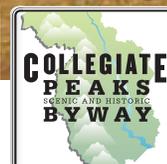


Chaffee County Heritage Area & Collegiate Peaks Scenic And Historic Byway

MANAGEMENT PLAN 2008



PREPARED BY **CHAFFEE COUNTY HERITAGE AREA ADVISORY BOARD**
APPROVED BY **CHAFFEE COUNTY BOCC, RESOLUTION 2008-56**



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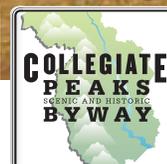




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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Description of the Chaffee County Heritage Area

As the valley of the Arkansas River winds its way through Chaffee County, it reveals a rich tableau of human interactions with a very special natural landscape. Majestic peaks rise dramatically to more than a mile above the fertile river plains to crest at above 14,000 feet. The broad meanders of the Arkansas River, a modern world-class destination for recreation, stretch for miles, surrounded by ancient geologic formations on all sides.

Alan Robinson



Along the valley’s western edge are the fourteen 14ers in the Sawatch and Collegiate Ranges along the Continental Divide; the rugged canyons, forests and watercourses are marked with furious but short-lived mining and timbering operations.

To the south are the Ute Peaks—Ouray, Shavano, Chipeta, and Pahlone, named

for the Ute Indians who once called the valley home, where their winter hunting grounds are the same grounds now hiked and explored by visitors seeking solitude and adventure. To the east are craggy, piñon-juniper forests of the East Salida Hills and Fourmile area, which were once key providers of public grazing land and are now popular destinations for multiple-use recreation.

Signs of the evolution of Chaffee County’s heritage are evident all around. Mountain bikers and hikers venture on historic railroad routes deep into the rocky hills of the Fourmile area, passing Native American and mining remnants including chert quarries and crude early ore-crushers called arrastas. Rafters and kayakers negotiate the waters of the Arkansas River through rocky canyons and swift rapids. Through intricate historic ditches these same waters reach the valley’s broad agricultural lands, irrigating local hay fields and watering livestock on ranches that have been in continuous operation for more than 100 years.

Historic stagecoach trails, railroad routes, early motor ways and the remnants of a late 19th century smelter parallel the river's path, evoking tales of early explorers, settlers, and miners who sought adventure and a new life as well as ore and minerals. Narrow ribbons of riparian habitat sheltering birds and small mammals along the river give way to shrub and grasslands supporting bighorn sheep, elk and deer.

The 57-mile Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway, incorporating pieces of US Highways 285 / 24, and 50, as well as Colorado Highway 291, connects the historic towns of Buena Vista, Salida and Poncha Springs. Though all are energized by a diverse economy of agriculture, arts, recreation and tourism, each rural town displays its own character.

Historic downtowns, dating from the time of the railroads in the late 1800s, bustle with activity as residents and visitors enjoy good food, unique shopping, and an abundance of visual and performing arts in an environment that is at once modern yet steeped in historical ambiance. Neighborhoods of historic Victorian homes surround the busy downtowns, and these communities remain close-knit in their common heritage.

1.2 Purpose of the Chaffee County Heritage Area and Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway

Chaffee County is endowed with a diversity of resources that define its heritage: archeological and historic sites, agricultural, railroad and mining cultural traditions,



and land use patterns reflecting these histories. Extensive public lands, world-class mountains, and rivers support globally significant rare animal and plant communities. The county is known for its unparalleled scenic beauty and an arts community with national recognition.

The Chaffee County community has long recognized the value of this distinct natural environment and the unique cultural, historical and recreational resources that it has spawned. To protect and preserve these resources, to promote economic development, and to provide educational opportunities, the community established the Chaffee County Heritage Area in 2004. The establishment of the Heritage Area grew out of a growing consensus among county residents, governmental agencies, and local businesses that those heritage resources that define the county's sense of community should be protected by creative and sensible solutions to retain and attract residents, appropriate businesses, and tourism.

This designation of Chaffee County as a Heritage Area is by resolution (Resolution No. 2004-45), officially established by the Chaffee County Commissioners with a defined boundary that coincides with the official county boundary (Figure 1, page 4). To guide development and management of the Heritage Area, the County Commissioners established the Chaffee County Heritage Area Advisory Board (CCHAAB) at the same time.



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Chaffee County Heritage Area Boundary

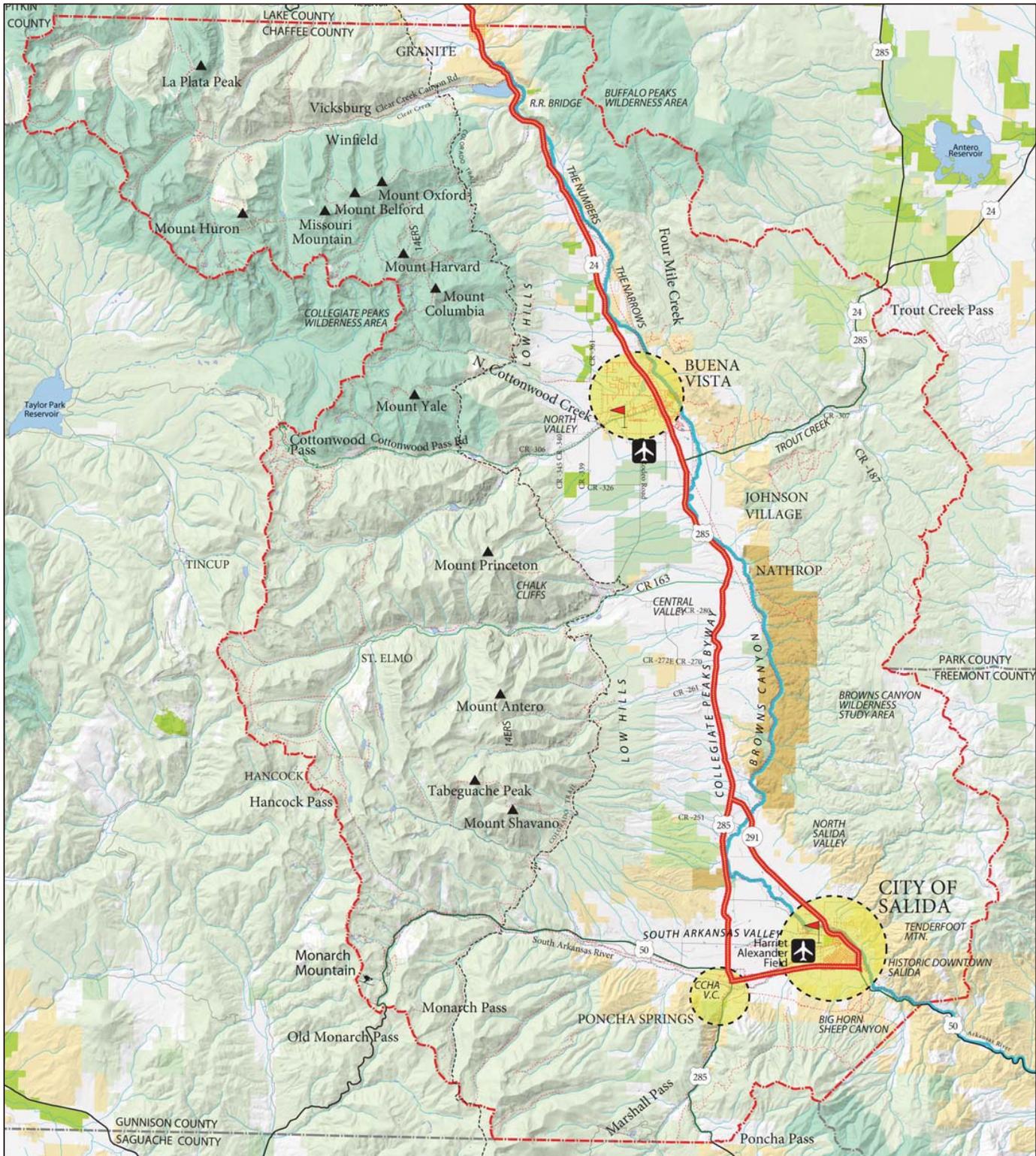


Figure 1

The CCHAAB consists of seven to nine members appointed by the Commissioners “to provide assistance on matters associated with planning and implementation of the Heritage Area program.” Members must be full-time residents and are selected by geographical diversity. At the direction of the County Commissioners, the program is administered and coordinated by the Greater Arkansas River Nature Association (GARNA), a local non-profit 501-c (3) cooperating association.

Soon after its creation the Board recognized the value of having the county’s major highways designated as a Colorado Scenic and Historic Byway, and using that designation to energize and catalyze protection and preservation of the heritage resources of the Heritage Area, i.e., the whole county. Establishing a byway was given the highest priority, and in 2005, through the Board’s efforts and with community support, the Collegiate Peaks Historic and Scenic Byway was formally established.

1.3 Purpose of the Management Plan

Completion of a byway Corridor Management Plan is required by the Colorado Department of Transportation Scenic Byways program, and, with agreement from the state program, CCHAAB chose to meet that requirement by incorporating the corridor plan into this county-wide Heritage Area Management Plan (the Management Plan), which includes planning for historic initiatives and preservation of intrinsic resources. Approval of the Management Plan will make the Heritage Area and Byway directly eligible for additional grant funding under the National Scenic Byway Program.

The approved Plan is also expected to significantly improve chances for successfully competing for grant funds from many other sources. Great Outdoors Colorado funds may be explored for proposals relating to land conservation and scenic view protection, and the State Historical Fund is a possibility for preservation of historic structures and other physical remains.

The Chaffee County Heritage Area Management Plan will:

- **Guide decision-making by the Chaffee County Heritage Area Advisory Board (CCHAAB) in the management and promotion of the Chaffee County Heritage Area and the Collegiate Peaks Byway;**
- **Provide a vision and goals for the Heritage Area and Byway's future, an inventory of its intrinsic qualities, and identification of 'key findings' related to the unique character of Chaffee County;**
- **Recommend a set of strategies and actions, and present a phased implementation plan.**

The Chaffee County Heritage Area Advisory Board (CCHAAB) will:

- **Act as a coordinating body to support and promote county-wide historic and heritage initiatives (including preservation, interpretation, and educational efforts) by organizations and institutions identified as partners, including but not limited to the county and local historic groups;**
- **Provide expertise on county-wide historic preservation issues, and participate in County planning activities in an advisory capacity;**
- **Assist the county in maintaining the historic sites database to inventory historic sites and to facilitate evaluation of potential impacts of proposed development; and**
- **Manage and coordinate the Heritage Area and Byway administration.**

1.4 The Planning Process

The planning process for the Management Plan occurred over a one-year period, guided by the Chaffee County Heritage Area Advisory Board with the involvement of the community through public meetings, oral history workshops, and stakeholder

Alan Robinson



interviews. Planning occurred through three primary tasks: *Research and Inventory of Intrinsic Qualities, and Identification of Issues and Opportunities; Presentation and Review of Initial Findings and Potential Tools or Strategies; and Recommendations for Strategies and Actions.*

The primary source for initial data was the Chaffee County

GIS (geographic information system), which provided information on the county's topography, geomorphology, roads, railroads, water, land use, and historic resources. The county's agricultural lands were mapped by Chaffee County using data generated by the Natural Resource Ecology Lab at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colorado, and included in the initial database. A number of additional sources were consulted in the inventory preparation, including the Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP) and the Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW). Local historic preservation groups including Historic Salida, Inc. and Buena Vista Heritage, and several public agencies including the BLM (Bureau of Land Management) and the USFS (United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service) provided data on potential cultural and historical resources.

Members of the CCHAAB provided expertise on local issues, historical resources, and recreational resources. Close collaboration occurred throughout the planning process with the Chaffee County land use update, particularly in coordination with the Chaffee County Citizen's Land Use Roundtable, a group of 16 people representing county residents who participated in land use focus groups. The preliminary recommendations from this group helped to confirm shared community values such as the importance of the county's rural character, its wealth of recreational opportunities, and most importantly the value that the county's scenic views have to residents.

On November 29, 2007, more than 35 community members met for an afternoon to share their personal stories about Chaffee County. Many of these individual and family stories were instrumental in crafting the interpretive themes presented in Chapter 5.0.

These stories ensure that the interpretive strategy builds upon experiences of the community and reflects the unique intrinsic qualities of the county.

The members of the CCHAAB worked together to develop recommendations to guide the future of the Heritage Area and the Byway. With the assistance of the planning consultants, CCHAAB created and presented initial findings and potential tools to the community in two public open houses in late November 2007. Additional input was solicited from the Chaffee County Planning Commission and planning staff, the Citizen's Land Use Roundtable, and stakeholders that included property owners along the Byway. In August 2008, the CCHAAB returned to the community (through two public presentations) to share their consensus recommendations for the improvement and management of the Heritage Area and Byway. These recommendations provide three strategic approaches to fulfill the vision and goals of the Chaffee County Heritage Area. A series of actions is provided so that the CCHAAB can proceed with specific implementation tasks. An action plan for the next five years provides the CCHAAB with immediate priorities.

1.5 Organization of the Management Plan

The Chaffee County Heritage Area Management Plan is organized into five main sections that provide a vision and a plan for the future of the Chaffee County Heritage Area and the Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway. These five sections begin with a vision, followed by the identification of the county's intrinsic qualities and those issues and opportunities that affect the Heritage Area. A wayfinding and interpretive strategy and a strategic plan are the core sections of the Management Plan. These two chapters include recommendations for future improvements to the Byway and identify partnerships that should be undertaken to improve the Heritage Area.

Chapter 1.0 provides an overview and introduction to the Chaffee County Heritage Area and the Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway. The role of the Chaffee County Heritage Area Advisory Board is also described in this chapter. Chapter 2.0 presents a vision for the future of the Heritage Area that provides the basis for planning, infrastructure, and management recommendations that occur later in the report.

Chapter 3.0 provides a summary analysis of Chaffee County Heritage Area's intrinsic qualities—its scenic, natural, agricultural, cultural, historical, archeological, and recreational resources. Intrinsic qualities are often defined as those inherent, essential, unique or irreplaceable features that are distinctly characteristic of an area. A series of illustrative maps completes the description of these qualities.

Issues such as growth and development, land use policy, scenic character, recreational conflicts, lack of knowledge of significant resources, economic viability, wayfinding, and visitor amenities all affect the Chaffee County Heritage Area. A summary of these issues and related opportunities is presented in Chapter 4.0.

Chapters 5.0 and 6.0 outline a series of recommendations and strategies that will guide the CCHAAB in managing the Heritage Area and Byway. The wayfinding and interpretive strategy is presented in Chapter 5.0, and provides a consistent county-wide approach for the interpretation of the scenic, natural, agricultural, cultural, archeological, and historical assets of the Heritage Area. Chapter 6.0 is the Strategic Plan, which is a comprehensive plan of specific actions that are to be undertaken by the Chaffee County Heritage Area Board (CCHAAB) and its partners to achieve the goals of the Chaffee County Heritage Area and the Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway. The Strategic Plan is organized into three approaches: *Preserve Scenic Character through Resource Protection, Identify and Protect Significant Historic Resources, and Educate and Engage the Community and Visitors*. The Action Plan is the last section of Chapter 6.0, and provides the CCHAAB with a detailed list of projects to be undertaken in the next few years.

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2.0 Vision for the Chaffee County Heritage Area

2.1 Vision

Development of the Management Plan was guided by the CCHAAB's vision for the future of the Heritage Area and the Byway.

“The vision that the CCHAAB has of the future Chaffee County Heritage Area is of a community that has successfully balanced growth and economic development with protection of its rural and agricultural landscapes, scenic river and mountain views, natural areas, cultural traditions, and historical places, all of which give the county its sense of place and make it proud. It is a place where visitors and residents alike experience, understand and appreciate the county’s heritage resources through respectful exploration, learning and adventure.”

2.2 Goals of the Management Plan

In the broadest sense, the purpose of the Management Plan is to ensure that the future vision is effectively accomplished. The following specific goals have guided development of the Plan's strategic actions to implement that vision.

- Identify and define the essential natural, archeological, historical, and cultural resources that shape the character of the Chaffee County Heritage Area.
- Preserve the heritage values of Chaffee County, while sustaining and enhancing the desirability of living, working, and recreating in the County.
- Promote the value of Chaffee County's scenic character, and identify the underlying resources (agricultural, natural, historical, and cultural) that contribute to that scenic character.
- Encourage actions (including heritage tourism) that promote economic development while preserving a way of life that the community as a whole favors.
- Work in partnership with the local community including ranchers and property owners, residents, government agencies, public land managers, and historic preservation organizations to implement projects that promote good land stewardship and protection of heritage resources.
- Educate and engage residents and visitors about Chaffee County Heritage Area's significant places through exploration and learning of the county's heritage.

3.0 Intrinsic Qualities

This chapter provides a summary analysis of Chaffee County Heritage Area’s intrinsic qualities—its scenic, natural, agricultural, cultural, historical, archeological, and

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recreational resources. A brief description of each intrinsic quality is provided. More detailed information on the intrinsic qualities is presented in a subsequent chapter, Chapter 7.0 Background. This chapter also includes illustrative maps that complete the descriptions of these qualities.

Intrinsic qualities are those characteristic features that give a landscape its own sense of place. Intrinsic qualities are often defined as those inherent, essential, unique or irreplaceable features that are distinctly characteristic of an area.

The Chaffee County Heritage Area and Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway have five intrinsic qualities that combine to give the county its distinct rural community—scenic; natural; agricultural; cultural, historical and archeological; and recreational resources. A brief description of each of these intrinsic qualities follows.

- Chaffee County Heritage Area’s Five Intrinsic Qualities*
- Scenic Beauty**
- Natural Diversity**
- Agricultural Lands**
- Cultural, Historical, and Archeological Heritage**
- Recreation**



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Scenic Byway Viewshed Analysis

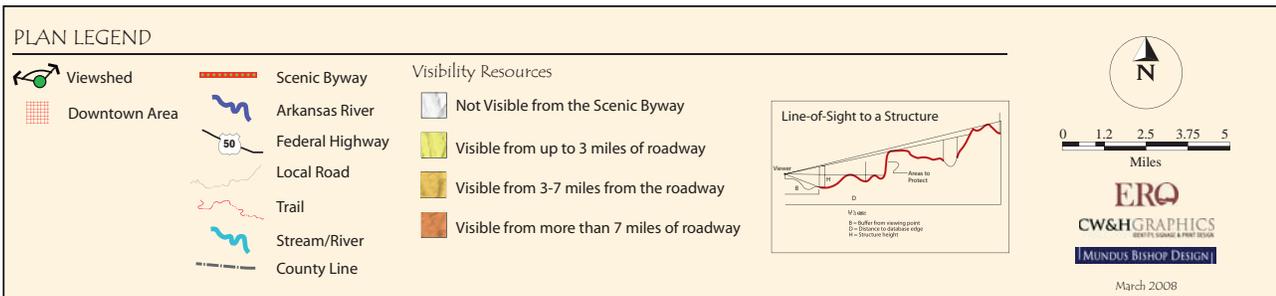
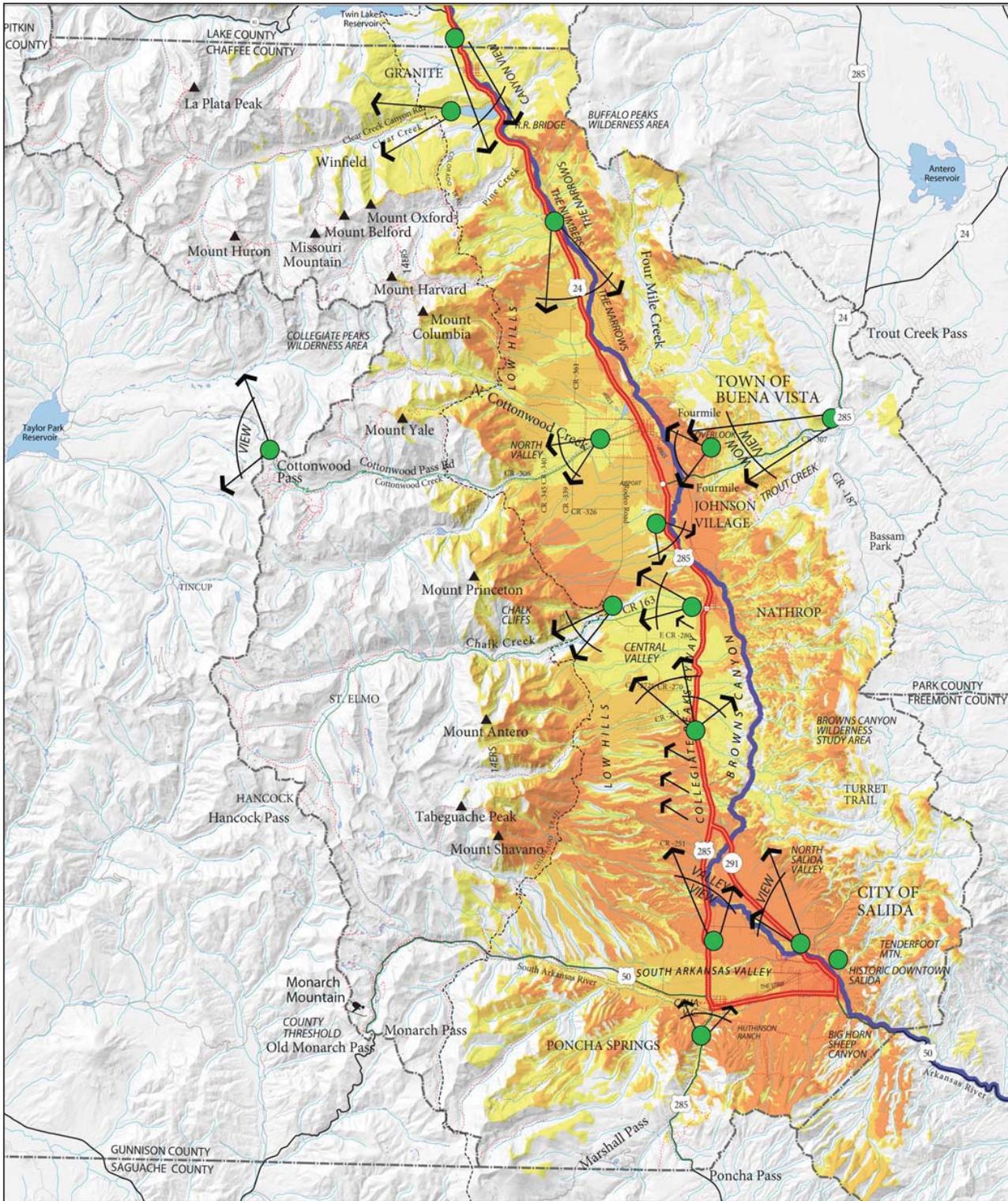


Figure 2

3.1 Scenic Beauty

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The scenic beauty of Chaffee County is without parallel in the Rocky Mountain West. The Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway provides a 57-mile corridor that accesses the high mountain valley of the Arkansas River. It provides scenic views of its two major life zones and Colorado’s impressive mountain range of ‘14ers’

(mountains with a summit of 14,000+ feet above sea level). A spectacular view of at least one of these impressive mountains is possible from almost anywhere in the county.

