On the way to Janeway" interpretive exhibits, Redstone Inn, Broderick Gulch and the Dutchman Coal Mine trailheads, Huntsman's Ridge trailhead, Chair Mountain trailhead, McClure Pass Campgrounds, Crystal Valley pullout, "Crystal History" interpretive exhibits, Trout Creek trailheads, Lake Irwin Campground, La Veta Hotel, John Gunnison monument, Signal Peak trailhead, "River Ecology" and "Orientation Panel" interpretive exhibits
- There were interpretive signs for Coke Ovens and "Mining on the North Fork" interpretive exhibits. The "Watchable Wildlife" interpretive exhibit signs were not readable, they were in bad shape.
- No interpretive signs were found for "Almont Triangle" and placement panel interpretive exhibits
- Redstone National Heritage District sign was on the Byway
- The Elk Park Placita sign says Redstone Park
- Redstone Coke Ovens are on the side of the highway so it is easy to find
- Gunnison Visitor Center has information signs

Carbondale

- It was noted by driver that it would be beneficial to have more notice on Hwy 82 as you are approaching Hwy 133 that you are approaching a scenic byway. Not enough advanced notice was given.

- Driver noted that a confirmation plaque on Hwy 133 when you turned off Hwy 82 would be beneficial.
- When entering Carbondale it would be useful to have better information on how to find Tourist Information. Driver was confused on where to go to ask for Byways map & get info.
- Were able to stop and USFS Ranger station and get some guidance but could not find actual Tourist Information center.
- Thompson House and Museum are the same building which is confusing. Can only see the monument sign from the highway when traveling SB on Hwy 133. No sign present on NB Hwy 133.
- Iphone Siri did not prove to be useful to find information on assessment checklist in pretty much every circumstance. Google Maps search fared much better for electronic results.
- Signing for Avalanche Creek Road was adequate however driver and teammate did not see anything for Avalanche Creek Campground, Trailhead, or Janeway Meadows pull off.

Redstone

- There was adequate signage on Hwy 133 to alert driver of Redstone. The coke ovens and interpretive exhibit were easy to find because they were right off the highway.
- There was no Elk Park sign on Hwy 133. Finding the park was not intuitive even though it was right off of Hwy 133. There is a parking sign but no sign actually designating the park. There was no findable reference for the "Placita".
- Finding locations within Redstone was very difficult. Driver and teammate had to stop and ask for directions to Redstone Castle/Elk Park/Broderick Gulch.
- Driver noted that an arrow underneath the Redstone Historic District sign would be useful.

Marble

- Signs for Marble as well as the interpretive signs were easily seen from Hwy 133.

McClure Pass

- Found McClure campground sign from Hwy 133. There was no advanced warning sign for the campground. Something the driver noted would be useful.

Paonia Reservoir

- Found Hawsapple & Spruce Campground entrance. Did not notice interpretive exhibits

Kebler Pass

- Turn for Kebler Pass found as well as directional signage for Crested Butte. Scenic Byway plaque found. The interpretive signs right after the turn onto City Rd 12 is in good shape but pull out needs maintenance such as weed trimming and trash pickup.
- Lost Lake Campground sign was easily found. Signage for Lake Irwin campground not found.
- Interpretive signs were found at the turn for Lake Irwin campground but driver and teammate did not realize they were on the correct road for Lake Irwin.

Almont Triangle

- GPS did not work over McClure or Kebler passes but resumed once in Crested Butte.
- Found Roaring Judy Fish hatchery sign from Hwy 135. Could not see a sign for the campground. Driver noted that she would have turned into hatchery to ask for directions to campground.
- Almont triangle entrance was spotted on the way back from Gunnison but it was not clearly marked. No interpretive signs were found.

Gunnison

- Could not see street signs for Hwy 50 and Hwy 135 in Gunnison.
- Direction finding in Gunnison was difficult for team.

- Eventually the team found the visitors center and were able to get directions to the Art Center and Western State. The other locations in Gunnison were not found before it was time to return.

Driver noted that there could be more signs/plaques confirming to people that they are on the scenic byway when travelling from Gunnison to Crested Butte. Group knew we were on byway but driver noted that it was not obvious.