The county’s scenic character was analyzed through a three-part process that included a viewshed analysis, a skyline analysis, and a scenic quality composite. Four graphic maps illustrate the findings from this analysis:

- **Scenic Byway Viewshed Analysis (Figure 2)**
- **Scenic Byway Viewshed Analysis – Excluding Public Lands (Figure 3)**
- **Skyline Analysis (Figure 4)**
- **Character Zones and Priority Views (Figure 5)**

The viewshed analysis documented those areas along the Byway that are most visible to a traveler by identifying the regions, at ground level, that are visible from a series of viewpoints along the Byway. The analysis revealed that most of the foreground along the Byway is visible to the traveler. Both man-made and natural elements are visible, and many contribute to the scenic character. The working landscapes of the valley’s ranches, the Arkansas River, and diverse natural areas are elements of the foreground that are

significant. These foreground views accent the long views from

The scenic character is important to the county’s tourism and recreational base, and is also highly valued by residents as it provides a sense of place and contributes to the county’s quality of life.

the Byway toward the ‘14ers’ and of the surrounding hills that are equally visible and equally important. The Skyline Analysis identified locations where a structure of 35 feet (the height allowed by building code) would interrupt views to the skyline. As stated in the Citizen’s Land Use Foundation recommendations as a site standard for rural residential, development in this land use will respect the intent of the Byway and not disrupt the view corridor where feasible.

Scenic Byway Viewshed Analysis - Excluding Public Lands

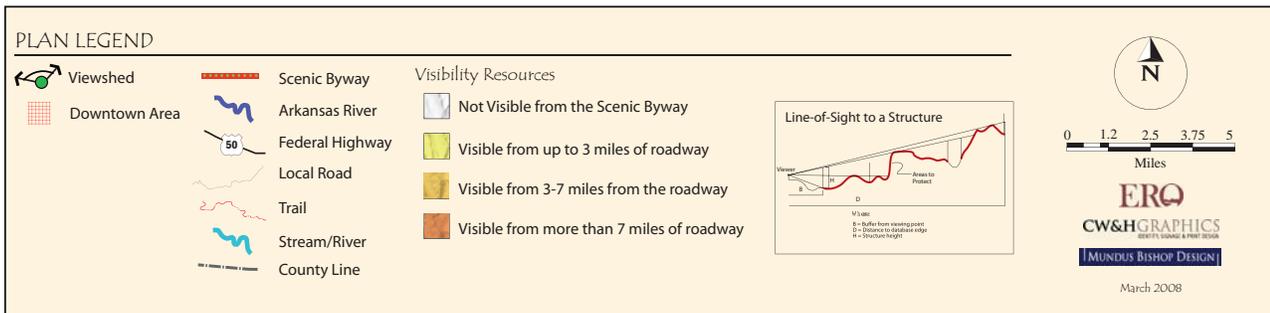
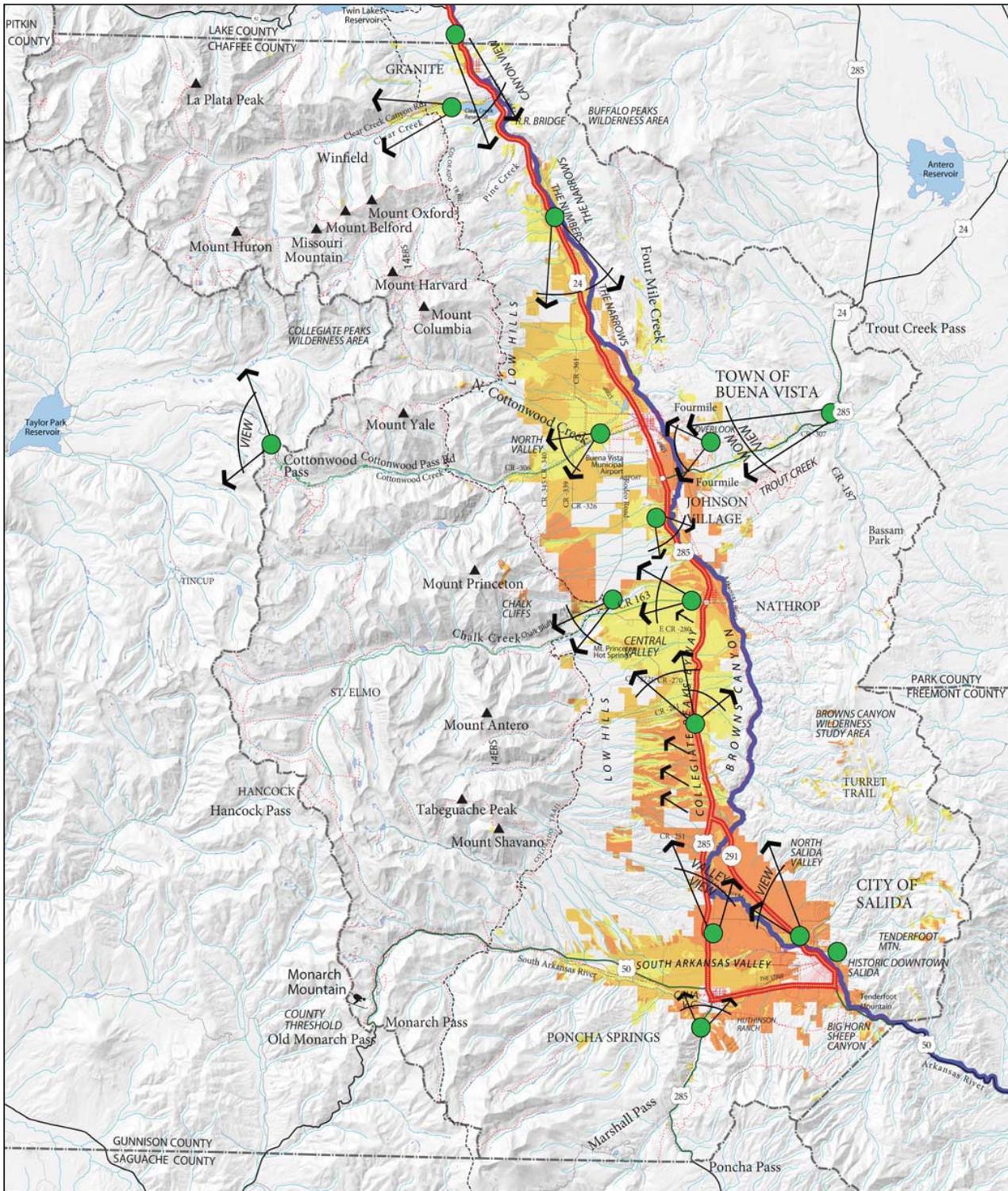


Figure 3



The Character Zones and Priority Views map identifies points along or adjacent to the Byway that offer ‘priority’ views (those that provide most significant or characteristic views into the river valley and towards the 14ers) showcasing significant natural, historical, and agricultural resources. The ‘priority’ views were identified through field

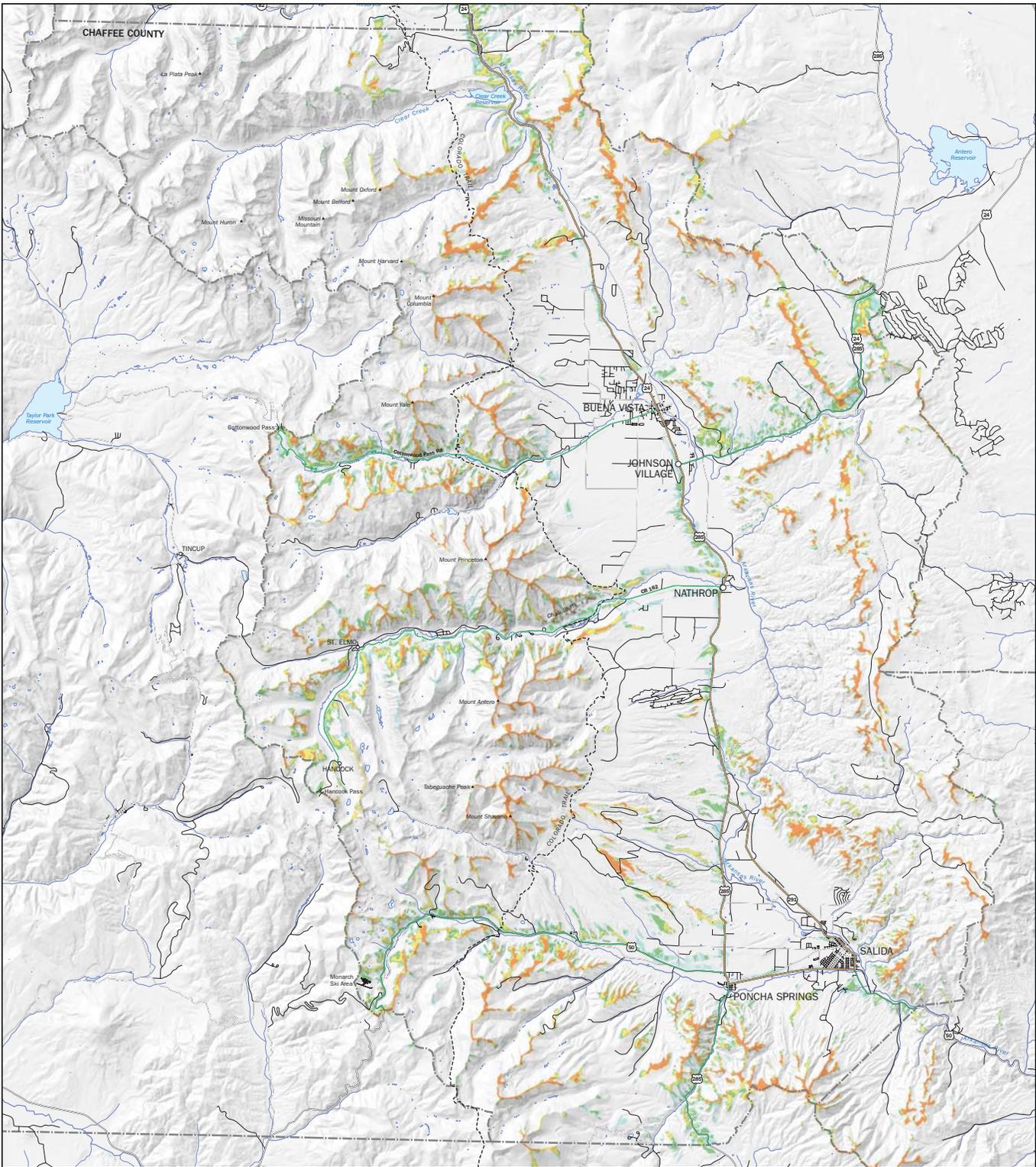
reconnaissance with additional input from the CCHAAB, the local community, and the Chaffee County Comprehensive Plan.

These ‘priority’ views reflect the community’s collective agreement on where the most significant views occur. These views are numbered on the Character Zones and Priority Views map (Figure 5), and include the following list.

- 1 – view south from Granite along US 24
- 2 – view west towards Clear Creek (route to Vicksburg and Winfield)
- 3 – view south in the Narrows towards Railroad Bridge
- 4 – view west from Cottonwood Pass
- 5 – view west from Buena Vista
- 6 – panoramic views from Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area (AHRA)
Collegiate Peaks Scenic Overlook
- 7 – views west on Trout Creek Pass towards Mt. Princeton
- 8 – views south on US 285 to river valley and agricultural lands
- 9 – views west on Chalk Creek Road towards Mt. Princeton
- 10 – views west from US 285 and Chalk Creek Road
- 11 – panoramic views from US 285 to the north at high ridge
- 12 – views west all along US 285 west towards 14ers
- 13 – views north on US 285 at ridge north of Poncha Springs
- 14 – views north along CO 291 from Salida,
- 15 – views north from Poncha Pass on US 285
- 16 – views to and from Tenderfoot Mountain

The protection of Chaffee County’s scenic character is critical to the Heritage Area and Byway. Of particular importance is the protection of the significant views, including the foreground views, and the viewsheds, and those elements that contribute to these views. The scenic character is important to the county’s tourism and recreational base, and is also highly valued by residents as it provides a sense of place and contributes to the county’s quality of life.

Skyline Analysis



PLAN LEGEND			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Viewshed Downtown Area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic Byway Arkansas River Federal Highway Local Road Trail Stream/River County Line 	Visibility Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not Visible from the Scenic Byway Visible from up to 3 miles of roadway Visible from 3-7 miles from the roadway Visible from more than 7 miles of roadway 	<div style="text-align: center;"> ERO CW&H GRAPHICS <small>DESIGN, ANALYSIS & PLANNING</small> MAUNDUS BISHOP DESIGN <small>March 2008</small> </div>

Line-of-Sight to a Structure

H = Structure Height
D = Distance to structure edge
B = Buffer from viewing point

Figure 4

Character Zones and Priority Views

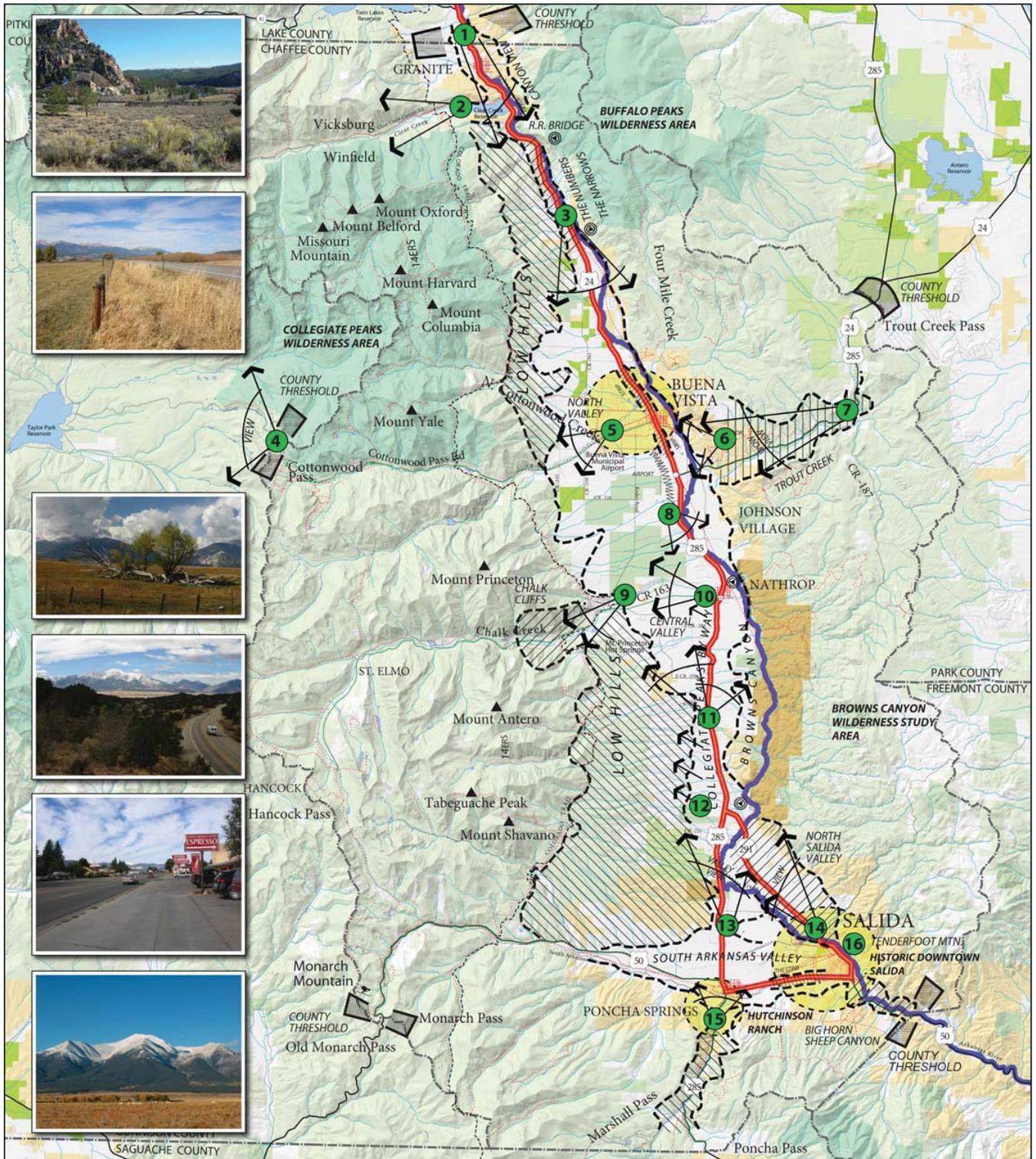
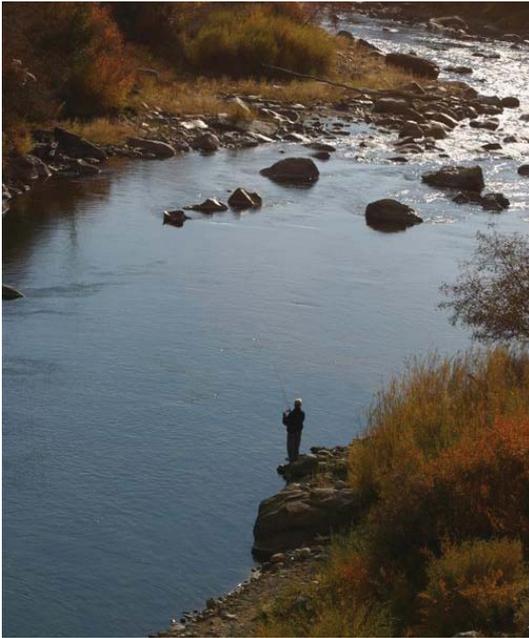


Figure 5

3.2 Natural Diversity

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The county's natural resources were inventoried and mapped to identify the extent of wildlife habitat, riparian areas, and other important natural resources that contribute to the character of the Heritage Area and the Byway. A number of sources were consulted in the inventory preparation, including the Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP) and the Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW).

The detailed natural resource inventory, and maps illustrating individual natural resources such as wildlife distribution, riparian areas, and potential conservation areas are presented in Chapter 7.0 Background.

This section provides a summary description of those natural resources that characterize the Heritage Area. It also includes the Natural Resource Composite (Figure 6, page 22), a map that combines the individual natural resource maps to illustrate those areas with a high occurrence of overlapping resources.

Natural Resources

Among the most outstanding natural features of the upper Arkansas Valley and the Chaffee County Heritage Area are the glacial characteristics of its topography. The rocky remnants of its giant glacial moraines, evident from Buena Vista to Salida, are what make this valley different from other major river valleys in the region. About 70 million years ago, the shallow inland sea that had been covering Colorado retreated for the last time due to a tremendous period of mountain building that affected the whole Rocky Mountain chain. This uplifting raised the sedimentary rocks that had been deposited on the floor of the sea upward into today's Sawatch Range, which includes the Collegiate Peaks that dip west and the Mosquito Range to the east. The two mountain ranges are separated by what is now the valley of the Arkansas River. Evidence of the earlier inland sea remains near the town of Granite in northern Chaffee County, where Precambrian granite that is hundreds of millions of years old also occurs.

After the mountain building had raised these two ranges, climate conditions turned very cold causing a vast cooling across the region. Immense mountain glaciers formed near the crest of the mountains and slowly ground their way down to the valleys. They steepened slopes and carved cirques in their paths, and deposited great masses of rock, known as terminal moraines, where they ended. These glaciers were the primary agents

creating the landscapes we see today: very steep upper slopes, great cirques carved near the ridgelines, and tremendous masses of rubble deposited near the bottoms of the slopes nearer the river.

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As the glacial ice melted, streams began to flow eastward, forming valleys. The Arkansas River is one of these mountain streams, starting high in the Sawatch Range above Leadville, meandering through mountain valleys, and running through steep-sided gorges before finally flowing out into the plains.

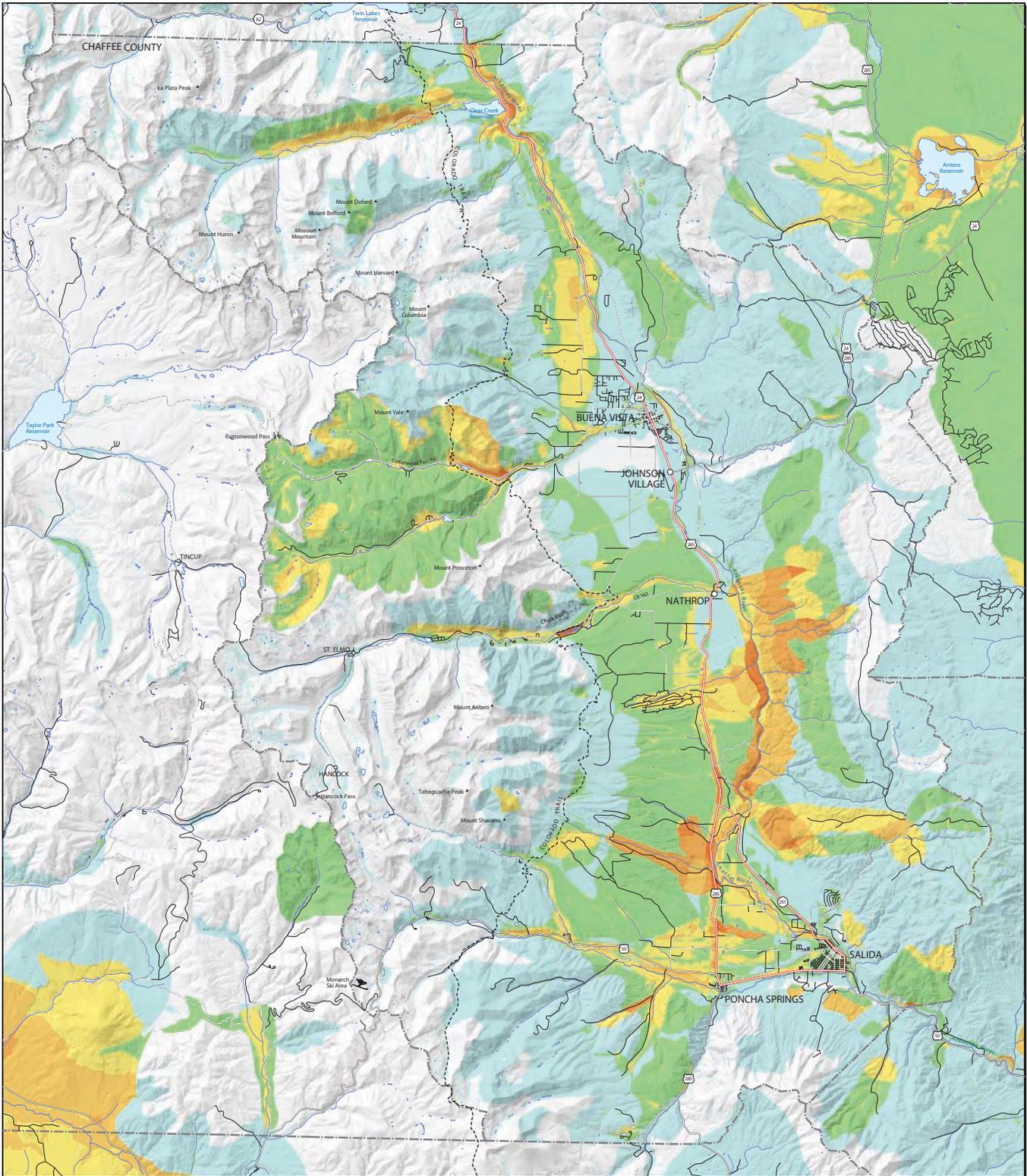
In a nod to its glacial heritage, and like most Colorado rivers in the high mountains, natural

flows in the Arkansas River occur primarily as a result of snow melt runoff. Snowfall accumulates in the mountains during the winter and early spring months and as it begins to melt in late spring and early summer, it often leads to high intensity short duration runoff events. This interaction of snow melt, runoff, and geomorphology forms distinct vegetation communities. For example, flooding inundates vegetation, physically dislodging seedlings/saplings, and altering channel morphology through erosion and deposition of sediment.

The Heritage Area supports a diversity of vegetation communities that in general can be divided into ecological zones based on elevation. Within these zones, vegetation can be further characterized by its relationship with water (hydrologic regime). These ecological zones include uplands with forests and grasslands that are not supported by the Arkansas River or its tributaries, and riparian areas of deciduous trees and shrubs that are present around modern-day reservoirs or along the Arkansas River and are supported by adjacent sources of water. Wetlands of herbaceous plants and shrubs also occur along the Arkansas River and its tributaries; these are supported by the Arkansas River and/or its shallow subsurface waters (alluvial aquifer).

The wide bottom lands of the Arkansas River, along with the county's diverse vegetation communities, provide important habitat for many wildlife species. In addition, the extensive acreage of public lands, including large tracts of specially designated lands, such as the Collegiate Peaks Wilderness Area and Brown's Canyon Wilderness Study Area, protect important natural areas. Several species of predators, ungulates (hoofed mammals), and raptors (i.e., bald eagle and peregrine falcon) occur

Natural Resources Composite



PLAN LEGEND		NATURAL RESOURCE COMPOSITE	
	Scenic Byway		No mapped natural resources
	Federal Highway		One natural resources
	State Highway		Overlapping natural resources add up to Two
	Local Road		Overlapping natural resources add up to Three
	Colorado Trail		Overlapping natural resources add up to Four
	Stream/Lake		Overlapping natural resources add up to Five
	County Line		Overlapping natural resources add up to Six
			Overlapping natural resources add up to Seven
			Overlapping natural resources add up to Eight
			Overlapping natural resource add up to Nine

The Natural Resource Composite map was generated by adding the NDIS wildlife distribution map layers, riparian areas and the Colorado Natural Heritage Potential Conservation Areas together. The NDIS layers were assigned values of 1 if the species distribution occurred and 0 if it did not. Riparian areas were assigned a value of 1. The CNHP areas were assigned values of 1 - 3 (1=General Biodiversity, 2=Moderate - High Biodiversity, 3=Very High - Outstanding Biodiversity). The resulting map indicates the areas of greatest natural resource overlap.

0 1.25 2.5 3.75 5 Miles

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Figure 6

within the Heritage Area. Although it is rare for a traveler to see some of these species, the likelihood of viewing wildlife in this area is much greater than in many other areas of Colorado. Elk, mule deer and bighorn sheep (hoofed mammals) may be commonly seen during winter and spring months crossing the Collegiate Peaks Scenic Byway. The severe winter range for mule deer and winter concentration areas for elk occur in the wide expanses of the Arkansas River Valley. Bighorn sheep are common in the high altitude areas and within the Brown's Canyon Wilderness Study Area.

In an effort to establish a viable population of Canada lynx, the Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) initiated a reintroduction effort in 1997, with the first lynx released in February 1999. From 1999 to 2006, more than 200 lynx were released in Colorado, including some in the county. Because Chaffee County has many lands above 9,500 feet in elevation, it is possible that the area supports some of the surviving Canada lynx.

Notable raptors common in the Heritage Area include the osprey, peregrine falcon, and bald eagle. Osprey forage in the Arkansas River north of Salida, and peregrine falcon nest within the Chalk Creek corridor and near Clear Creek Reservoir. Wintering bald eagles use large trees near open water and/or riparian habitats for establishing diurnal perches near feeding areas. Bald eagles may occasionally migrate through the corridor en route to breeding or wintering habitat.

Natural Resource Composite

The natural resource inventory and the Natural Resource Composite (Figure 6, page 22) are objective analyses that illustrate areas of natural resource importance, where modifications can be predicted to have consequences on habitat or wildlife. The Natural Resource Composite map is not intended to imply that all the high coincidence areas shown should be conserved, whether by public acquisition or by other means. However, it does provide information on those major areas that could be considered for future protection, monitoring or mitigation.

The Natural Resource Composite was created by overlaying several mapping layers into a single map. These included the NDIS (Natural Diversity Information Source) wildlife distribution map layers, documented riparian areas, and the Potential Conservation Areas developed by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program. The NDIS layers were assigned a value of 1 if the species distribution occurred and 0 if it did not; riparian areas were assigned a value of 1; and the CHNP were assigned values of 1 to 3 (i.e., low to high) based on biodiversity. Areas in white have no mapped resources. As greater overlap occurs, areas get 'hotter' in color. For example, those areas with the greatest natural resource overlap are in red and dark orange.

3.3 Agricultural Lands

The agricultural heritage of Chaffee County dates to the mid 19th century when miners moving westward found the fertile bottom lands of the Arkansas River and the warm climate conducive to farming. Today, the rural working landscape of farmlands and grazing areas provides a distinct character for the Heritage Area. Ranching and farming operations are valued by the community for their contributions to the county's scenic beauty, helping to attract tourists and contributing to the quality of life for residents. They are valued as a key economic sector with a direct positive impact on the community. Agricultural lands are also valued for their heritage, reflecting the history of settlement of the Arkansas Valley.

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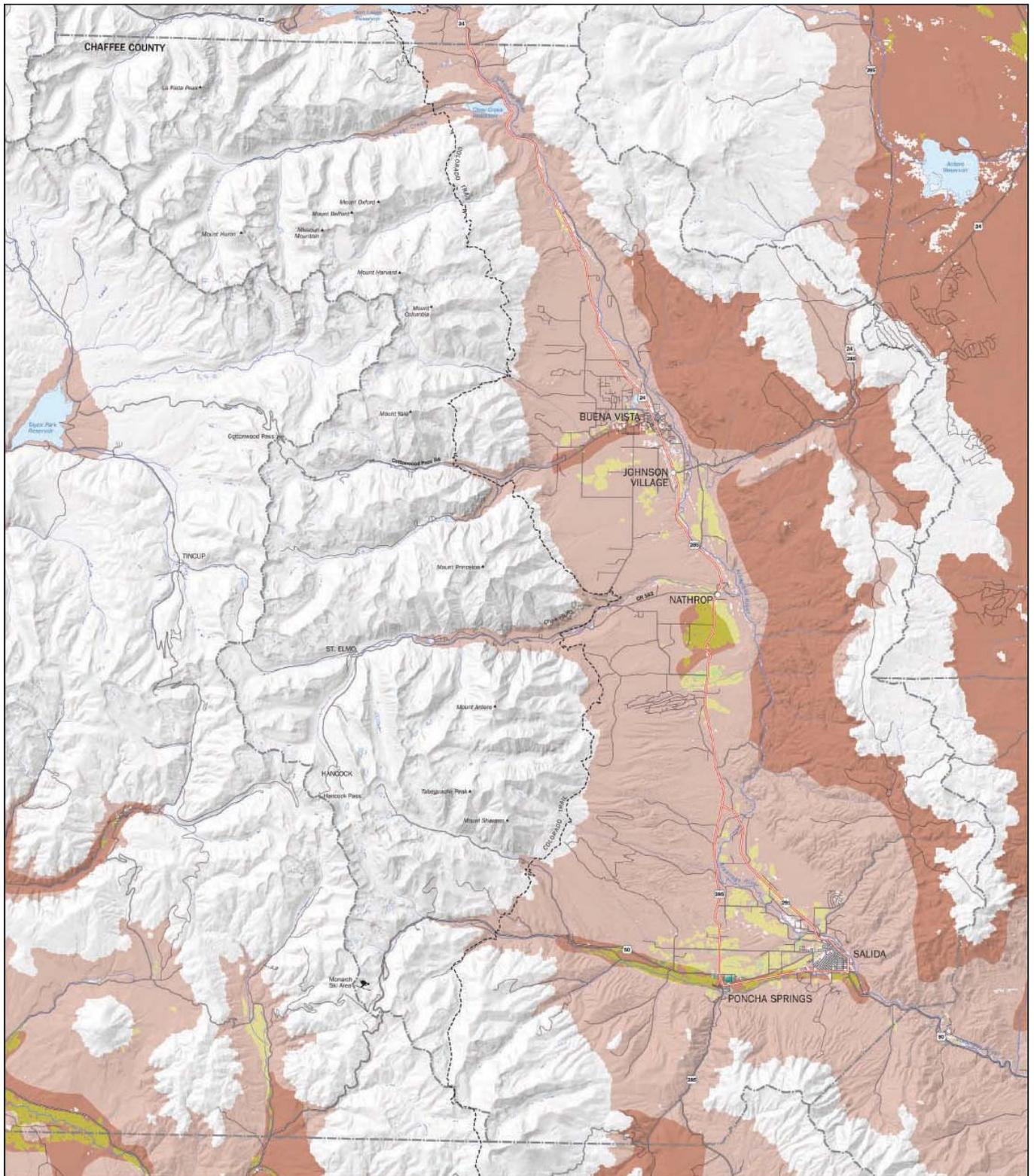
Pastures and hay meadows make up large areas of agricultural lands within the river valley, interspersed with small areas of irrigated cropland. Senior water rights and abundant seep water enhance the agricultural productivity, as well as support adjacent vegetation

communities in naturalized sections of the river. The bottom lands are largely cow-calf operations and hay production. Large expanses of the county are used for rangeland, and cattle grazing occurs on adjoining hillsides on both private and public lands.

The county's agricultural lands have been mapped by Chaffee County using data generated by the Natural Resource Ecology Lab at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colorado. The agricultural classes illustrated in this mapping, presented in Figure 7 on page 24, were generated by analyzing land cover (i.e., vegetation such as grasses and shrubs suitable for foraging) from the USGS National Land Cover Dataset. The mapping illustrates areas by their levels of productivity and includes irrigated and non-irrigated cropland, rangeland, and pasture/hay area.

Productive irrigated agricultural land accounts for less than two (2) percent of Chaffee County's total land area, but contributes disproportionately to its heritage and scenic quality. These lands are generally located along the Byway in highly visible areas, making them significant contributors to the Heritage Area and the high quality scenic views of the Byway. However, the county's relatively small amount of agricultural land, along with the county's close proximity to the Front Range and its appeal due

Agricultural Classes



PLAN LEGEND		AGRICULTURAL CLASSES	
	Scenic Byway		Irrigated Cropland - low to average productivity
	Federal Highway		Irrigated Cropland - average to high productivity
	State Highway		Non-Irrigated Cropland - low to average productivity
	Local Road		Rangeland - low to average productivity
	Colorado Trail		Rangeland - average to high productivity
	Stream/Lake		Pasture / Hay - low to average productivity
	County Line		Pasture / Hay - average to high productivity

This dataset was generated by David M. Theobald, Ph.D. at the Natural Resource Ecology Lab, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO 80523-1499. To identify Colorado agricultural lands, the USGS National Land Cover Dataset (NLCD, 30m land cover) was used to distinguish four agriculture land types: irrigated and non-irrigated cropland, pasture / hay, and rangeland. Within these broad land cover types there are different levels of productivity, particularly for rangeland. To highlight lands of greater productivity, the USDA NRISS STATSGO dataset using the production variable as an estimate for overall productivity was used. Areas higher than 3500 feet in elevation were removed because although these may be identified as grass/shrub in NLCD, they contribute little to forage availability. Isolating the weighted average productivity value across Colorado, two classes were created: low to average and average to high productivity. These productivity classes were then overlaid onto the four agricultural land classes to generate 8 total classes.

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Figure 7

to its warm temperatures and scenery, make these farm and ranch lands particularly vulnerable to development, and ultimately to loss of water rights. Colorado Conservation Trust's recent report, "Colorado Conservation at a Crossroads," identified Chaffee County as one of 12 counties in the state with the highest potential threat of losing its ranching heritage, but with limited capacity to prevent it.

Conflicts between development and agricultural lands exist in some areas. Ranchers and farmers have noted that rural residential development has had a negative effect in areas where it interferes with ranching. Issues include conflicts between new structures and access to irrigation ditches and areas prone to flooding due to ditch failure, conflicts between dogs and cattle, and new residents who are not tolerant of the dust, noise and smells of productive agricultural lands.

Local ranchers and farmers recognize the value of their lands to the county, as well as for their development potential. Because of this, they have begun to work collaboratively with county agencies and local and state-wide conservation groups. Together, they are identifying issues and proposing solutions to minimize conflicts, protect important agricultural lands for their open space value, and provide ranchers and farmers with viable land use and economic options that allow them to continue ranching.

3.4 Cultural, Historical and Archeological Heritage

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Chaffee County is a unique heritage landscape, in which its distinct natural setting provides the basis for this heritage. The history of the land from early occupation by indigenous people to railroad and mining industries, and onward to today's recreation and tourism has left an innumerable quantity and

variety of cultural, historical, and archeological resources. These examples of the past are the physical remnants that assist in telling the county's story of evolution from early Native American habitation to today's diverse rural community with an economic base of ranching, farming, tourism and recreation as well as light industry and a growing retirement and second home market.

This section presents an overview of the cultural, historical and archeological qualities that characterized the Heritage Area. It begins with a brief history of the development of Chaffee County. This is followed by a description of historic preservation activities that have enriched the county since the 1970s, and the section ends with an overview of current issues and opportunities.

A more detailed inventory of extant historical and archeological resources is provided in Chapter 7.0 Background. The chapter includes the GIS (geographical information system) database prepared by Chaffee County as well as illustrative maps that show locations of these resources.

History

Human occupation of the Arkansas River valley by indigenous peoples dates back thousands of years (Paleo-Indians). By the 1600s the Ute Indians, for whom many of the surrounding peaks are named, made the valley their home, taking advantage of its abundant water and wildlife. Several Plains Indians tribes also used this area. Decades of exploration and organized survey expeditions 'discovered' Chaffee County. These included such notables as Governor of New Mexico Juan Baustisade Anza who, in 1779, led a military campaign through Salida against the Comanches, and explorer Zebulon Pike, both whom immortalized their travels with elaborate written accounts.

The westward expansion of homesteaders and the discovery of gold in the late 1800s brought miners and farmers to the Chaffee County area. Historic records indicate that, as early as 1862, prospecting and placer operations were occurring near Granite

on the Arkansas River. Early settlers included Dr. Frank Mayol, the area's first farmer; and Captain Joseph S. Hutchinson, who served in the Union Army during the Civil

“Well they used to raise a lot of head lettuce. Usually in August, they had the celebration called Lettuce Day and they'd have a parade and rodeo and they always had a big barbeque. They'd cut the lettuce in the day time and haul it into a lettuce shed there in the evening. I worked in the lettuce shed, you'd have to work at night because they were cutting lettuce in the daytime, they'd haul it in, then you'd have to get it all boxed up. A truck would come in and pick it all up and haul it into Denver that same night.”

Ron Little, Buena Vista

War and moved to the area in 1866, first supervising placer operations on Cache Creek, and later starting a cattle business that would eventually cover thousands of acres. By 1874, Hutchinson built a home with his wife Annabel near Salida.

Today, this house and its outbuildings and corrals are a historic site, operated by Salida-area Parks Open-space and Trails (SPOT). The Hutchinson family continues to farm and ranch on many of the original homesteaded acres. Although conflicts between the growing settlements and the Native Americans would eventually move the Utes out of the valley, many were on friendly terms with the settlers. These included Chief Ouray, for whom Mount Ouray is named, and his wife Chipeta, who were influential leaders of the seven Ute tribes, as well

as the notorious Chief Colorow who would camp at the Hutchinson ranch.

The first Indian agent, John Burnett, and his wife Menerva Maxwell Burnett (one of the area's

first schoolteachers) homesteaded in the area now known as Poncha Springs in 1865, building a log cabin for use as a trading post in 1866. The town of Poncha Springs was incorporated in late 1880.

“(My family came) out of Canada, and they went up to Leadville, working up at California Gulch in the mines. In about 1865 they came here and started ranching. They were the first white settlers to ever live here. His name was John Burnett. His wife Sarah Burnett, when the Indians would go on their war-paths, she would feed them biscuits so they wouldn't bother her. So, all the other people would come to her house, women and children, and they would stay with her, because they knew that the Indians wouldn't bother her. They were the Utes with Chief Colorow.”

Danny Burnett

By the late 1870s, the area had grown into a significant mining, farming, and ranching region. Silver was discovered as early as 1872 at Chalk Creek, spurring the opening of the Hortense Mine on Mount Princeton, along with mines at St. Elmo and Alpine. The



Monarch Mine opened in 1878, near Monarch Pass, mining minerals such as lead, zinc, and silver with small amounts of gold. Toll roads and transportation routes brought travelers to the area, including one that provided access to the area of Poncha Springs. In 1878 the Jackson Hotel was built along the toll road in what was a booming town. In

1881, Poncha Springs boasted a population of 5000. Today its population is just under 500. Unfortunately the Jackson Hotel is closed and in need of rehabilitation, but the town's most notable building, the brick schoolhouse, has been rehabilitated as the town hall, and includes a town museum and community room.

The water supply and temperate climate in the Arkansas River valley led farmers to build irrigation ditches to water fields they had cleared of sagebrush to grow grains (oats, wheat, and barley) rotated with legumes such as alfalfa and clover to replenish the soil. In 1874, a dispute over irrigation water between Elijah Gibbs and George Harrington, farmers near present-day Buena Vista, sparked the Lake County War, which lasted for several years and resulted in numerous deaths.

In 1879, Chaffee County was established by the splitting of the older and larger Lake County, and was named for Jerome Chaffee, a United States senator and a local investor. That same year Buena Vista was incorporated. On May 1, 1880, after years of competition and lawsuits between rival railroad companies, the Denver and Rio Grande Western (D&RGW) Railroad arrived in the Arkansas River Valley in South Arkansas (now known as Salida), coming from Cañon City through the Royal Gorge Canyon.