FRONT SEAT OBSERVATIONS

3. Volunteer, Cherlyn Crawford – Never Ever (Driver) (Carbondale, Redstone, McClure Pass, Kebler Pass, Crested Butte, and Gunnison)

- Found a map at visitor center
- Stopped at forest service for information and were given a map
- Person navigating used “Siri” to navigate the Byway
- The visitor center and people were helpful
- Excellent directional sign to Crystal River Fish Hatchery and Kebler Pass pullout
- Excellent directional sign at base of Kebler Pass turn off to Somerset Mine and pullout
- Adequate directional signs to Crystal River Fish Hatchery/Museum, Redstone National Heritage District, Redstone Inn, Coke Ovens, Hawsapple and Spruce Campgrounds, Ruby Anthracite Trail or CB Wagon Road Trail trailheads, Roaring Judy fish Hatchery and town of Crested Butte
- Not enough directional signs for Historic Society Museum (Jail & Historic Log Building), Thompson House Museum and pullout, Almont Triangle, Gunnison Pioneer Museum, Gunnison Art Center and Gunnison Visitor Center
- No directional signs for Cleveholm Manor/Redstone Castle, Broderick Gulch and the Dutchman Coal Mine trailheads, McClure Campground, Huntsman’s Ridge trailhead, Chair Mountain trailhead, Crystal Valley pullout, “Crystal History” interpretive exhibit, Anthracite Creek trailhead, Erickson Springs Campground and overlook, Trout Creek trailheads, Lost Lake Campground, “Mining on the North Fork” interpretive exhibits, Roaring Judy Campground, Signal Peak (Lost Canyon Trail System) trailhead, “River Ecology” and “Orientation Panel” interpretive exhibits.
- Interpretive signs located at Historic Society Museum (Jail & Historic Log Building), Crystal River Fish Hatchery and Museum, and “Placita” interpretive exhibit
- No interpretive signs were found at Thompson House Museum and Pullout, “Crystal History” interpretive exhibits on McClure Pass, Paonia Reservoir’s Hawsapple and Spruce Campgrounds interpretive exhibit
- The interpretive signs at Historic Society Museum (Jail & Historic Log Building) and Thompson House Museum were in awful shape; they were destroyed and unreadable
- A directional sign on the street, visible from both sides, would help locate the Historic Society Museum
- At the “Watchable Wildlife” interpretive exhibit the Carbondale farming for gold sign was OK
- A warning sign that the Crystal River Fish Hatchery and Museum were coming up would be nice
- We saw the road for Avalanche Creek but there was no indication of trails or campground
- No directions on brochure to the Redstone Museum to the Redstone National Heritage District

- Redstone National Heritage District was not on a city walking tour map
- There was no directional signage to the Cleveholm Manor/Redstone Castle
- Didn't see the Broderick Gulch and the Dutchman Coal Mine trailheads because unable to locate
- Asked for directions to the Elk Park Placita at the General Store; the store owner said it was a ghost town
- Located the "Placita" interpretive exhibit but it was unlabeled
- Coke Ovens were right on road
- Town of Marble turnoff and interpretive sign had good signs and warning
- Unable to locate any directional or interpretive signs on McClure Pass including McClure Campground, Huntsman's Ridge trailhead, Chair Mountain Trailhead, Crystal Valley pullout and "Crystal History" interpretive exhibits
- Possibly located "Local Geology" placement panel and interpretive exhibits ("there was one we looked at because I saw it across a meadow")
- The Ruby Anthracite Trail or CB Wagon Road Trail trailheads off-road parking is steep
- No directional signage to "Mining on the North Fork" interpretive exhibits ("Was that what was at the turnoff from Hwy 133?")
- U-turned to get back to "Almont Triangle" placement panel and interpretive exhibit ("We missed it once and barely saw it when we did a u-turn.")
- La Veta Hotel torn down 15 years ago
- Did not find the Western State College Museum; it wasn't shown on the college map ("We could have found the college information center and asked where it was.")

4. Volunteer, Robin Waters— Basalt Chamber of Commerce (Carbondale, Redstone, McClure Pass, Kebler Pass, Crested Butte, and Gunnison)

- Used road signs, Google and visitor centers to research or navigate the Byway
- "Siri" was unable to identify visitor attractions along the Byway
- Searching Google brought up information
- Road signs were fine, outdoor interpretive sign were good
- Signs in Crystal River Fish Hatchery reception were also good, brochures needed refilling
- Excellent directional sign to Crystal River Fish Hatchery/Museum and interpretive exhibits, Redstone Inn, Hawsapple and Spruce Campgrounds, Erickson Springs Campground and overlook, Lost Lake Campground, Ruby Anthracite Trail, and Roaring Judy Fish Hatchery
- Adequate directional signs to Avalanche Creek trailhead, Redstone National Heritage District, Coke Ovens, town of Marble turnoff and interpretive sign, McClure Campground, and Western State College
- Not enough directional signs for Elk Park Placita, McClure Pass "Local Geology" placement panel and interpretive exhibits, Gunnison Pioneer Museum, Gunnison Art Center and Gunnison Visitor Center
- No directional signs for Cleveholm Manor/Redstone Castle, Broderick Gulch and the Dutchman Coal Mine trailheads, town on Redstone "Placita" interpretive exhibit, Huntsman's Ridge trailhead, Chair Mountain trailhead, McClure Pass Campgrounds, Anthracite Creek trailhead, Trout Creek trailheads, Kebler Pass pullout, Kebler Pass "Mining on the North Fork" interpretive exhibits, Lake Irwin Campground, "Almont Triangle" placement panel and interpretive exhibit, Roaring Judy Campground, La Veta Hotel, John Gunnison monument, town of Gunnison Signal Peak trailhead, "River Ecology" and "Orientation Panel" interpretive exhibits