The arrival of the railroad spurred the establishment of the City of Salida in 1880, so-named by the wife of ex-Territorial Governor A.C. Hunt, who was an official with the railroad, for 'salida,' which means *exit* in Spanish. Within a month, businesses and establishments from nearby Cleora moved to the new town of Salida. Hotels and banks opened immediately, followed by merchants with clothing, hardware, and drug stores, and then physicians, attorneys, and an architect. Within a decade, Salida prospered as the hub of the thriving railroad, mining, and agricultural region. Devastating fires between 1886 and 1888 destroyed portions of the early business district, but the downtown rebounded with the building of substantial two-story brick buildings of which many remain today and are recognized for their historical significance by the



downtown Salida Historic District. A month after arriving in Salida, on June 5, 1880, the D&RGW railroad had extended its tracks to Buena Vista (on its way to Leadville and its silver and lead mining deposits where the tracks arrived in July). That same year the county seat moved from Granite to Buena Vista. The county courthouse was built in 1882. By 1892, the Buena Vista Correctional Facility opened, and remains today as a strong part of the town's economy. Early on it provided jobs and day labor for local construction projects.

By 1894, the town was thriving as a small mining and agricultural community with electricity, street lights, and lands set aside for parks, schools, and cemeteries.

Railroad and precious-metal mining activities continued through the 1920s. In addition to the larger towns of Salida and Buena Vista, smaller communities supported the mining industry at Vicksburg/Winfield, St. Elmo, and Hancock. Independent smelters in Romley, Poncha Springs, and Salida served nearby mines. The Ohio and Colorado Smelting and Refining Company began smelter operations near Salida in 1901, building a town site for its workers at Kortz. In 1917 they built a 365-foot tall smokestack, the tallest smelter in the country. Although the smokestack only operated for two years, it has served as an icon for Salida and the Arkansas Valley since its construction. It is currently being restored as an interpretive site by the Salida Museum.

Mining and railroad operations gradually diminished after the 1920s, the same year the Climax Mine near Leadville was established. Its production surged in the mid-to late 20th century, helping to support the Chaffee County economy where many miners and their families lived. Of the dozens of mining towns that were established during the boom days of mining, just three grew into substantial municipalities—the City of Salida, Town of Buena Vista, and Town of Poncha Springs. Others became ‘ghost towns’ like St. Elmo and Hancock, and others have almost completely disappeared. Through local efforts, a few ghost towns such as St. Elmo have been recognized for their historical importance and are designated as historic districts. The downtowns of Salida and Buena Vista are appreciated for their historical value as well.

By the mid-1950s, outdoor recreation and tourism began to grow in importance, primarily due to the scenic beauty of the county and the white water rapids of the Arkansas River. Competitive whitewater boating began in Salida in 1949 with the first FIBark festival.

Historic Preservation in the Heritage Area

In the 1970s, Chaffee County residents began to see the benefits of historic preservation in preserving their own community values, as did residents in other communities across

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the country. One of the earliest historic preservation actions in the county occurred in 1972, when a group of local Buena Vista residents set out to save and restore the original Saint Rose of Lima Catholic Church as a community arts center. With lots of community support, including donations of cash, materials, and labor, the Little Chapel was relocated, repaired and winterized. Today, it serves as the Buena Vista Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center.

In 1975, local citizens rallied to save the original Chaffee County Courthouse when it was threatened with demolition, resulting in the formation of Buena Vista Heritage, which organized to operate a museum in the building. In 2003, voters transferred the Courthouse to Buena Vista Heritage for one dollar. Buena Vista Heritage also owns the Turner Farm, acquired in 1997 for the purpose of a living farm and history museum, and the Buena Vista Depot and Caboose, which they are restoring for use as a transportation museum. Buena Vista Heritage also owns two historic buildings in St. Elmo—the St. Elmo Schoolhouse for which restoration is complete, and the historic Town Hall, rebuilding of which is underway. In accordance with their mission “to preserve and share the history of Buena Vista and Chaffee County for the education and enjoyment of the public,” the historic preservation group also oversees the Maxwell Park School for the state of Colorado.

By the late 1970s, residents and public agencies saw the benefits of recognizing significant archeological and historical places by designating them as historic sites. In addition to the grass roots initiatives of local residents, county and municipal agencies, along with state and federal agencies, have inventoried and surveyed properties on lands they own or manage in all parts of the county and for all types of resources. Since 1976, close to 100 properties, including districts and individual sites or buildings with archeological, historical or architectural significance, have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) or the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties (SRHP).

These properties include the first listing in the county—the Hutchinson Homestead in 1973. The Ohio-Colorado Smokestack, originally known as the Ohio-Colorado Smelting and Refining Company, was listed on the NRHP in 1976. Other listed properties

include the ‘ghost town’ of the historic mining camp Winfield that was listed in 1980, St. Elmo listed in 1979, the Buena Vista Courthouse in 1978, the Grace Episcopal Church in Buena Vista listed in 1979, the Arkansas River Bridge in Johnson Village listed in 1985, and the archeological remnants of the Marshall Pass route. Two Salida buildings, the old Hospital and the Unique Theater have been locally landmarked.

The largest designation in the county is the downtown Salida National Register Historic District that was listed in 1984. This historic district recognizes dozens of Salida’s intact commercial structures, predominantly two-story brick buildings that display architectural characteristics typical of late 19th century storefronts and their setting in the established downtown. In 2003, the historical and architectural importance of the district’s buildings was re-confirmed by a building survey that defined contributing and noncontributing buildings.

Historic preservation has continued to evolve. In 2001, a Historic Preservation Commission was created in Salida to provide design review for their local historic district. In 2005 the city became a Certified Local Government (CLG) opening up incentives for preservation through tax credits, grant opportunities, and authorizing Salida to locally landmark historic properties. In 2002, Historic Salida, Inc. was formed by local residents to “research, preserve, interpret, and promote historic resources in and near Chaffee County.” HSI offers tours and scholarships, and hosts special events and workshops to promote education. Salida-area Parks Open-space and Trails (SPOT) is currently rehabilitating the Hutchinson Homestead owned by the town of Poncha Springs. The Salida Museum Association is raising funds for the rehabilitation and interpretation of the Ohio-Colorado Smokestack and Maysville School.



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A local land conservation organization, the Land Trust of the Upper Arkansas, was formed in 2000 to “advance the conservation and stewardship of agricultural lands, wildlife habitat, open space, scenic beauty, and other diminishing natural and historical resources.” Their efforts in protecting agricultural lands complement the work of the area’s historic preservation organizations.

The establishment of the Chaffee County Heritage Area in 2004 reinforced the value that the community places on its heritage. It recognizes that historic preservation can play a key role in planning growth and development and acknowledges that stewardship of the area’s heritage resources can positively contribute to the county’s rural character, while also providing positive economic benefits.

Existing Cultural, Archeological and Historical Resources

The following summarizes the range of existing resources that exist within the Heritage Area and along the Byway. These existing resources are the tangible evidence of the county's history. In 2004, the county contracted with GARNA to compile a

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GIS database using available research and documentation, and with the contributions of partner organizations such as Historic Salida, Inc. and Buena Vista Heritage. This is not intended as a complete listing, but rather a sampling of the range of resources that contribute to the character of the Heritage Area. A more complete list is included in Chapter 7.0 Background, section 7.2 Historical Resource Inventory and Data Base, beginning on page 84.

Archeological resources within the area are plentiful with numerous recorded sites scattered throughout the valley. The upper Arkansas valley was home to various bands of Ute Indians who roamed the mountains as hunter-gatherers. As many are located on public lands, recorded sites are rarely revealed to the general public in the interests required to inventory and survey for archeological sites, revealing a range of resources. There are ample opportunities for interpretation and protection of these sites through educational venues and archeological outreach programs that enhance appreciation of past Native American cultures. Information on archeological sites is available from the USFS, BLM, and the Colorado Historical Society, but specific locations are not made public in order to protect them.

Historical resources include historic buildings of architectural and vernacular merit, historic sites where significant events occurred, and historic landscapes. Historic buildings include the downtowns of Salida and Buena Vista with turn-of-the-century two and three-story buildings on a gridded street pattern.

Examples of the country's railroad and mining past include the Buena Vista Depot and Caboose and Smelertown in Salida. Elements associated with early mining and transportation include chert quarries in the foothills east of the river, remnant railroad lines throughout the county, and stagecoach road remnants near Granite.

Issues and Opportunities

Alan Robinson

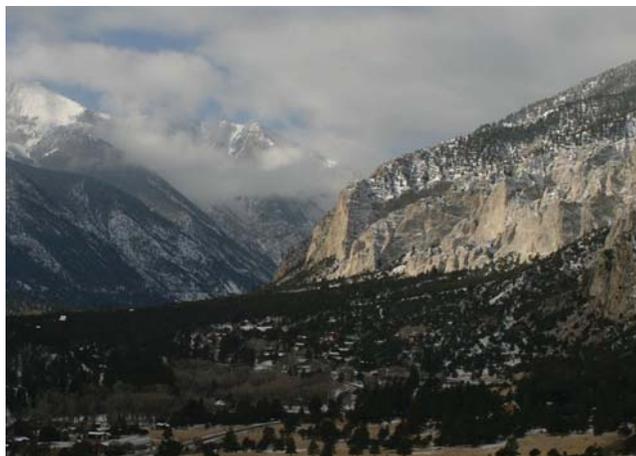


Most of Chaffee County's designated historic properties remain in their historic use or in an adaptive reuse that is compatible with their historic qualities. The rehabilitation of historic buildings and sites is generally accepted as a positive and sustainable approach in the broader community.

Important preservation tools include the listing of properties on the National Register of Historic Places or the Colorado

State Register of Historic Properties. The criteria associated with these Registers provide the standard method used to evaluate places for their historical significance and for determination of integrity. The City of Salida has other valuable tools that assist their local community in promoting historic preservation. The primary tool is the local ordinance that includes an historical commission, the Downtown Salida Design Guidelines, and a demolition provision, all of which are related to the downtown Salida Historic District. Salida is the only municipality with a local ordinance for historic preservation, and also the only certified local government (CLG). There are no county-wide historic designations nor are there county-wide guidelines or standards that address the treatment of historic properties.

Because of the county's broad heritage, there are many additional sites that may be worthy of preservation and recognition. Over the last 30 years, many archeological and historical resources have been inventoried and evaluated. Some have been deemed eligible for listing on the NRHP, others have been deemed



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field eligible, and some have been noted as not rated. These resources are identified in Chapter 7 Background by a matrix and an illustrated map that identifies their locations and lists their evaluation. Chapter 7 also provides a matrix of specific sites that may be potentially significant, including agricultural lands, structures on agricultural and public lands, mining remnants, and roads and bridges that may not have been considered significant in previous inventories.

The greatest threat to the county's archeological and historical resources is likely growth and development. The county's rapid growth has already resulted in new development and patterns of development that may impact its scenic, natural, agricultural, historical and archeological resources. Preserving the significant buildings and landscapes that characterize Chaffee County can provide positive economic benefits to the community.

According to *The Economic Benefits of Historic Preservation in Colorado*, a publication funded by the Colorado Historical Foundation in 2002, historic preservation acts as a catalyst for economic development. Between 1981 and 2001, grants and incentives resulted in \$676.2 million in direct expenditures, rehabilitation projects amounted to \$1.5 billion in indirect benefits, and thousands of jobs were generated in communities across the State of Colorado. Historic preservation promotes sustainability. It reinvests in underutilized buildings and places by returning them to a productive use. Local economic benefits are gained as well, in the form of new jobs and increased tax revenue.

3.5 Recreational Resources

The high mountain oasis of the Chaffee County Heritage Area provides the perfect setting for world-class outdoor recreation and adventure in unparalleled scenery.

Historically, natural hot springs and rustic resorts offered a respite for travelers from

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the city, offering nature's healing powers and a health cure. Hot springs at Mount Princeton and Cottonwood Hot Springs remain from days past, and this experience can now also be enjoyed at Salida's municipal pool. Recreation has continued to grow to the extent that it is one of the most significant sectors of the county's economic base.

Visitors from around the world travel to Chaffee County for its four-season adventure

opportunities, and to experience a variety of outdoor activities that few Colorado counties can match. The diversity of recreational settings and activities in the county is an important component of the quality of life for residents as well.

In 1949, competitors boating from Salida to Cañon City started white water competitions in the United States with the first FIBark festival on the Arkansas River. It still tops the kayaking charts today. Whitewater kayaking and rafting on the rapids of the Arkansas River, the most commercially rafted river in the United States, are the most popular summer activities. The area's abundance of wildlife attracts big game hunters and fishermen and creates opportunities for wildlife viewing. Camping, jeep touring, and ATV and motorcycle riding are popular activities. Hiking, horseback riding, and mountain biking choices at all skill levels are available in dramatic settings that only Chaffee County can offer. In the winter, a similar variety of recreation is available, from downhill skiing and snowboarding at Monarch Mountain (established in 1939) to snowshoeing and backcountry skiing on public lands. Snowmobiling on designated trails is another growing winter activity.

The county offers a broad diversity of recreational settings from backcountry wilderness areas such as Brown's Canyon Wilderness Study Area, the Collegiate Peaks, Buffalo Peaks Wilderness Area, and the Sangre de Cristo Mountains to the Big Bend motorcross track and the white water parks in Salida and Buena Vista. More than 80 percent of the county is public land managed by the United States Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, or the State of Colorado in the form of the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area. These lands provide access to the county's major designated wilderness areas and to the tremendously popular '14ers,' the fourteen 14,000-foot peaks that define the county's (and the Heritage Area's) western edge. The wide variety of public lands offers four-season mountaineering activities for families and experts alike, along more than a hundred miles of shorter-distance routes as well as major sections of the state's long-distance high mountain trails such as the Colorado Trail and the Continental Divide Trail.

A large segment of Chaffee County's tourism economy ties directly to its heritage resources, and many historic resources offer a wide variety of recreational experiences. Rivers and streams provide settings for placer mining hobbyists, and rock-hounding enthusiasts can dig for gems on Mount Antero, Ruby Mountain, or dozens of other locations on public lands. Mining towns like St. Elmo, Turret, Winfield, and Vicksburg offer a visit back in time. Forest access roads, historic mining routes, and abandoned railroad beds create an attractive and sometimes challenging system of trails and terrain, making the county a popular spot for races, including the Banana Belt Mountain Bike Loop Race, burro races, and an increasing number of semi-professional competitive bicycling and running events. Community events also tie directly to the county's heritage resources.

4.0 Issues and Opportunities

An important first step in planning for the future of the Chaffee County Heritage Area and the Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway is to understand the issues, opportunities, and challenges that exist within the county, and how they may affect the county's intrinsic qualities. Issues such as growth and development, land use policy, scenic character, recreational conflicts, lack of knowledge of significant resources, economic viability, wayfinding, and visitor amenities are important to consider when determining potential strategies and actions that should be undertaken to promote and protect the Heritage Area and the Byway.

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This chapter presents a summary of the key findings determined during this planning process. The findings help to determine the strategies and actions that will be necessary to promote and preserve the Heritage Area and the Byway. Strategies and Actions are presented in a subsequent chapter, Chapter 6.0 Strategic Plan.

4.1 Growth and Development

The county's scenic beauty, temperate climate, and affordability make it an attractive place for development and growth.

- Chaffee County is experiencing rapid growth, resulting in new development and patterns of development that may impact its scenic, natural, agricultural, historical, and archeological resources. For example, new growth and smaller development patterns such as two-acre lots located along major travel routes are already beginning to impact the significant scenic views adjacent to or visible from the Byway.
- According to the Chaffee County Comprehensive Plan (March 2000) the county has grown by more than 5% each year since 1997 (contrasted with a statewide rate of 2% and national rate of 1%). The county's population is currently more than 15,000—conservative estimates place it at more than 25,000 by 2020.

- Most new growth occurs in unincorporated areas, placing a financial strain on the county in providing public services. A large amount of this growth is scattered residential development, frequently on two-acre lots with little or no clustering to preserve open space, which is changing the county's rural and scenic character.
- Although more than 80% of the county is public land, lands adjacent to the Byway are primarily privately owned (most of which is productive agricultural land). Farming and ranching are valued for their historic roles, contribution to the local economy, and function in maintaining the county's authentic rural mountain character, but they are also endangered by development. Ranchlands are indeed more financially valuable as development property than for ranching income.

4.2 Land Use Policy

Few incentives or regulatory controls are available to preserve the county's scenic, natural, agricultural, or historic resources. The limited number of planning tools offers few options for landowners or the community to protect lands that provide Chaffee County with its rural character.

- Private property owners are looking for tools that will assist them in protecting their lands, while maintaining their property rights and ability to generate income.

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- Regulatory controls are minimal, particularly in the county's unincorporated rural areas, and especially for lands along the Arkansas River Valley and the Byway.
- There is a need for land use policy that promotes creative and progressive development that maintains open lands and respects natural landscapes while still offering economic benefits to landowners.
- In response to these issues, the Chaffee County community is completing a two year inclusive public process that is providing input and helping set direction for the county's land use code revision. CCHAAB is actively participating in this process, advocating land use policies that will balance growth and development with the preservation of Chaffee County's rural character and local quality of life—key elements of its heritage.

4.3 Scenic Character

In addition to driving growth and development, Chaffee County’s scenic beauty draws tourists and recreationists who collectively bring important economic benefits to the entire community. Scenic character is also noted by residents as being an important reason for living in the county.

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- The connection between scenic beauty, rural character, and sustainable long-term economic viability has not explicitly been recognized by the broader Chaffee County community.
 - All of the Heritage Area’s intrinsic qualities contribute to its scenic character, which in turn contributes to the county’s economic well-being. The county’s growth and plans for new development should be carefully evaluated and designed to minimize impacts on historical and natural resources.
-
- CCHAAB’s mission includes the obligation to provide data to the county and local municipalities and residents on the scenic and historic character. As part of this planning process, CCHAAB prepared a scenic quality inventory to identify specific views, vistas, and areas that contribute to Chaffee County’s scenic character. This was shared with the community through the land use code revision process, where it has already been, and will continue to be, an important planning tool for the county in their evaluation of new development. A description of this inventory is included in Chapter 7.0 Background, in the viewshed and scenic quality analysis.

4.4 Recreational Conflicts and Opportunities

Chaffee County’s abundance of sunny and warm days, and its geologically diverse landscape that includes a world-class river and many 14ers, provide outstanding outdoor recreation and adventure in unparalleled scenery.

- The popularity of diverse recreation activities sometimes causes conflicts between users. Commercial rafting on the Arkansas River has grown exponentially, resulting in management issues such as how to allocate river resources fairly among commercial and private boaters and anglers.



- Issues sometimes arise between motorized and non-motorized users on popular trails, i.e., hikers seeking solitude sometimes conflict with motorized users and bicyclists, equestrian use at times conflicts with motorcycles and bicyclists.
- There is increasing demand for access to public lands by local residents and families, as well as by users from the Front Range and out-of-state. Resource protection and trail maintenance are ongoing issues for public land managers, making it important to identify and protect places, features, and sites that are significant to Chaffee County's heritage.
- As new recreational opportunities arise, such as the addition of hiking and biking trails in and near Salida and Buena Vista, creation of a Brown's Canyon Wilderness Area, and use of historic routes such as the Midland Railroad, their impact or enhancement of heritage values should be considered. It will also be important to support the preservation and adaptive reuse of historic features such as railroad routes that may pass through private lands, i.e., the potential public use and preservation of the Old Leadville Stagecoach Road.
- Providing more access and new trails throughout the county is sometimes challenging, requiring collaboration between potential users and those who manage or own the land, such as public land managers and private owners. A balance between protecting resources on public lands and ensuring that the rights and opinions of private landowners are respected must be made when providing new access such as trails.

4.5 Protection of Significant Historic Resources

Historic buildings, landscapes and features are visible all across Chaffee County, helping to tell its story of mining, settlement, and adventure. Unfortunately, many locals and

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visitors are not aware of the importance of these resources, and means to protect these important resources are not always easily available. Although Chaffee County has several historic preservation groups who have been actively protecting important resources for decades, there are many more sites and properties that have yet to be identified and designated.

- Chaffee County has close to 100 designated historic sites. Most of these properties continue in their historic use or in an adaptive reuse that is compatible with their historical qualities. And, reuse of historic sites and buildings is recognized as a positive and sustainable approach in the community.
- There are potentially many more properties that may be historically significant, such as agricultural lands, structures on agricultural and public lands, mining remnants, and roads and bridges that may not have been considered significant in previous inventories.
- The county's geographical information system (GIS) database includes a listing of the county's historic sites to date. A historical inventory has also been developed and additional plans to continue surveying the county are included in this management plan.

4.6 Historic Preservation and Economic Sustainability

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The economic benefits of historic preservation and land conservation are not readily familiar to the broader Chaffee County community. Recreation and tourism are better understood for the positive benefits they provide to the county's economic viability.

- There is an opportunity to promote historic preservation within the local community for the benefits that it offers, including its role in environmental sustainability such as returning potentially underutilized buildings and sites to a productive use, and the local economic benefits that are gained in the form of new jobs and increased tax revenue.
- Additional opportunities exist for expanding the county's tourism base to include heritage tourism, agri-tourism, visits to public lands, and other sectors of the tourism industry that respect the qualities of unique places. Travelers in these categories generally bring a high level of respect to a place with historical or agricultural significance, and are usually willing to pay a premium for quality lodging, food, and collectibles.

4.7 Wayfinding

Travelers to the Chaffee County Heritage Area generally travel the Byway route (along US 285, US 50, US 24, and CO 291). The route is maintained by the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), whose future plans consist mainly of widening for passing lanes and improving intersections.

- The route is direct, but inconsistent application of CDOT signs, a lack of signs to promote visitor attractions, and clutter in some of the commercial signs (i.e., sign pollution) diminish the experience.
- There is an opportunity to partner with CDOT on interpretive waysides and signs as they implement their planned roadway projects. Roadway widening or modifications to the Byway should be monitored to ensure that improvements do not diminish the scenic and rural experience.

4.8 Visitor Amenities

Human comforts such as rest rooms and water, quality accommodations, and food service establishments are essential to attracting visitors and to getting them to stay longer. However, establishments that are poorly located or inappropriately designed, or that disrupt important resources or scenic views, can detract from the visitor's experience.

- Most traveler amenities are well distributed along the Byway (usually concentrated within a town or a developed area). The recreation sites of the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area provide restrooms and water. Others, such as gas stations or convenience stores, are scattered along undeveloped portions of the Byway, detracting from the beauty of the setting.
- High-end accommodations, such as a downtown hotel in a historic building, are missing from the Heritage Area.
- Some heritage sites and visitor amenities, although they may be appropriately located, are not yet fully “visitor ready” in the sense that their standards of service, quality of facilities, and maintenance may not be at levels expected and demanded by heritage travelers.



5.0 Wayfinding and Interpretive Strategy

Chaffee County's palette of natural and scenic resources and historical and cultural attractions draws new residents and visitors to the county every year. The county has an active, involved community that has spent years organizing interest groups and forming partnerships whose objectives are to preserve and highlight these heritage resources for residents and visitors alike. The current picture is one of an assortment of players who use a wide range of logos, signs, and interpretive installations to convey their individual messages.

The designation of the Chaffee County Heritage Area and the Collegiate Peaks Scenic Byway provides an excellent opportunity to create an integrated framework for education and interpretation that builds on these existing efforts.

The purpose of the wayfinding and interpretive strategy is to set forth a consistent county-wide approach for the interpretation of the scenic, natural, agricultural, cultural, archeological, and historical assets of the Chaffee County Heritage Area.

The objectives of the wayfinding and interpretive strategy are as follows.

- 1. Educate and inform visitors and residents about Chaffee County Heritage Area's natural environment, and its important scenic, natural, agricultural, cultural, historical, archeological, and recreational resources.**
- 2. Assist in preservation and protection of the Heritage Area and its significant heritage resources by telling its important stories.**
- 3. Convey that the Chaffee County Heritage Area is a friendly and attractive destination built upon a pattern of agricultural, natural, and cultural history that can be experienced through exploration, adventure, and learning.**
- 4. Work collaboratively with public agencies, not-for-profit organizations, and private groups that already provide educational, recreational, and interpretive experiences to residents and visitors.**

The first part of this chapter provides a series of recommendations to improve wayfinding within the Heritage Area and the Byway in order to meet the objectives stated above. These improvements are needed so that visitors and residents can fully enjoy and appreciate the intrinsic qualities of the Heritage Area and the Byway.

The second part of this chapter describes the interpretive strategy that is intended to offer a county-wide approach to better connect visitors and residents with the area's heritage qualities. The interpretive strategy identifies an interpretive audience and themes, and recommends a series of interpretive installations and media. The third part brings these together into an interpretive framework.

5.1 Wayfinding

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Wayfinding refers to the ways in which travelers orient themselves as they move from place to place. It includes sensory as well as signs and other graphic communication elements that provide cues to orienting oneself and to choosing a path within an environment. These cues can include natural features and formations, travel routes, and directional and informational signs. Mapping, web-based information, and travel brochures are also elements of wayfinding. Another important aspect is safe travel, which includes road safety and condition of travel routes.

An analysis of the current condition of wayfinding in the Heritage Area and along the Byway determined that there are a number of wayfinding techniques in use, but there is an inconsistent application. There is a general lack of directional and informational signs, especially those directing travelers to important heritage attractions. In addition to the existing directional signs, the Heritage Area has a wide mix of interpretive installations with varying styles, content, and messages. Commercial signage exists in the more populated areas of the Heritage Area, principally in Salida, Buena Vista, and Poncha Springs. In some areas, commercial signs detract from the scenic and historical character. There is only one roadside wayside along the Byway route. The mix of existing sign types and style, and information presented by public agencies and commercial enterprises throughout Chaffee County is addressed in Chapter 7.0 Background.

An analysis of the Byway's existing roadway condition (US 24/US 285, US 50 and CO 291) was conducted in the fall of 2007. A more detailed summary is presented in Chapter 7.0 Background. In general, the roadway analysis noted that the Byway travel

route is direct, but there is an inconsistent application of highway signs. The majority of the roadway pavement is in good to fair condition, with only a few sections rated as fair to poor (from milepost 202 to 212 on US 24). Along US 285 and US 50 where there are intermittent driveways there tend to be wide shoulders, in contrast to the narrow shoulders along CO 291. In addition, there are a few stretches with passing lanes on US 285. CDOT's future projects include the addition of passing and auxiliary lanes on US 24 and US 285 where needed. Improvements to the bridge and intersection at US 24 and US 285 have been completed, and there are no immediate recommendations to widen any of the Byway routes.

Wayfinding Recommendations

A consistent wayfinding approach is required for the Chaffee County Heritage Area and the Byway. Wayfinding should include directional and regulatory signs to help visitors find their way along the Byway and to interesting sites within the Heritage Area. Informational signs are needed to identify important places and events along the Byway, and a visual acknowledgement at the gateways or portals into the Heritage Area is needed to cue the traveler that they have arrived. Specific recommendations include the following. These recommendations are also illustrated on the Interpretive Framework presented later in this chapter.

- Subtly announce the Chaffee County Heritage Area at each of its three spectacular natural gateways along the Byway. Provide an interpretive medallion near the county boundary and in conjunction with another sign. Refurbish the historic Chaffee County signs and reinstall in their current locations.
- Work with public agencies, not-for-profit organizations, and private groups to develop a family of signs and a method for implementation to inform residents and visitors about heritage sites.
 - o Include a consistent application of the 'brown' CDOT signs along the Byway to direct visitors to important heritage sites such as to the historic downtowns of Salida and Buena Vista.
 - o Include a county-wide wayfinding sign system to direct residents and visitors to important attractions.
 - o Include a family of interpretive signs.
- Work with the local business community to reduce "sign pollution" along the Byway and adjacent to important heritage sites.

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5.2 Interpretive Strategy

Interpretive Philosophy

Interpretation is about connecting people with places. Its role is to bring forward and explain the underlying meaning of the places, people, events, and natural forces that have marked and shaped an area. The resources that characterize the special nature of the Chaffee County Heritage Area are known as the intrinsic qualities— scenic, natural, agricultural, cultural, historical, archeological, and recreational resources. The intrinsic qualities are described in Chapter 3.0.

The interpretive plan for the Heritage Area is based on these intrinsic qualities, offers unique experiences, and builds on existing amenities. It focuses on portraying the Heritage Area’s character as a combination of remarkable natural resources overlain with a fascinating and visitor-attractive social and cultural history.

Interpretive Audience

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The Chaffee County Heritage Area interpretive audience is two part: the first is the traveler or visitor who arrives for their first or repeated visit, and the second is the resident who has chosen to live in the county.

In attracting visitors, the objective is to interest those who will sustain the character of this exceptional place—its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well being of its residents. For new or returning visitors who enjoy the area’s recreational or natural resources, it is important to provide additional experiences related to heritage that will encourage longer stays.

In attracting new visitors, it is important to attract those with a special interest in the county’s heritage, agricultural history, and scenic appeal. Tourism studies have shown that these types of travelers tend to have a positive economic and social impact on communities, and tend to be educationally oriented.

Providing interpretive approaches that support the local community and attract local residents is equally important. Interpretation can play a key role in educating and informing the local community about the significant heritage resources that contribute to their quality of life. Educating local businesses about the preservation and promotion of heritage can increase their business.

Interpretive Themes and the Stories of Chaffee County

Typically, an interpretive theme provides a key message that is used to organize all interpretive activities at an individual site. For a region as broad as the Heritage Area with an equally broad range of stories, the interpretive themes recognize the important stories and places of the area, and convey those that express the qualities of the entire

“My uncle, George Naples, was a brake-man and he worked from Denver to Salida. He was one of the older members, working on the railroad for over 50 years. I had four children and he took them on the last ride from Salida to Denver. That railroad was so much fun. We’d stop under the Royal Gorge every time we went down the canyons. And it was more fun to get out, every time, and look up at the Royal Gorge. The train was a very integral part of our town, it really made the town. And my dad and my father-in-law were both tailors and they made suits for all of the railroad men because they had to dress in blue suits, so they were quite busy tailors.”

Jane Ferraro

region. The interpretive themes convey a complete message and should be used primarily to provide information that relates to the entire Heritage Area. In most cases, interpretive information on the Heritage Area will be added to existing facilities and be used to promote the region as a whole.

Six themes have been identified for the Heritage Area. They were created with the assistance of the CCHAAB, through the involvement of the community in a series of oral history workshops, and through the inventory and analysis of the area’s historical and natural resources. The oral history workshops were instrumental in identifying individual stories and collective memories. Transcripts from the workshops are included in the Appendix.

The historical and natural resources inventories (presented in Chapter 7.0 Background) helped to identify events, people, and resources that tell the story of the county’s evolution.

The thread of the county’s dominant natural setting, and its role in the development of the county, is a consistent idea that is woven through all six themes. The themes convey the historical development of the county. The six themes are: 1) Finding Our Roots, 2) Pushing Cattle, 3) Recreation and Adventure, 4) Making a Living: Mining, Transportation, and Industry, 5) Exploring the Valley: the Earliest Days, and 6) Tapping the Water: the Lifeline of the West.

Finding Our Roots

The human character of Chaffee County is built upon the ingrained and varied traditions and ethnic roots of its pioneering and long-residing families. These stories explore the ethnic diversity, and the ways in which families and residents have contributed (and continue to contribute) to the sense of place that makes the county unique.

Pushing Cattle

From the 1860s onward, opportunities for productive high altitude agriculture brought many settlers to the Arkansas Valley, where dry land farming, irrigated hay meadows, grazing, and other practices continue today as important livelihoods. Agriculture and its land patterns in the valley provide a distinct landscape character, particularly along the Byway, where broad open fields contrast with the steep backdrops of the mountain peaks to the west. Stories of ranching, farming, and the industries they supported, including truck farming and mining, will be explored.

Recreation and Adventure

The magnificent and largely publicly held lands in the county have long drawn adventurers and outdoor recreationists to fish, hunt, raft, climb, photograph, and explore its environs. And from very early on, the clean high mountain air, an untamed river, and world-class scenery have offered a respite from ‘city life’. How such large expanses of land came to be protected and the stories of how they have been managed, as well as the history of the Heritage Area’s recreation and the diverse and popular activities still pursued, will be explored.

Making a High-Altitude Living: Mining, Transportation and Industry

The discovery of gold and silver in Colorado and the Homestead Act in 1863 brought settlers, miners, and entrepreneurs to the Arkansas Valley. But it was the advent of the stage routes and eventually the railroads in the late 19th century that truly facilitated development of a thriving economy in the Arkansas Valley. These stories will explore the evolution of transportation as well as the mining industry and other industries that have contributed, and continue to contribute, to the character of the county – railroad, hard rock mining, processing minerals, timbering, recreation, construction, and the prison.

Exploring the Valley: The Earliest Days

Before European settlers moved to Chaffee County, the lands were inhabited by Native Americans, and later by transient explorers and adventurers. These stories will explore the earliest history of the county, from aboriginal inhabitants until the first permanent settlers.

Tapping the Water: The Lifeline of the West

Water is the lifeblood to the West, and Chaffee County is no exception. The role of water in the development of the Arkansas Valley, and the intriguing history of water bought and sold to support the development of distant communities, will be explored.

Interpretive Framework



Figure 8

5.3 Interpretive Framework

The Interpretive Framework describes an integrated current and future system of physical infrastructure that will provide facilities necessary to interpret the natural and cultural heritage of the Heritage Area.

Specifically, the Interpretive Framework recommends adding several interpretive sites, including local visitor centers and interpretive waysides (newly developed and existing sites). Destination Sites and Adventure Routes included in the Interpretive Framework are also important amenities because they offer ways of logically directing travelers through the Heritage Area to its significant places. Interpretive media, including a Heritage Area logo and marketing brochure, are also important elements that will support the Interpretive Framework.

Interpretive Sites

A hierarchy of places and sites will be created to convey the stories of the Chaffee County Heritage Area and the Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway. The sites are intended to allow residents and visitors to gain knowledge about the Heritage Area through a variety of experiences. Many of the proposed sites are locations where the interpretive information is already available. A few new sites will be created specifically to tell the stories of the Heritage Area and the Byway. The type and amount of information and level of detail will vary by site, depending on its role in the interpretive framework.

The development of the interpretive sites will build upon existing sites where visitors and residents currently congregate and where interpretation already exists. Most of these sites were built and are managed by one or more of the partners of the Heritage Area. The interpretive sites include the following.

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- Local Heritage Centers
- Historic Downtowns
- Interpretive Waysides
- Destination Sites
- Museums
- Adventure Routes

Local Heritage Centers

To complement the activities of existing visitor centers that are site specific or related to one entity (such as the USFS), a new visitor center is proposed for each municipality. Each municipality will create a local visitor center in conjunction with an existing facility that already has

a similar mission. The function of the local visitor centers will be to provide basic information about the Chaffee County Heritage Area to aid in trip planning and general interpretation, complemented by providing more in-depth interpretation about the immediate place in which the center is located. Because each would be incorporated within an existing site and/or program the local visitor center would provide an individual focus on that community while also providing county-wide information.

Three local visitor centers are suggested, one each in Poncha Springs, the City of Salida, and the Town of Buena Vista.

- Poncha Springs Local Heritage Center – Located at the crossroads of US 285 and US 50 in the current location of the seasonal visitor center and an outdoor display.
- City of Salida Local Heritage Center – The second location is in downtown Salida, possibly in collaboration with the offices of GARNA, Federal Highways Administration (FHWA), National Scenic Byways Program, or the Chamber of Commerce.
- Town of Buena Vista Local Heritage Center – The third location is in downtown Buena Vista, in conjunction with the Buena Vista Chamber of Commerce.

Historic Downtowns

The primary destinations within the Chaffee County Heritage Area are its three municipalities—Poncha Springs, the City of Salida, and the Town of Buena Vista. The traditional downtowns of each of these municipalities include many of the Heritage

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Area’s cultural and historical resources as well as many of its visitor amenities such as lodging, shopping, and food.

Historic downtowns are key locations to provide a variety of interpretations. These may include exhibits, historical markers, walking tours and maps. The CCHAAB will coordinate with its partners including the municipalities and historic preservation groups.

Interpretive Waysides

In addition to the local heritage centers, a series of interpretive waysides are proposed along major travel routes and at sites where opportunities exist to provide information related to the Heritage Area and to complement the material already presented.



Interpretive waysides would expand or improve existing facilities or would be developed as new waysides in locations considered missed opportunities.

An interpretive wayside would typically include a small parking area, safe ingress and egress into the wayside, educational and interpretive media, and a means to explore or further enjoy the setting such as a trail connection, a picnic

site, or a photographic opportunity. Interpretive media would include wayfinding information, panels or signs conveying information on the history of the site or its surroundings, an illustrated map of the Heritage Area for orientation, and seating if appropriate.

For locations that already provide facilities such as parking, interpretive signs, and amenities, information about heritage resources associated with the immediate surroundings and identification of the site as part of the Heritage Area would be provided. In some cases, the only need is the addition of the Heritage Area logo. At others, new interpretive panel(s) would convey Heritage Area information. At a few, all of the typical wayside facilities listed above would be new improvements.

Interpretive waysides are recommended at select locations along the Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway, Trout Creek Pass, at select points on the Arkansas River, and along Poncha Pass. Their locations and interpretive content are as follows.

Collegiate Peaks Scenic Overlook

Providing additional interpretive information related to the area's heritage at the existing Collegiate Peaks Scenic Overlook is proposed. Interpretation of the Heritage Area would be integrated with the existing panels, and could include the interpretive themes of *Pushing Cattle*, *Exploring the Valley*, and *Tapping the Water*.

Arkansas River Interpretive Waysides

Several interpretive waysides are proposed along the Arkansas River where the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area (AHRA) provides facilities such as rest rooms, camping, and visitor information. Sites were selected that are easily accessible from the Byway, that have existing visitor facilities or have the potential to add visitor facilities, and that offer effective interpretive opportunities.

These sites, their content, and potential interpretive themes (in italics) include the following.

- Clear Creek/Stagecoach Road (a crossing of the Midland Railroad and Leadville Stage Road incorporating an 1876 William Henry Jackson panoramic view) - *Making a Living: Mining, Transportation, and Industry*
- Pine Creek (story of the Class V rapids and railroads—the DRG narrow and standard gauge, Midland Railroads) - *Making a Living: Mining, Transportation, and Industry, and Recreation and Adventure*
- Ruby Mountain - *Pushing Cattle*
- Hecla Junction - *Tapping the Water*
- East Salida - *Recreation and Adventure*
- Buena Vista River Park (Midland Railroad, adding the Heritage Area logo) - *Making a Living: Mining, Transportation, and Industry*
- Coors Boat ramp in Salida - *Recreation and Adventure*

Collegiate Peaks Scenic Byway Interpretive Waysides

Five interpretive waysides are recommended along the Collegiate Peaks Scenic Byway, including three sites that require improvements to existing facilities, and two new sites that would require the construction of all of the features of a typical wayside as identified above. The interpretive waysides and their content include the following.

- Old Stage Road near existing sign - *Making a High Altitude Living: Mining, Transportation and Industry*
- Christmas 1806 - at existing CDOT facility at mile marker 132 - *Exploring the Valley: the Earliest Days*
- Smelertown - an interpretive wayside at the smelter site near Salida - *Making a High Altitude Living: Mining, Transportation and Industry*
- Hutchinson Ranch - an interpretive wayside along US 50 - *Exploring the Valley: the Earliest Days*

Poncha Pass Interpretive Wayside

One interpretive wayside is recommended along Poncha Pass. The wayside would be located at an existing pull-out, and will require the construction of all of the features described above.

- Poncha Pass - *Making a High Altitude Living: Mining, Transportation and Industry*

Destination Sites

In addition to the historic downtowns, there are dozens of significant places within the county that contribute to Chaffee County's heritage. Many are not located immediately adjacent to the Collegiate Peaks Scenic Byway, and some are found in distant and even remote locations, such as in the foothills and in the 14ers to the west of the Byway, or in the rugged foothills in the Fourmile area east of the Arkansas River.

Collectively, these places play a vital role in telling the broader Chaffee County stories to residents and visitors. They are termed Destination Sites, where detailed educational and interpretive information should be made available on the history and value of these specific places, and general information should also be provided on the Heritage Area and the Byway. The destination sites and their content include the following.

- Historic Downtowns of Buena Vista, Salida and Poncha Springs - *Multiple Themes*
- Granite - *Finding Our Roots*
- Vicksburg / Winfield - *Making a High Altitude Living: Mining, Transportation and Industry*
- Buena Vista Depot - *Making a High Altitude Living: Mining, Transportation and Industry*
- Turner Farm - *Finding Our Roots and Pushing Cattle*
- Fourmile Area (Historic Lenhardy Toll Road, Midland Railroad, mining and timbering, tie cutting) - *Making a High Altitude Living: Mining, Transportation and Industry*
- Cottonwood Hot Springs - *Recreation and Adventure*
- Mount Princeton Hot Springs - *Recreation and Adventure*
- St. Elmo - *Making a High Altitude Living: Mining, Transportation and Industry*
- Smelertown - *Making a High Altitude Living: Mining, Transportation and Industry, and Finding Our Roots*
- Hutchinson Ranch - *Finding Our Roots, Pushing Cattle, Exploring the Valley, and Tapping the Water*
- Maysville Schoolhouse – *Finding Our Roots*
- Monarch/Mine/Quarry - *Making a High Altitude Living: Mining, Transportation and Industry*

Museums

Several museums and archives already provide exhibits and interpretive information on local history as well as serving as depositories for historical information. The museums are key locations that will be supported by the Heritage Area. They are also locations where information about the Heritage Area can be distributed, and activities undertaken by the Heritage Area can be conveyed. The existing museums include the Salida Museum and the Buena Vista Heritage Museum, and the Salida Regional Library Local History Archives.

Adventure Routes

The county's municipalities and the destination sites offer many ways to explore Chaffee County's heritage, but the routes to and between these places are just as interesting, offering scenery and experiences that are world renowned. Designating scenic routes that access the destination sites as adventure routes will assist in providing a broader heritage experience for travelers. The following are routes that should be considered as adventure routes.

- Clear Creek Canyon Road to Vicksburg and Winfield (County Road 390)
- Cottonwood Pass (County Road 306)
- County Road 162 to Mount Princeton Hot Springs
- US 50 to Monarch Pass
- US 285-Johnson Village to Trout Creek Pass
- County Roads 339 and 326 connecting Cottonwood Pass to Mount Princeton
- Spiral Drive on "S" Mountain in Salida
- Old Monarch Pass (County Road 234)
- Aspen Ridge – Trout Creek Pass to Ute Trail (County Roads 307, 185, and 175)
- DSP&P Railroad to Hancock from St. Elmo (County Road 295)



Logo

There already exists a wealth and diversity of markers, signs, logos and identifying symbols that are used by the multiple public agencies, municipalities, and preservation groups to highlight their own cultural, historic and recreational features. Because of this, it is important that the CCHAAB introduce a simple mechanism that identifies the region as the Heritage Area.