- Interpretive signs located at Crystal River Fish Hatchery and Museum, Avalanche Creek trailhead, and Ruby Anthracite Trail.
- No interpretive signs were found at Janeway Meadows pull off, Carbondale “On the way to Janeway” interpretive exhibits, Avalanche Creek trailhead, Avalanche Creek Campgrounds, Kebler Pass pullout, “Almont Triangle” placement panel and interpretive exhibit, and John Gunnison monument
- Did not find Janeway Meadows pull off; saw a single highway sign showing “Avalanche Creek Road” but no mention of Janeway Meadows and Campgrounds
- The Avalanche Creek trailhead on Forest Service Road was easy to find with map
- Did not find Avalanche Creek Campgrounds; “No sign, no find”
- Sign to Redstone National Heritage District on highway needs directional arrow.
- Did not find Broderick Gulch and the Dutchman Coal Mine trailheads due to no directional signage
- No road signs to Elk Park Placita; there was one older sign in the parking lot
- No directional sign or reference to “Placita” interpretive exhibit
- The coke ovens were on the highway; the small sign needs improvement
- McClure Pass (pullout) had good double signage from each direction
- McClure Campground had no advance signage; sign at entrance/parking
- McClure Pass “Local Geology” interpretive sign (at mile marker 35-36) not identifiable from road (no scenic overlook)
- Unable to locate Crystal Valley pullout and “Crystal History” interpretive exhibit (no directional signs)
- Paonia Reservoir’s Hawsapple and Spruce Campgrounds had 2 entrance signs, along with sign to reservoir
- Entrance to Kebler Pass (Somerset Mine pullout) had nice signs but needs clean up
- Ruby Anthracite Trail has “so-so parking”
- Could not find reference to “Almont Triangle” placement and interpretive exhibits except on web – SWA
- Found Roaring Judy Fish Hatchery, but no signs to campground
- Passed Gunnison Pioneer Museum, didn’t see Visitor Center information
- Passed Gunnison Visitor Center first time, found coming back through town
- Passed Gunnison Art Center twice, didn’t see directions from Visitor Center
- Located Western State College campus but did not find museum
- Got directions to Signal Peak (Lost Canyon Trail System) trailhead from Visitor Center, but didn’t find

5. *Volunteer, Lisa Langer – Never Ever, GSC Resort Association (Crawford, Black Canyon of the Gunnison, Curecanti, and Blue Mesa)*

- The following resources were used to research or navigate the Byway: Colorado State map, Black Canyon National Park Service flyer (Walking guide to the Chasm, View Nature Trail)
- Directional signs were excellent for Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park
- Directional signs were adequate for Chasm View Nature Trail trailheads (North of Black Canyon NPS Ranger Station), Black Canyon North Rim Road (6 overlook points), Blue Mesa Dam Interpretive Exhibits (short walk north of Dam), Crossing Blue Mesa Reservoir overlooks, Blue Mesa Reservoir Campgrounds (5 campgrounds), Elk Creek Campgrounds, Elk Creek Marina, Elk Creek Visitor Center, and town of Gunnison

- There were not enough directional signs for Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park, North Rim Campground, Blue Mesa Reservoir, Pioneer Overlook (best view of Curecanti Needle), and Dillon Pinnacle/Neversink Trail trailheads
- No directional signs were found for Black Canyon of the Gunnison Campground, Curecanti Creek Trail trailheads, Signal Peak (Lost Canyon Trail System) trailheads, and “River Ecology” and “Orientation Panel” interpretive exhibits
- There were interpretive signs for Blue Mesa Dam Interpretive Exhibits (short walk north of Dam)
- No interpretive signs were found for Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park, North Rim Campground
- First sign reads No Pad (concrete pad)
- Signage to Ranger Station is missing
- Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park does not have North listed on sign
- Fee into national park adequate
- Could have left rim out of drive
- North Rim Campground sign covered by trees
- Chasm View Nature Trail trailheads viewable, needs a sign to overlook and a geological interpretive sign
- Park Ranger parks at Black Canyon North Rim Road overlooks
- No signage for restrooms at Kneeling Camel and Deadhorse Trails
- Blue Mesa Reservoir and Dam signs need repair (one is missing and one has graffiti)
- Need more directional signs to Pioneer Overlook (while driving - overlook came up too fast); looked back at Curecanti Needle
- Blue Mesa Dam Interpretive Exhibits need repair
- Crossing Blue Mesa Reservoir overlooks had 1) private RV park, 2) boat slips, 3) Red Creek, 4) Dry Gulch, 5) Ray of Chicken, 6) East Elk Creek and 7) Elk Creek
- Dillon Pinnacle/Neversink Trail trailheads are on a curve and are before all the Elk Creek and Blue Mesa signs
- Did not find Signal Peak trailhead and “River Ecology” and “Orientation Panel” interpretive exhibits due to no directional signs
- 1st Scenic Byway sign at Redstone
- 2nd Scenic Byway sign at Marble turnoff
- 3rd Scenic Byway sign at the turn to Crested Butte and Gunnison
- 4th Scenic Byway sign just past Somerset and after crossing of North Fork Gunnison River
- 5th Scenic Byway sign on 92 at turn to Paonia
- Saw Hops Farm and Wineries
- Saw Stahl Orchards Agriculture
- Crawford Town Hall closed on Friday
- Crawford – nice view of Needle
- Delta County sign very small
- Montrose – nicer sign
- Black Canyon of the Gunnison sign on left, low to the ground, weeds covered sign, looked like a rock
- Black Canyon of the Gunnison - well maintained gravel road
- Black Canyon of the Gunnison North Rim sign had right arrow, but road only turns slightly – confusing
- Saw National Park sign