A simple logo that identifies the Heritage Area will be added to existing and future interpretive sites. The logo can be displayed prominently on partner sites, and at new Heritage Area sites. The logo will also serve to visually tie the proposed interpretive sites and elements of the Heritage Area into a cohesive image. It is also envisioned to be a part of the county threshold signs and other county-wide wayfinding signs.

6.0 Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan presents the actions that are to be undertaken by the Chaffee County Heritage Area Board (CCHAAB) and its partners to achieve the goals of the Chaffee County Heritage Area and the Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway.

The first section of the Strategic Plan is organized into three approaches. Each of these is described by a set of specific actions that should be undertaken to successfully preserve, promote, and improve the Chaffee County Heritage Area and the Collegiate Peaks Byway. The three approaches are as follows.

- **Preserve Scenic Character through Resource Protection**
- **Identify and Protect Significant Historic Resources**
- **Educate and Engage the Community and Visitors**



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The following is a description of each of these approaches. Each is introduced with an explanation of the approach, followed by an explanation of the role that the CCHAAB will have in implementing the strategy, and ending with a set of actions needed to implement the strategy. A recommendation for immediate action, future action, and/or an ongoing role is provided. The actions are numbered (1 through 16) so that they are easy to locate, regardless of which strategy is addressed.

The last section of the Strategic Plan presents a series of actions, the Action Plan, that prioritizes the actions that the CCHAAB will undertake initially to meet their goals. Those actions include activities noted for immediate action.

Immediate action includes those activities that the CCHAAB is already undertaking, or that could be undertaken within the next three years. They also include activities that are of primary importance in meeting the goals of this plan. Future actions are those activities that are expected to be undertaken at a later date, not yet determined.

Ongoing actions are those activities that the CCHAAB will continue to be involved in, in either a leadership role or as a partner.

6.1 Preserve Scenic Character through Resource Protection

The 57-mile (91.7 km) Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway is the heart of Chaffee County, showcasing one of Colorado’s most spectacular scenic places. The essence and quality of this scenic character relies on retaining resources that create it—the core intrinsic values of the Heritage Area and the Byway.

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The scenic quality analysis (Chapter 3.0 Intrinsic Qualities) revealed that most of the foreground along the Byway is visible to the traveler, as are many of the foothills and high mountains beyond. The working landscapes of the valley’s ranches, the Arkansas River, and diverse natural areas are all elements of the foreground that contribute to the scenic character.

To protect the scenic character of the Heritage Area and the Byway, the CCHAAB will assist municipalities, county agencies, federal and state agencies, and private property owners in their efforts to protect the intrinsic qualities within areas visible from the Byway, and within the ‘priority’ views. Because the CCHAAB does not specifically manage or own the resources that contribute to this character, the role of the CCHAAB is to provide support, advocacy, and assistance in securing funding, and to generally assist with the identification and protection of significant resources.

Specifically, CCHAAB will:

1. **Promote the value of the scenic viewsheds and the ‘priority’ views.**
CCHAAB has already begun work to protect the county’s scenic character. CCHAAB has been an active participant in the community Roundtable that is influencing the county’s land use update. CCHAAB has provided documentation of significant resources and promoted the importance of these resources, the area’s scenic character, and the role they play in the economic well-being of the county.
2. **Support and advocate responsible development and sustainable land use planning.** CCHAAB supports zoning and development approaches that will protect scenic character. These include approaches recommended by the Roundtable, including focusing higher density development near towns, creating community nodes for new commercial development, and developing cluster ordinances and an agricultural overlay to protect open lands. Tools such as site planning and design standards are also supported.

3. **Work with partners to promote land conservation through historic preservation, conservation easements, and other tools.** Several local, state-wide, and national conservation organizations are actively working in Chaffee County to protect important agricultural lands and open space. These include Colorado Open Lands, the Ranchlands Group, Colorado Cattlemen’s Agricultural Land Trust, the Land Trust of Upper Arkansas, Colorado Conservation Trust, and The Trust for Public Lands. CCHAAB has the opportunity to partner with these groups to preserve the county’s agricultural and natural heritage.

Action 1: Promote the importance of the preservation of the intrinsic qualities that are visible from the Byway and that create its scenic character. Protect the ‘priority’ views along the Byway and throughout the Heritage Area. Refer to maps titled Scenic Byway Viewshed Analysis, Scenic Byway Viewshed Analysis Excluding Public Lands, Skyline Analysis, and Character Zones and Scenic Views.

	Priority		
	Immediate	Future	Ongoing
a. Continue to promote the Scenic Character Analysis as a valuable tool to county, state and federal agencies, and local municipalities. Encourage its broad distribution and use in land protection and land use planning.	X		X
b. Assist private property owners and efforts of local, state, and national conservation organizations as they identify the most significant lands for their conservation value and pursue appropriate long-term arrangements to ensure their protection.	X		X
c. Advocate the protection of the foreground views through land use regulations and incentives.	X		X
d. Advocate the implementation of regulations that protect against development along ridgelines.	X		X

Action 2: Support and advocate responsible development and sustainable land use through the county and municipal planning processes.

	Priority		
	Immediate	Future	Ongoing
a. Promote the adoption of the CCHA Management Plan by the Chaffee County Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners. Advocate its use as a planning tool to guide policies and regulations and to identify important resources.	Complete		X
b. Actively assist the County Planning Office, in an advisory role, in reviewing proposed development for compliance with the CCHA Management Plan.	X	X	X
c. Promote the CCHA Management Plan to municipalities as a planning tool they can use in developing policy and identifying resources.		X	X
d. Support and advocate policies of the Land Use Roundtable recommendations (Chaffee County Zoning Code Revision) that protect important resources.	X		X

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Action 3: Support and advocate protection of public lands and inholdings within public lands that contribute to the County’s scenic character.

	Priority		
	Immediate	Future	Ongoing
a. Work with state and federal agencies in reviewing proposed new land use or new development on public lands to ensure concurrence with CCHA Management Plan to the extent allowed by the agencies’ mandates.		X	X
b. Support Chaffee County efforts via zoning and code procedures that discourage inappropriate development on inholdings (private lands surrounded by public lands).		X	X
c. Promote a partnership with the State Land Board to influence future plans impacting state lands to preserve scenic and historic resources.	X		X
d. Support and advocate policies of the 2008 Land Use Roundtable recommendations (Chaffee County Zoning Code Revision) that protect important resources.	X	X	X
e. Support efforts of public or private partners who may seek to acquire or otherwise limit development on inholdings within the public lands that are considered critical to scenic character or other heritage values.		X	X

Action 4: Promote the protection of important agricultural lands that contribute to the scenic character in private ownership, using tools that provide an economic benefit to the landowner.

	Priority		
	Immediate	Future	Ongoing
a. Identify agricultural resources that also hold important heritage value such as important historic ranch buildings, sites and/or land uses. Refer to the Potential Listing of Historic Resources on page 88.		X	X
b. Actively participate in the Ranchlands Group to support their work in protecting important agricultural lands as working landscapes.	X		X
c. Partner with land trust organizations to promote conservation tools (i.e., conservation easements and land acquisition) that protect significant private lands and provide a benefit to the owner. Assist with support letters, grant funding, and education of landowners concerning benefits and constraints of these approaches.	X		X
d. Support the acquisition of important lands (by others) through services such as grant writing, education, and collaboration.		X	X

Action 5: Broaden the participation on the CCHAAB to include all interested stakeholders.

	Priority		
	Immediate	Future	Ongoing
a. Work with the County Commissioners to add an additional at-large seat to the CCHAAB. Consider adding a stakeholder with interests in agricultural lands.	Complete		
b. Re-evaluate the composition of the CCHAAB on a regular basis to ensure that it provides broad participation from all interested stakeholder groups.		X	

6.2 Identify and Protect Significant Historic Resources

Chaffee County's geologic diversity provides the basis for a distinct cultural landscape pattern, reflecting evolution from transient settlement and exploration to a railroad,

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mining, farming, and ranching community. Archeological resources include remains of prehistoric Native American sites. Historic resources are extensive, and include travel remnants such as stage roads, railroad tunnels, and bridges, as well as cabins, mines and ghost towns from past mining.

Historic buildings range from downtown two-story brick structures, Victorian homes on gridded streets, ranch houses, and mining structures to railroad depots. Historic landscapes include ranchlands, cemeteries, historic downtowns, and travel routes. A detailed inventory of the county's historic resources is included in Chapter 7.0 Background. This inventory uses illustrations and matrices to outline the listed, eligible, and potentially eligible historic resources. It also includes a matrix of sites that could be considered for immediate designation. Inventory of historic resources is an on-going effort and additional work will be required to continue to update the inventory.

The role of the CCHAAB in historic preservation is to be its leading advocate in the county, providing public education on its value, offering support services, assisting its partners in securing funding, and aiding in the identification and documentation of historic resources.

Specifically, CCHAAB will:

1. **Assist with the county-wide database of historic properties.** The county's geographical information system (GIS) database includes a listing of the county's historical sites, and was last updated in 2004. This planning process identified the extent of the existing database and the need to maintain and manage it on an on-going basis.

2. **Develop a comprehensive professional program to identify, evaluate and designate significant historic resources.**
3. **Work with partners to encourage awareness, urgency and importance of historic preservation and help obtain funding.**
4. **Identify potential historic properties for inventory and evaluation, and for historic designation.** CCHAAB has developed a list of Potential Historic Resources for consideration for further inventory, evaluation and designation. This list is based on the 2004 GIS database and information provided by the Heritage Area’s partners. The list is included in Chapter 7.0 Background. Future inventories will be needed to continue to evaluate potential historic resources.
5. **In consultation with historic preservation partners, identify and prioritize the most endangered and most significant historic resources and promote and facilitate preservation efforts.**

Action 6: Implement a county-wide process to document significant historic resources.

	Priority		
	Immediate	Future	Ongoing
a. Explore the possibility of Chaffee County becoming a certified local government to enhance partnerships and to acquire funding to manage historic resources.		X	
b. Encourage the County to maintain the historic resource GIS database, initiated in 2004 by the CCHAAB. Update to include the historic resources identified by this Management Plan. Update the GIS database on an annual basis, or more frequently if significant information becomes available.	X		X
c. Coordinate with the OAHF annually to obtain the most recent listing of inventoried properties (lead time for data can be up to one year).		X	X
d. Work with local preservation organizations on a regular basis to obtain information on properties they are inventorying, surveying or designating.		X	X
e. Encourage local municipalities and federal agencies to provide their most recent inventories for inclusion in the database.	X		X
f. Support local libraries and museums as depositories of information on county historical resources.		X	X

Action 7: Encourage local municipalities and communities to recognize historic resources through historic designation (local, state or national) or through other planning measures.

	Priority		
	Immediate	Future	Ongoing
a. Work with the Buena Vista community to recognize its historic downtown through a local designation or overlay district.		X	X
b. Support the City of Salida’s efforts to survey and designate additional historic districts, buildings, and landscapes.		X	X
c. Work with the Town of Poncha Springs community to recognize its historic buildings through a local designation process.	X		X
d. Work with the incorporated communities and the county to develop ordinances, design guidelines, and designation processes that protect historic resources and that are compatible with the values of the community. Examples include demolition protection, a county-wide historic designation ordinance, conservation districts, and overlay districts.		X	

Action 8: Explain the economic options and benefits of historic preservation, such as gaining eligibility for historic grants for public and community projects and obtaining tax credits for private properties that are designated and rehabilitated as historic properties.

	Priority		
	Immediate	Future	Ongoing
a. Assist partners by providing services such as presentations and participating in grant writing and providing letters of support.		X	X
b. Work with partners to create publications, brochures and other media to promote the importance and benefits of historic preservation. See Educate and Engage Residents and Visitors below.		X	X

Action 9: Use the Potential Historic Resources (included in Chapter 7.0 Background) to craft projects for additional or new inventory, evaluation or designation of historic resources.

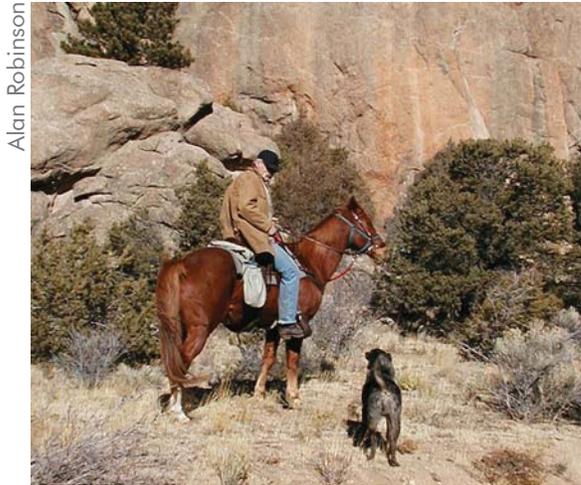
	Priority		
	Immediate	Future	Ongoing
a. Continue to identify potential historic resources through public/private partnerships and outreach and add to Potential Historic Resources.		X	X
b. Work with partners and private property owners including ranchers to secure funding and technical support for evaluation and inventory projects.	X	X	X
c. Add List of Potential Historic Resources to GIS database as sites needing additional study.	X		
d. Prepare and submit grant applications to the Colorado Historical Society's State Historical Fund to conduct additional survey work. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first candidates for additional study and potential properties for designation are noted under Actions in Potential Historic Resources, section 7-2. 	X	X	X

Action 10: Work with partners on their existing historic sites to bring appropriate sites up to a high level of service (visitor ready) and authentic quality for interpretation, programming, and events (see Chapter 5.0 Wayfinding and Interpretive Strategy).

	Priority		
	Immediate	Future	Ongoing
a. Work with partners on those sites that are already identified as high priority for improving facilities and interpretation (i.e., getting them visitor ready). See <i>Educate and Engage Residents and Visitors</i> below, and <i>The Five Year Task List</i> at the end of the chapter.	X		
b. Work with partners and private property owners to secure funding and technical support for implementation.	X		X

6.3 Educate and Engage the Community and Visitors

Chaffee County Heritage Area is a special place where the past and present intertwine in a way that creates its special character. Articulating these qualities and making history visible is an important aspect of the role of the Heritage Area. Creating broad support and enthusiasm for the Chaffee County Heritage Area includes reaching out to local communities, educating children and adults, and interpreting the county's heritage for visitors and local residents.



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The process of developing this Management Plan included outreach by the CCHAAB through a series of public presentations and community meetings, where each presentation was accompanied by a series of maps and illustrative graphics that convey the intrinsic qualities of the Heritage Area. It is important to the CCHAAB to promote the rural character of the Heritage Area and its intrinsic qualities, so that they in turn are valued by visitors and residents alike.

The CCHAAB will provide a lead role in educating and engaging the community (residents, business owners, and others) and visitors about the importance of the Heritage Area and the Collegiate Peaks Scenic Byway. This role includes promoting the economic benefits of the Heritage Area and its historic preservation components to the community, private property owners, and others who own, manage, or otherwise control potential historic buildings, sites or cultural landscapes.

Specifically, CCHAAB will:

1. **Implement the Wayfinding and Interpretive Strategy** (presented in Chapter 3.0).
2. **Promote the Heritage Area and Byway through an interpretive, educational and marketing program.**
3. **Work with partners to jointly develop programs and interpretive facilities.**
4. **Solicit funding, and develop partnerships to create and implement programs and facilities.**

Action 11: Implement an interpretive, educational, and marketing program to educate local communities and visitors on the intrinsic values of the Heritage Area and Byway.

	Priority		
	Immediate	Future	Ongoing
a. Develop a marketing approach and a marketing brochure to promote the Heritage Area and Byway (this project is part of the 2007 work of the CCHAAB).	X		
b. Create a logo for use in identifying the Heritage Area and the Byway (this project is part of the 2007 work of the CCHAAB).	Complete		
c. Maintain, and update on an annual basis, the Chaffee County Heritage Area web site, garna.org/heritage . Consider a new web address that has Chaffee County Heritage Area in the name.		X	X
d. Develop and maintain a speaker's bureau (a listing of available experts) to visit schools, organizations, or other groups to promote the Heritage Area and Byway. Develop lecture topics and potential venues.		X	X
e. Provide information to the State and National Scenic Byway programs for inclusion with their marketing materials and web sites. Provide stories and road trips (using the Adventure Routes) to the National Scenic Byways Program for use on their web site.	X		X
f. Write articles for publication such as press releases, and contributions to heritage tourism and other industry publications.			X

Action 12: Create training and outreach programs to engage the community (this project is part of the 2008 FHWA (National Scenic Byways Program) Grant Submittal, to be administered by GARNA if granted).

	Priority		
	Immediate	Future	Ongoing
a. Work with Byway partners to develop and provide a training program for business owners and other organizations to educate them on the Byway, resource protection, benefits, and methods to integrate this into their business offerings.	X		X
b. In partnership with existing programs, conduct oral history workshops on an annual basis using the format and training from this Management Plan planning process. *	X		X

Action 13: Create an integrated and cohesive system of graphic signing and materials to identify the Heritage Area and Byway (See Chapter 3.0).

	Priority		
	Immediate	Future	Ongoing
a. Develop a graphic design for the Heritage Area's interpretive signs (this project is part of the 2007 work of the CCHAAB).	X		
b. Develop a graphic design for a family of interpretive installations and interpretive media. Build on the marketing brochure and the interpretive signs from the 2007 work.		X	

* A workshop for the first year is included in the 2008 FHWA (Byways Program) Grant Submittal, to be administered by GARNA if granted.

Action 14: Create a series of interpretive waysides to convey the interpretive stories of the Heritage Area and Byway (See Chapter 5.0).

	Priority		
	Immediate	Future	Ongoing
a. Work with CDOT and BLM to improve the Christmas 1806 site on the Byway as a pilot project for interpretive wayside development. Provide site improvements, interpretive signs, and visitor amenities.*		X	
b. Develop a typical wayside site plan for use in developing interpretive waysides. Consult CDOT and other partners.*		X	
c. Work with AHRA and Colorado State Parks to add the logo and interpretive information to the AHRA Collegiate Peaks Scenic Overlook.*		X	
d. Work with AHRA and Colorado State Parks to add the logo and interpretive information to two interpretive wayside locations along the Arkansas River, in conjunction with existing facilities.*		X	
e. Work with AHRA, Colorado State Parks, CDOT, and other partners to continue the development of the interpretive waysides.		X	

* project is part of the 2008 FHWA (Byways Program) Grant Submittal, to be administered by GARNA if granted.

Action 15: Create three local heritage centers, to convey interpretive, educational, and marketing information (see Chapter 5.0).

	Priority		
	Immediate	Future	Ongoing
a. Work with the County and other partners to develop heritage centers in the county.		X	
b. Work with the Town of Poncha Springs in developing architectural and site plans and interpretive installations for their local visitor centers.*		X	
c. Work with the Town of Buena Vista in evaluating locations and partners for their local visitor centers.		X	
d. Work with the City of Salida in evaluating locations (preferably downtown) and partners for their local visitor centers.		X	

** project is part of the 2008 FHWA (Byways Program) Grant Submittal, to be administered by GARNA if granted.*

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Action 16: Solicit funding and develop partnerships to create and implement programs and facilities that support the Heritage Area and Byway.

	Priority		
	Immediate	Future	Ongoing
<p>a. Explore funding possibilities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colorado Historical Society’s State Historical Fund for planning grants; • Colorado Tourism Office’s Heritage Tourism Project; • CDOT enhancement funds; • National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Share Your Heritage; • private foundations. 	X		X
<p>b. Identify additional funding opportunities that align with the Heritage Area and the Byway mission, such as partner membership dues, individual memberships, special events, or sponsorships.</p>		X	X
<p>c. Assist partners with funding needs by partnering on grant proposals, providing support services, and by administering grants.</p>		X	X

6.4 Action Plan for the Chaffee County Heritage Area Advisory Board

The actions and priorities listed above are the heart of the Heritage Area Plan. They will guide activity of the CCHAAB over at least the next five years. **Equally important, they are intended as expressions of recognition and support of actions of the Board’s partners such as the BOCC, municipal governments, public land managers, historic preservation groups, local or regional land trusts and others whose independent but related projects are essential to accomplishing the vision of the Chaffee County Heritage Area.** It is the explicit intention of the CCHAAB that the approved Heritage Area Plan serve as a collective expression of community support and assignment of priorities for relevant actions of our partners as well as ourselves, and that institutions approached by the Board and our partners seeking financial and other support will take this into account.

Having acknowledged that the actions of partners are essential to completing the vision, the CCHAAB recognizes that the Board itself has many continuing responsibilities and opportunities. The following section outlines a Five Year Action Plan for the Chaffee County Heritage Area Advisory Board.

The highest priority actions are to be completed in Year 1, followed by the next level of priorities to be completed from Year 2 through Year 5. Each level of priority is organized by the three strategic approaches—*Preserve Scenic Character, Identify and Protect Significant Historic Resources, and Educate and Engage the Community and Visitors.*

Some actions may in fact need to be followed through in subsequent years, and these are listed as “ongoing.” Actions proposed for years 2-5 should be periodically evaluated to note those which have been completed or to add new projects which might have been

Action Plan

1. Preserve Scenic Character through Resource Protection	Priority		
	Year 1	Year 2-5	Ongoing
a. Secure adoption of the CCHA Management Plan prior to November 2008.	X		
b. Coordinate an official process for the CCHAAB to provide development review (in an advisory capacity) to the Planning Commission.	X		X
c. Add an additional at-large seat and a designated agricultural lands seat to the CCHAAB.	X		
2. Identify and Protect Significant Historic Resources	Priority		
	Year 1	Year 2-5	Ongoing
<p>a. Update the historic resource GIS database.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include resources identified by this planning process (see Potential Historic Resources). • Obtain OAHP's most recent listing of inventoried properties (lead time for data can be up to one year). • Obtain most recent inventories from each municipality and preservation group in the county. • Secure funding and hire consultant. 	X		X
b. In partnership with existing programs, support depositories of information on county historic resources, e.g., a catalog of photographs and copies of inventory forms.		X	X
<p>c. Prepare and submit grant applications to Colorado Historical Society's State Historical Fund to conduct evaluation and inventory work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hutchinson Ranch with Salida Area Parks Open Space and Trails – secure funding to evaluate and possibly designate additional agricultural lands as historic resources. • Leadville Stagecoach Road – secure funding to evaluate segments not yet listed. • Ranchlands along Byway with private property owners – work with owners to identify potential historic ranch buildings, ranch complexes, and/or agricultural lands that may have historical significance, and secure SHF funding to evaluate identified lands. 	X Obtain Funding	X Implement	X

3. Educate and Engage the Community and Visitors	Priority		
	Year 1	Year 2-5	Ongoing
a. Create marketing approach and brochure, and a logo (completed as part of CCHAAB's 2007 work).	X		X
b. Secure grant funding from FHWA (Byways Program) for improving interpretive waysides as a pilot project. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christmas 1806 site with CDOT and BLM. Typical wayside site plan. - To develop a model wayside site plan. Add Heritage Area logo and interpretive installation at AHRA's Collegiate Peaks Scenic Overlook. Smelter wayside with Salida Museum Association Poncha Springs visitor center. 	X Obtain Funding	X Implement	
c. Secure grant funding from FHWA to implement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> training and outreach programs oral history workshops 	X Obtain Funding	X Implement	
d. Work with the Town of Poncha Springs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> developing architectural and site plans and interpretive installations for their local visitor center. 	X Obtain Funding	X Implement	
e. Work with City of Salida, Salida Museum, GARNA and Historic Salida, Inc. to locate a local visitor center site in historic downtown Salida.	X Obtain Funding	X Implement	
f. Work with Buena Vista Heritage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buena Vista Depot – assist in securing funding from Colorado Historical Society's State Historical Fund. 	X Obtain Funding	X Implement	
g. Seek Funding for rehabilitation and interpretive installations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turner Farm – assist in securing funding from Colorado Historical Society's State Historical Fund for interpretive installations. 	X Obtain Funding	X Implement	

	Priority		
	Year 1	Year 2-5	Ongoing
<p>h. Work with Salida Museum Assoc.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ohio-Colorado Smelter – assist in securing funding from Colorado Historical Society’s State Historical Fund for historic structure assessment; and securing funding and support from Colorado Brownfields for assessment. • Ohio-Colorado Smelter – assist in building interpretive wayside to make site and structure visitor ready. 	<p>X</p> <p>Obtain Funding</p>	<p>X</p> <p>Implement</p>	
<p>i. Work with Salida Museum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade existing buildings and exhibits. • Joint location with future local visitor center. • Depository (archival) project. • Wayfinding 	<p>X</p> <p>Obtain Funding</p>		X
<p>j. Work with Buena Vista Heritage Museum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrades to their building and exhibits • Old Chaffee County Courthouse / Buena Vista Heritage Museum - assist in securing funding from Colorado Historical Society’s 			X

7.0 Background for Intrinsic Qualities

7.1 Natural Resources Inventory

The county's natural resources were inventoried and mapped to analyze the extent of wildlife habitat, riparian areas, and other natural resources that contribute to the Heritage Area and the Byway. Numerous sources and references were used in compiling the inventory, including information on areas with special importance such as mapping and Potential Conservation Areas provided in 2005 by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP), wildlife distribution provided by the Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW), and scholarly publications. The following provides a summary of the natural resource inventory and includes mapping that identifies individual resources, such as wildlife distribution for black bear, elk, mule deer and other important wildlife species; riparian areas; and potential conservation areas.

This section also provides a summary description of those natural resources that characterize the Heritage Area, such as its geology and hydrology, and its ecological zones and vegetation communities.

Geology

Among the most outstanding natural features of the upper Arkansas Valley and the Chaffee County Heritage Area are the glacial characteristics of its topography. The rocky remnants of its giant glacial moraines are evident from Buena Vista to Salida, and are what make the upper Arkansas different from other major rivers in the region. About 70 million years ago, the shallow inland sea that had been covering Colorado retreated for the last time due to a tremendous period of mountain-building that affected the whole Rocky Mountain chain. This uplift, known as the Laramide Orogeny, resulted in the mountain building of both the Mosquito Range and the Sawatch Range. The sedimentary rocks of the Mosquito Range dip east and those of the Sawatch dip west. Evidence of the earlier inland sea can be found under stream deposits near the town of Granite. The town is named for Precambrian granite that is 1,750 million years old.

During the Quaternary Period that followed this mountain building, a vast cooling took place. Immense mountain glaciers were formed near the crest of the mountains and slowly ground their ways down to the valleys. In their paths they steepened slopes, carved cirques, and deposited great masses of rock at the terminus.

Hydrology

As the glacial ice melted, streams began to flow eastward, forming valleys. The Arkansas Valley is the northernmost of these mountain valleys, and it appears that this valley was formed no earlier than 29 million years ago.

The Arkansas River, the lifeblood of southeast Colorado, is one of these mountain streams created from glacial melting. It starts high in the Sawatch Range above Leadville, meanders through mountain valleys, and runs through steep-sided gorges in Fremont and Chaffee counties before finally flowing out into the plains. The majority of stream flow in the Arkansas River originates upstream of Salida as runoff from the Collegiate Peaks of the Sawatch Range, where mean annual runoff exceeds 30 inches.

True to its glacial heritage, and like most Colorado rivers in the high mountains, natural flows in the Arkansas River occur primarily as a result of snow melt runoff. Snowfall accumulates in the mountains during the winter and early spring months, and as it begins to melt in late spring and early summer it leads to high intensity short duration runoff events. This interaction of snow melt, runoff, and geomorphology forms distinct vegetation communities. For example, flooding inundates vegetation, physically dislodging seedlings/saplings, and altering channel morphology through erosion and deposition of sediment.

The natural stream flow of the Arkansas River has been significantly altered by decades of man-made water diversion projects such as delivery of transmountain water from the Western Slope via tunnels and reservoirs. Some of this water finds its way into the channel of the Arkansas and moves downstream; some is removed by pumping directly over to the Front Range. The timing and quantity of these diversions and releases can have major impacts on water use in agriculture and on recreational activities.

Major tributaries to the Arkansas River upstream of Salida and Buena Vista include Clear Creek, Lake Fork, Lake Creek, Cottonwood Creek, Chalk Creek and the South Fork of the Arkansas River.

Vegetation and Habitat

The Chaffee County Heritage Area supports a diversity of vegetation communities that in general can be divided into ecological zones based on elevation. Within these zones, vegetation can be further characterized by its relationship with water (hydrologic regime). These ecological zones include alpine tundra, uplands of forest and grasslands that are not supported by the Arkansas River or its tributaries, and riparian areas of deciduous riparian trees and shrubs that are present around modern-day reservoirs or along the Arkansas River, and are supported by adjacent sources of water. Wetlands of herbaceous plants and shrubs along the Arkansas River and its tributaries are also supported by the Arkansas River and/or its shallow subsurface waters (alluvial aquifer).

Alpine Zone

The alpine zone begins at about 11,500 feet. It is characterized by long, cold winters and a short growing season. Plants need to be specially adapted to grow under these harsh conditions and frequently take on novel growth forms. The contorted growth

of krummholz species is a striking example of one such adaptation. Low-growing, cushion-forming plants are another common growth form. Tundra vegetation is frequently dominated by islands of dwarf krummholz trees, expansive stands of shrubs, and a field layer of grasses, shrubs, and cushion plants. Only a limited number of animal species reside year-round within the alpine tundra. Most mammalian species (e.g., pika, shrew, weasel, and yellow-bellied marmot) are small bodied and take advantage of the microenvironment found near the surface of the ground. Larger mammals such as bighorn sheep and elk are forced to move to the lower elevations, where there is more shelter. Although several avian species are present during the breeding season or migration, only the white-tailed ptarmigan is a year-round resident of the alpine zone.

Subalpine Zone

The subalpine zone occurs between about 9,200 and 11,500 feet elevation. Common ecosystems in this zone are bristlecone-limber pine woodland, spruce-fir forest, wet meadow, subalpine-montane riparian shrub land, and high gradient streams. Spruce-fir forests are the dominant terrestrial system of this zone. Spruce-fir forests frequently give way, often along fire-induced boundaries, to lodgepole pine or aspen-dominated forests. These forested areas provide overall habitat and summer range for mule deer and elk. Other mammals found in the spruce-fir forest include black bear, red fox, porcupine, ermine, and pine marten. Pine martens are mostly a spruce-fir and lodgepole obligate (one of those species that only occur in a particular habitat) that require a healthy and sizeable mature forest. Bird species characteristic of the spruce-fir forest include brown creeper, boreal owl, golden-crowned kinglet, three-toed woodpecker, and gray jay.

Within the subalpine zone, riparian shrub lands may be extensive in broad, glacial valleys, along stream systems, and near other wetlands from 8,000 to 12,000 feet. These shrub lands have relatively low plant diversity composed mostly of willows, shrubby cinquefoil, and bog birch. The low plant diversity along with the short growing season usually results in low avian (bird) species diversity as well. However, the dense willow thickets provide many protected nest sites and an abundance of insects. This may result in a high density of nesting birds in a given area. Species most commonly found in these areas are broad-tailed hummingbird, dusky flycatcher, yellow warbler, MacGillivray's warbler, Wilson's warbler, Lincoln's sparrow, song sparrow, white-crowned sparrow, and fox sparrow. Beavers are primary users as well as mountaineers of these riparian areas. Annual and episodic flooding is important in maintaining this system. The wetlands along the Arkansas River and its tributaries in the subalpine zone are palustrine scrub-shrub and emergent wetlands. Scrub-shrub wetlands generally contain similar understory species with a willow and shrubby cinquefoil overstory. Emergent wetlands in meadows are composed of water sedge, beaked sedge, tufted hairgrass, and small-winged sedge. Generally in the subalpine zone, wetlands have soils rich in organic matter associated with low biological activity at high elevations.

Montane Zone

The montane zone is characterized by lodgepole pine forest, aspen forest, mixed conifer forests, montane grasslands, mountain sagebrush shrub land, montane riparian woodland and shrub land, high montane lakes, and streams with a high to moderate gradient. Lodgepole pine forests occur on gentle to steep slopes in extensive pure stands of lodgepole pine, or to a lesser extent, stands in association with other conifer species. Common animals of lodgepole pine forest include black bear, bobcat, elk, mule deer, and porcupine. The bird community consists mostly of hermit thrush, yellow-rumped warbler, junco, brown creeper, boreal owl, three-toed woodpecker, and gray jay.

Within the montane zone, riparian forests and woodlands form linear strips confined to floodplains or terraces of rivers and streams. Areas along the Arkansas River and its tributaries are often dominated by conifers such as subalpine fir, Engelmann or blue spruce, and quaking aspen. Characteristic bird species include American dipper, hairy woodpecker, and black swift. The primary ecological process necessary to maintain riparian forests is surface water flow, although ground water is important. Annual and episodic flooding is important in maintaining this system.

The Arkansas River between Granite and Salida, including Buena Vista, Nathrop, and Browns Canyon, is generally steep-sided with high banks, so wetlands only occur in small isolated pockets where the upper bank has sloughed into the edge of the stream or where sandbars have formed protected areas in which wetland vegetation has established itself. Wetland vegetation in these areas includes various species of willow, tufted hairgrass, reedtop, reed canarygrass, water sedge, and small-winged sedge.

Special Habitat Designations

Individual natural resource maps illustrate the habitat areas of the county's wildlife species. The attributes shown in these maps are notable because they represent objective "mappable" information that clearly show sections of the Heritage Area where developments or changes can be predicted to have consequences on wildlife. Decisions can then be made on methods, such as guidelines or restraints to development, to avoid or mitigate such consequences or on determinations of their importance. The individual resource maps are located at the end of this chapter.

Colorado Division of Wildlife

The Colorado Division of Wildlife's Natural Diversity Information Source (NDIS) database tracks general habitat attributes (factors that are known to be significant in animal behavior and reproduction) for certain wildlife species that have economic, cultural, or management importance. Within the Heritage Area most NDIS data relates to elk, mule deer, bighorn sheep, black bear, lynx, and raptors (i.e., bald eagle, peregrine falcon, and osprey).

Habitat attributes that occur within the Heritage Area are outlined below and illustrated in the accompanying maps.

Elk

Highway Crossings
Migration Corridors
Severe Winter Range
Winter Concentration Areas
Summer Concentration Areas
Production (i.e., calving) Areas

Mule Deer

Highway Crossings
Severe Winter Range

Bighorn Sheep

Winter Concentration
Severe Winter Range
Production Areas
Mineral Lick

Black Bear

Summer Concentration Area
Human Conflict Area

Lynx

Potential Habitat

Raptors

Peregrine Potential Nest Site
Peregrine Nesting Site
Osprey Foraging
Bald Eagle Winter Range

Colorado Natural Heritage Program

The Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP) identifies, tracks, and ranks rare and imperiled species and natural communities throughout the state. Besides tracking individual locations of rare plants, animals, or communities, the CNHP also identifies Potential Conservation Areas (PCAs) that are land units that have been identified as important to the continued existence of ecological processes that support the long-term survival of targeted species, subspecies, and natural communities. While PCAs are

useful for land use and land management planning, they have no legal meaning and are not intended to regulate or limit the use of property.

CNHP has identified 29 PCAs in the Chaffee County Heritage Area, most of which occur on public lands. These PCAs are illustrated on the accompanying map and range in designation from “General Biodiversity Interest” to “Outstanding Biodiversity Significance.” An example of a PCA with general biodiversity interest is the area surrounding Chalk Cliffs, and an example of a PCA with outstanding biodiversity interest occurs around Droney Gulch.

Bighorn Sheep Habitat

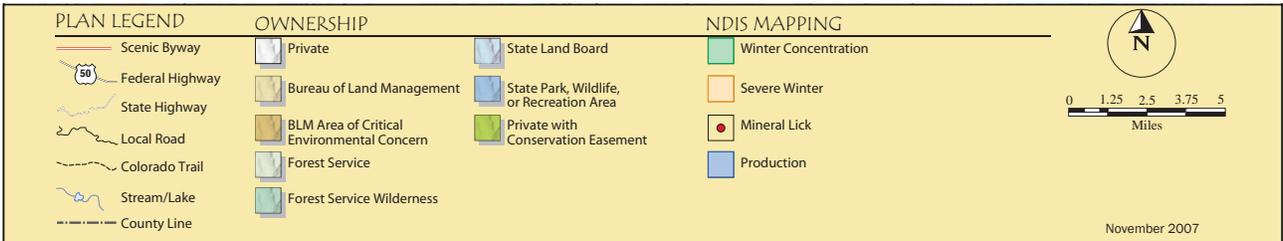
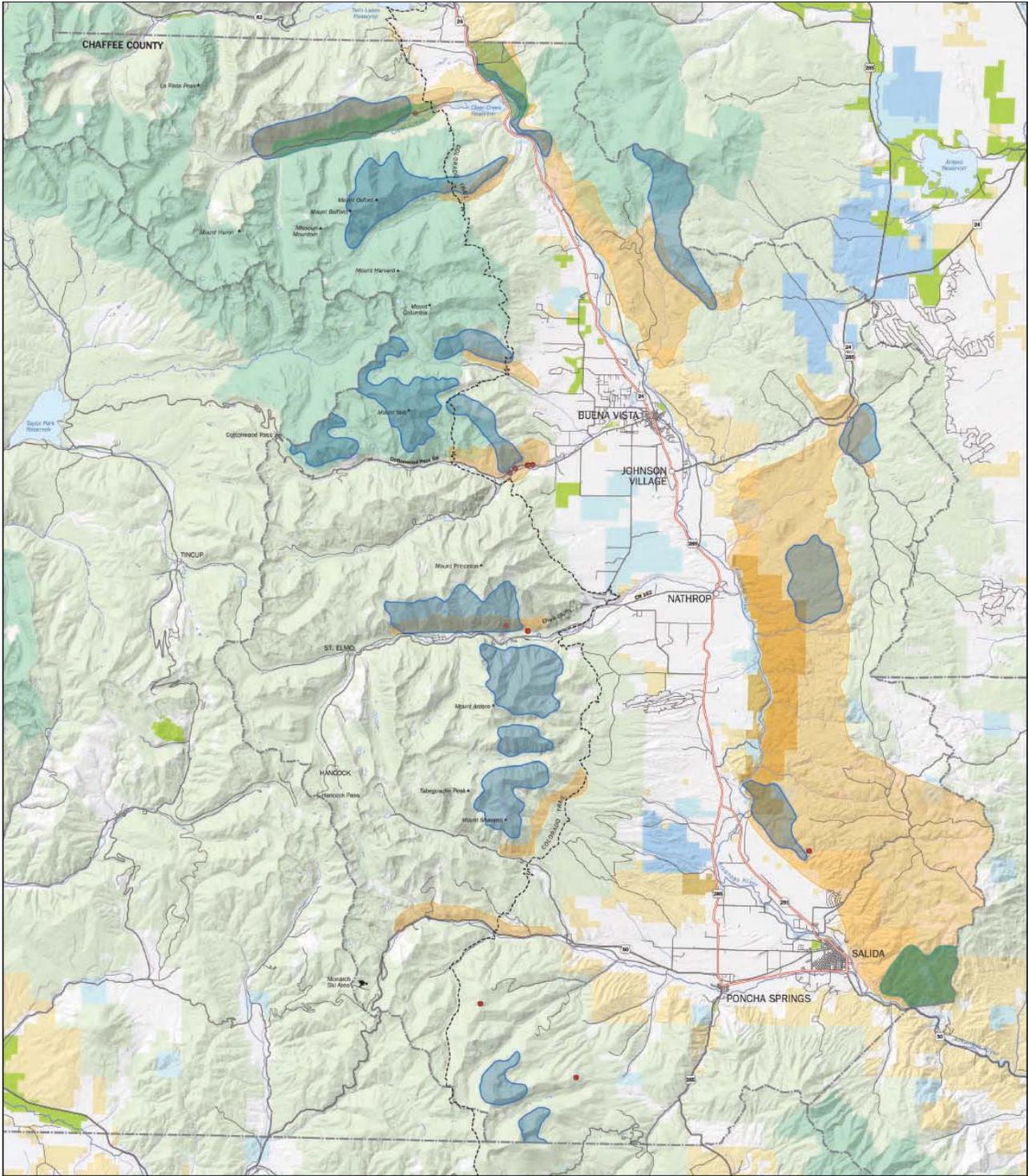