- After Black Canyon of the Gunnison saw a “Crown PK” sign. Unknown what it was.
- Scenic Byway sign near Meet Ranch
- Scenic Byway sign near X Lazy Ranch

BACK SEAT OBSERVATIONS

6. Volunteer, Bill Kight – Executive Director, Glenwood Springs Historical Society & Frontier Museum (Black Canyon of the Gunnison, Curecanti, and Blue Mesa)

- Directional signs were adequate for North Rim Campground, Chasm View Nature Trail trailheads, Black Canyon North Rim Road (5 overlook points), Pioneer Overlook, Elk Creek Campgrounds, Elk Creek Marina, Elk Creek Visitor Center, Dillon Pinnacle/Neversink Trail trailheads
- There were not enough directional signs for Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park, and Curecanti Creek Trail trailheads
- No directional signs were found for Black Canyon of the Gunnison Campground, Signal Peak trailheads, and “River Ecology” and “Orientation Panel” interpretive exhibits
- There were interpretive signs for Crossing Blue Mesa Reservoir overlooks
- No interpretive signs were found for Blue Mesa Dam Interpretive exhibits
- No signage to Ranger Station
- Ranger Station closed
- Five overlooks on Black Canyon North Rim Road: 1) The Narrows, 2) Balanced Rock, 3) Big Island, 4) Island Peaks, and 5) Kneeling Camel
- Kneeling Camel overlook interpretive sign is old fiberglass embedded sign
- Pioneer overlook has adequate sign, however came on it too fast (on a curve)
- Dillon Pinnacle/Neversink Trail trailhead on a curve

7. Volunteer, Vince Matthews – Board of Directors, National Mining Hall of Fame and Museum (Black Canyon of the Gunnison, Curecanti, and Blue Mesa)

- The following resources were used to research or navigate the Byway: Colorado map
- Directional signs were adequate for Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park, Chasm View Nature Trail trailheads, Black Canyon North Rim Road (6 overlook points), Pioneer Overlook, Crossing Blue Mesa Reservoir overlooks, Elk Creek Campgrounds, Elk Creek Marina, Elk Creek Visitor Center, Dillon Pinnacle/Neversink Trail trailheads
- There were not enough directional signs for North Rim Campground
- No directional signs were found for Black Canyon of the Gunnison Campground
- There were interpretive signs for Chasm View Nature Trail trailheads, Blue Mesa Dam interpretive exhibits
- Ranger Station needs better signage
- What are Golden Passport fees?
- Did not find Black Canyon of the Gunnison Campground due to no directional signage

FRONT SEAT OBSREVATIONS

8. Volunteer, Bill Crawford – CDOT Engineer (Driver) (Hotchkiss, Crawford, Black Canyon of the Gunnison, Curecanti, Blue Mesa, and Gunnison)

- The following resources were used to research or navigate the Byway: Colorado map
- Directional signs were excellent for Chasm View Nature Trail trailhead and Black Canyon North Rim Road
- Directional signs were adequate for North Rim Campground
- Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park North Rim Campground had signs in trees
- North Rim Campground - great primitive camping
- Chasm View Nature Trail trailheads (North of Black Canyon NPS Ranger Station) incredible view, steep canyon
- Black Canyon North Rim road was good

West Elk Loop Scenic Byway (205 miles)

Byway communities include Carbondale, Crawford, Crested Butte, Gunnison, Marble, Crystal River, Paonia, and Redstone



<http://www.coloradodot.info/travel/scenic-byways/assets/scenic-byways-maps>