Figure 9

Black Bear Habitat

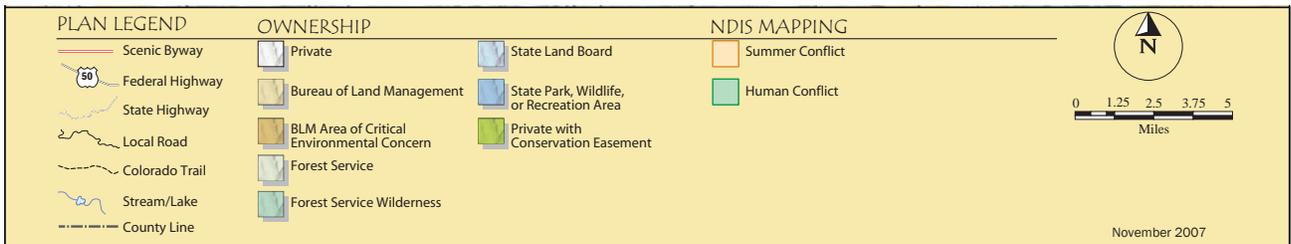
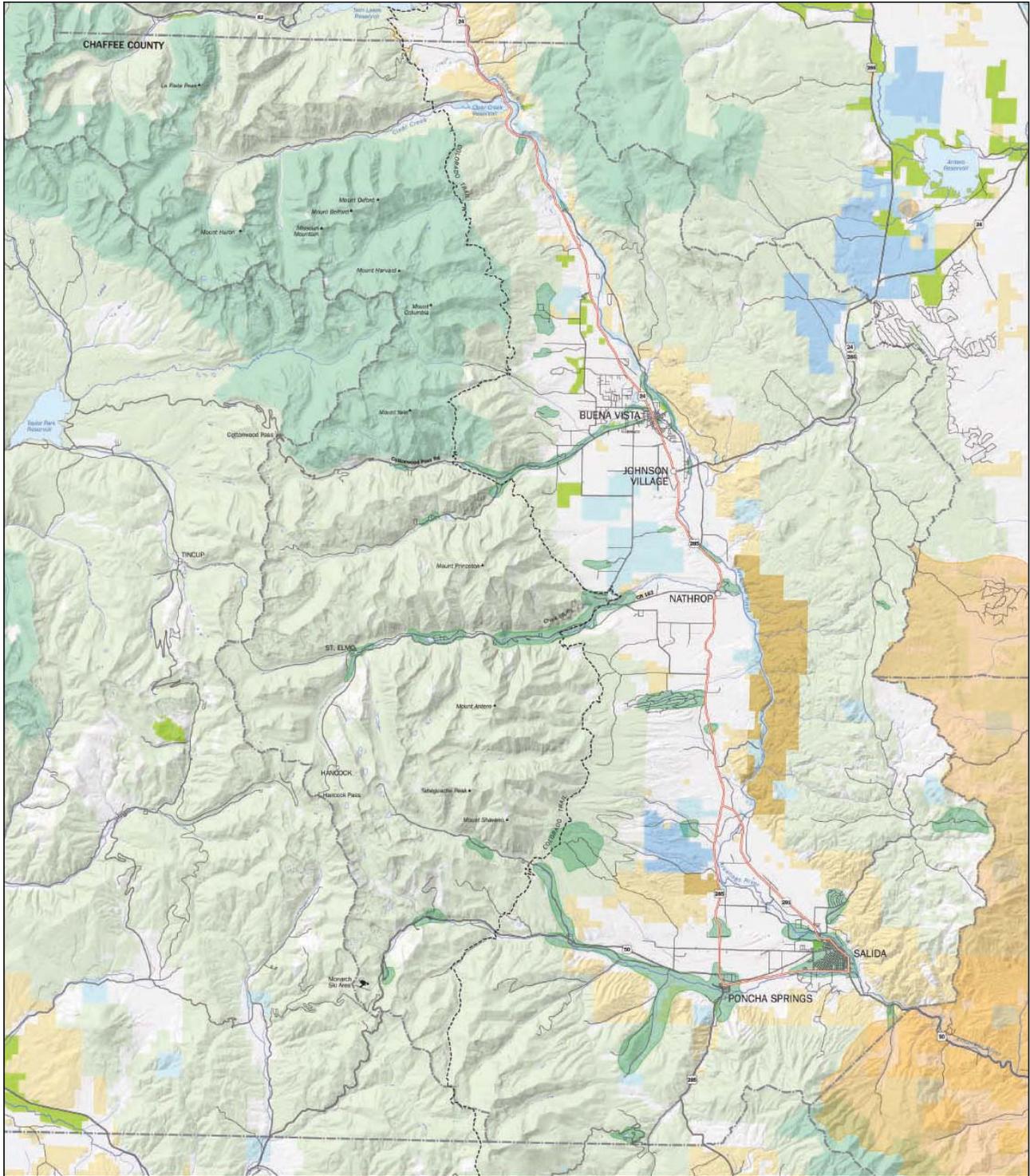


Figure 10

Elk Habitat

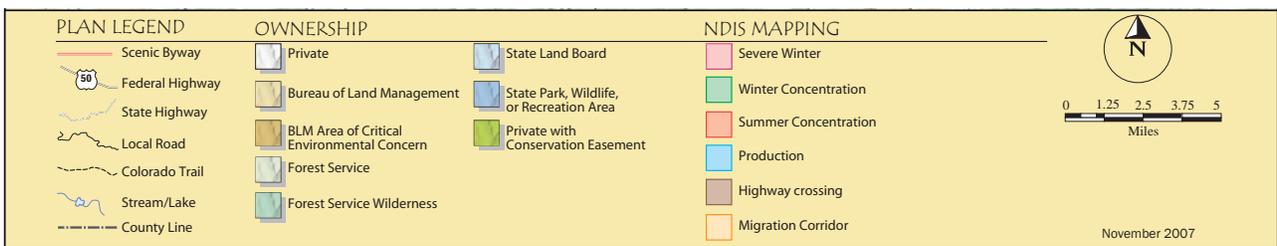
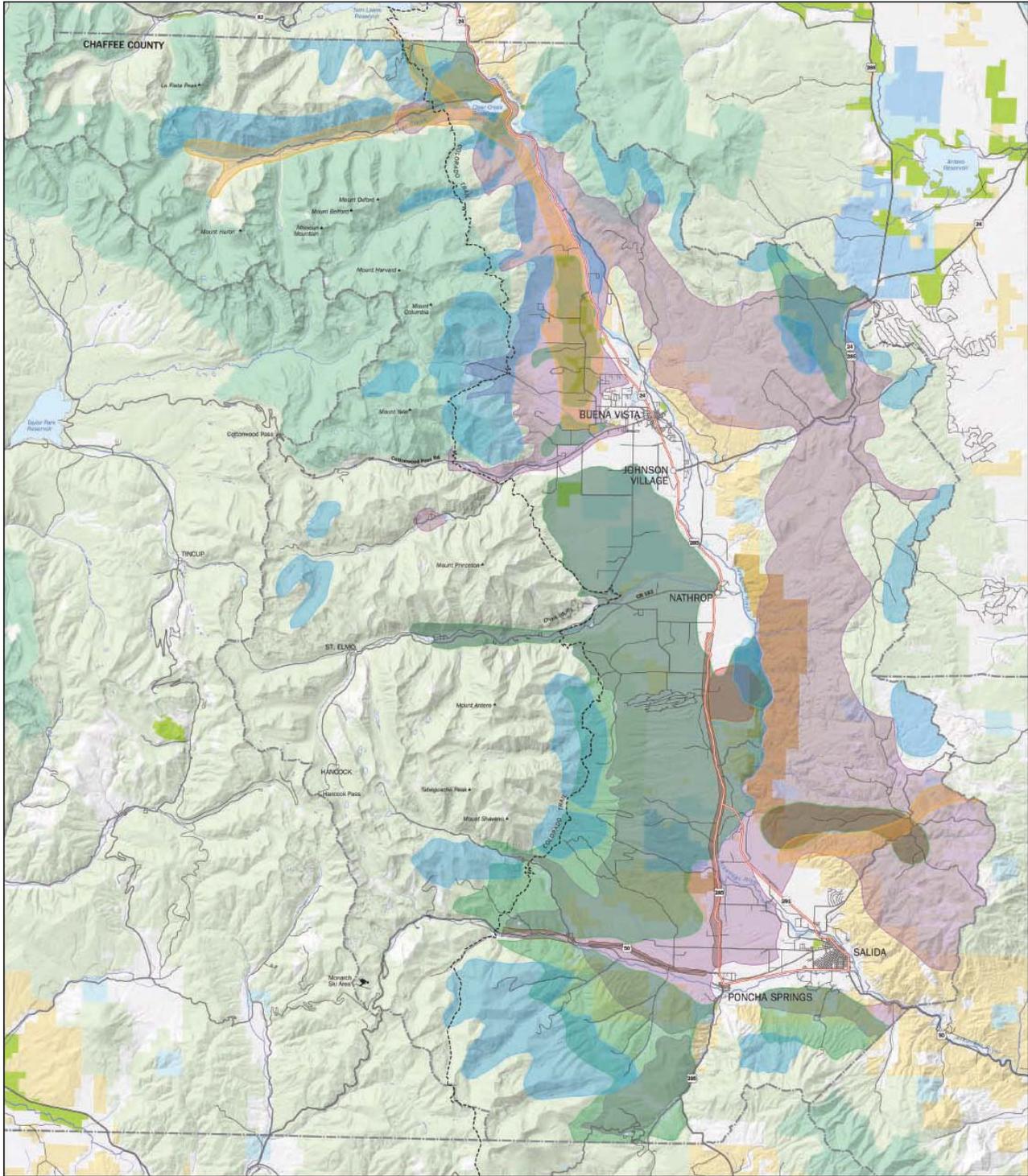


Figure 11

Lynx Habitat

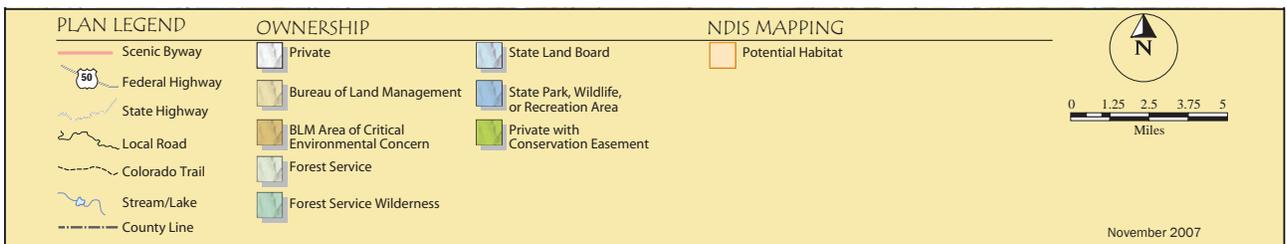
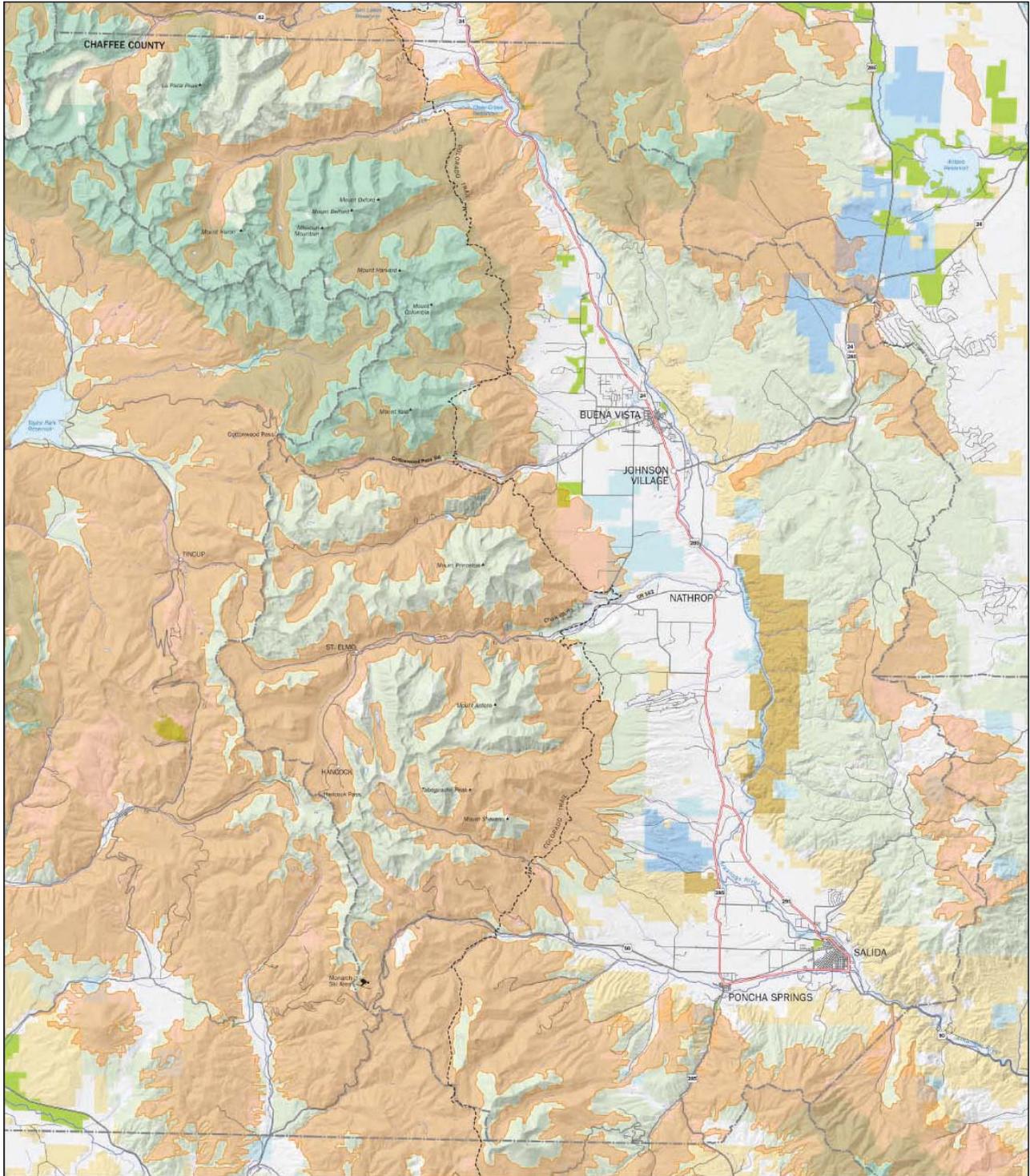
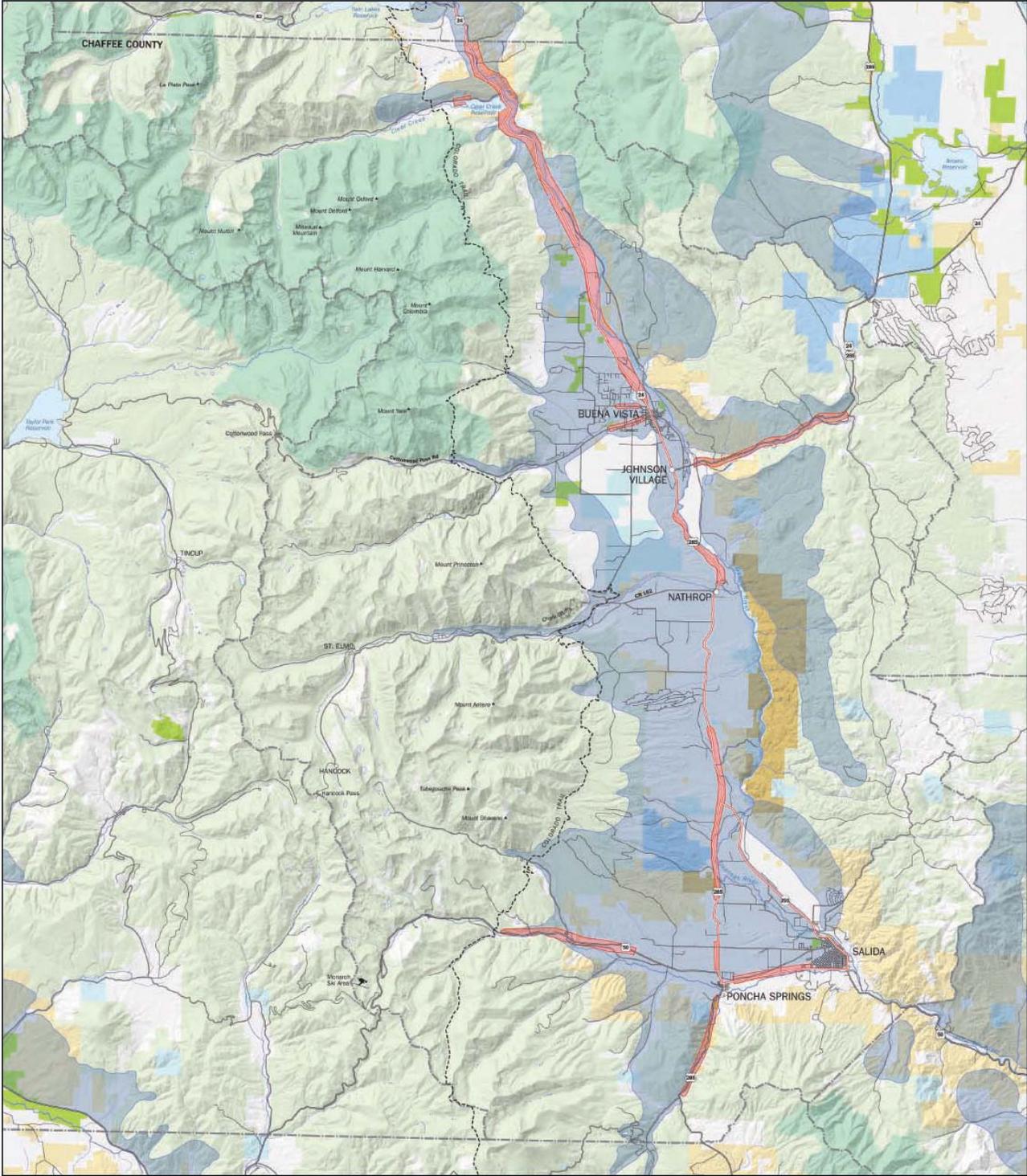


Figure 12

Mule Deer Habitat



PLAN LEGEND	OWNERSHIP	NDIS MAPPING
Scenic Byway	Private	Highway crossing
Federal Highway	Bureau of Land Management	Severe Winter
State Highway	BLM Area of Critical Environmental Concern	
Local Road	Private with Conservation Easement	
Colorado Trail	Forest Service	
Stream/Lake	Forest Service Wilderness	
County Line		

0 1.25 2.5 3.75 5 Miles

November 2007

Figure 13

Raptor Habitat

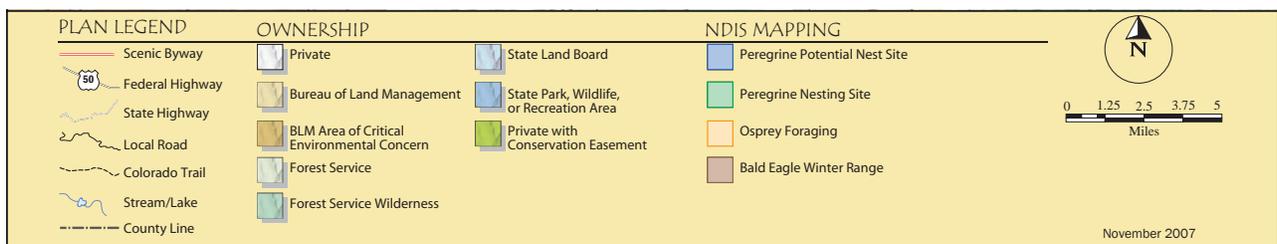
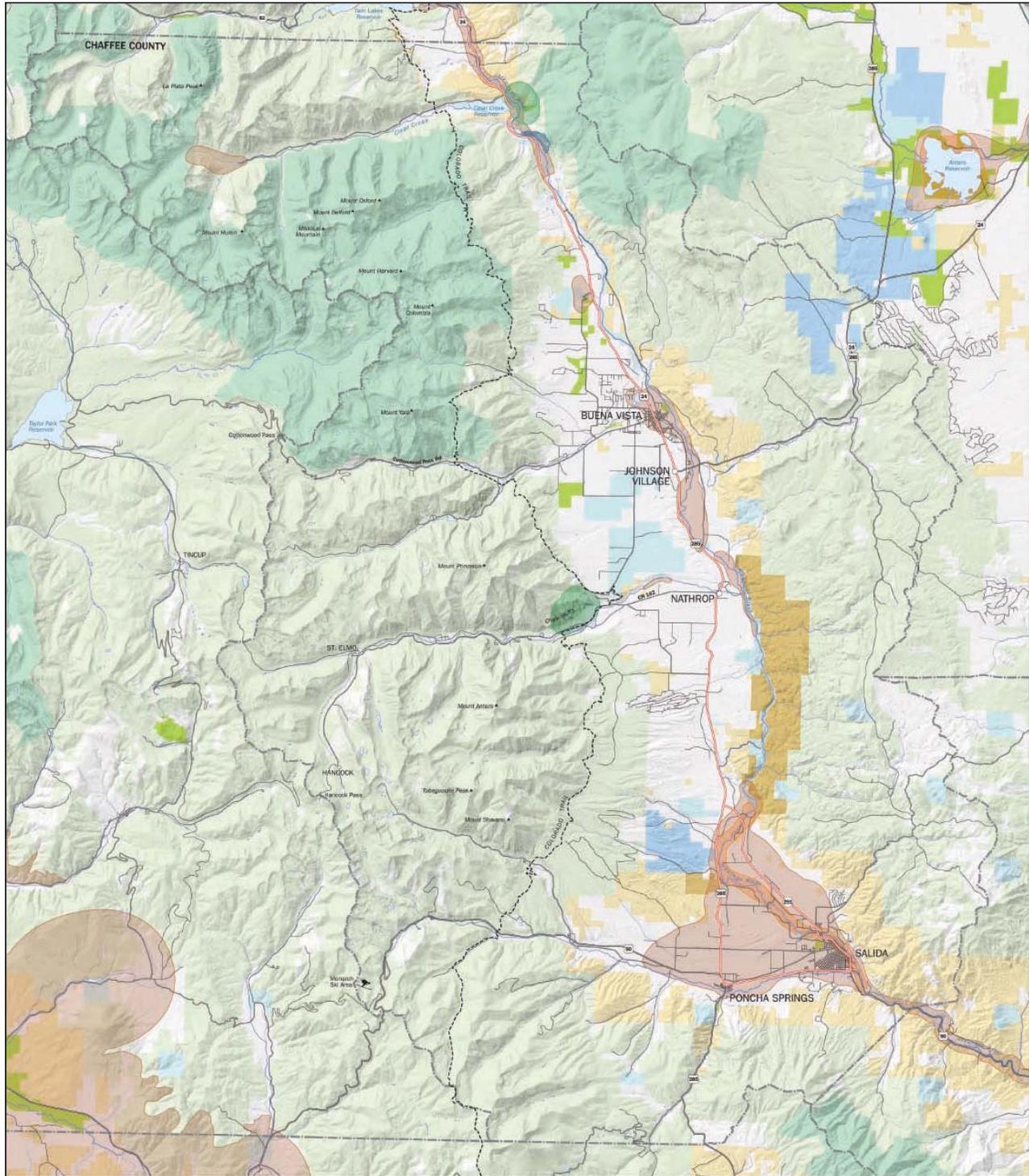


Figure 14

Riparian Habitat

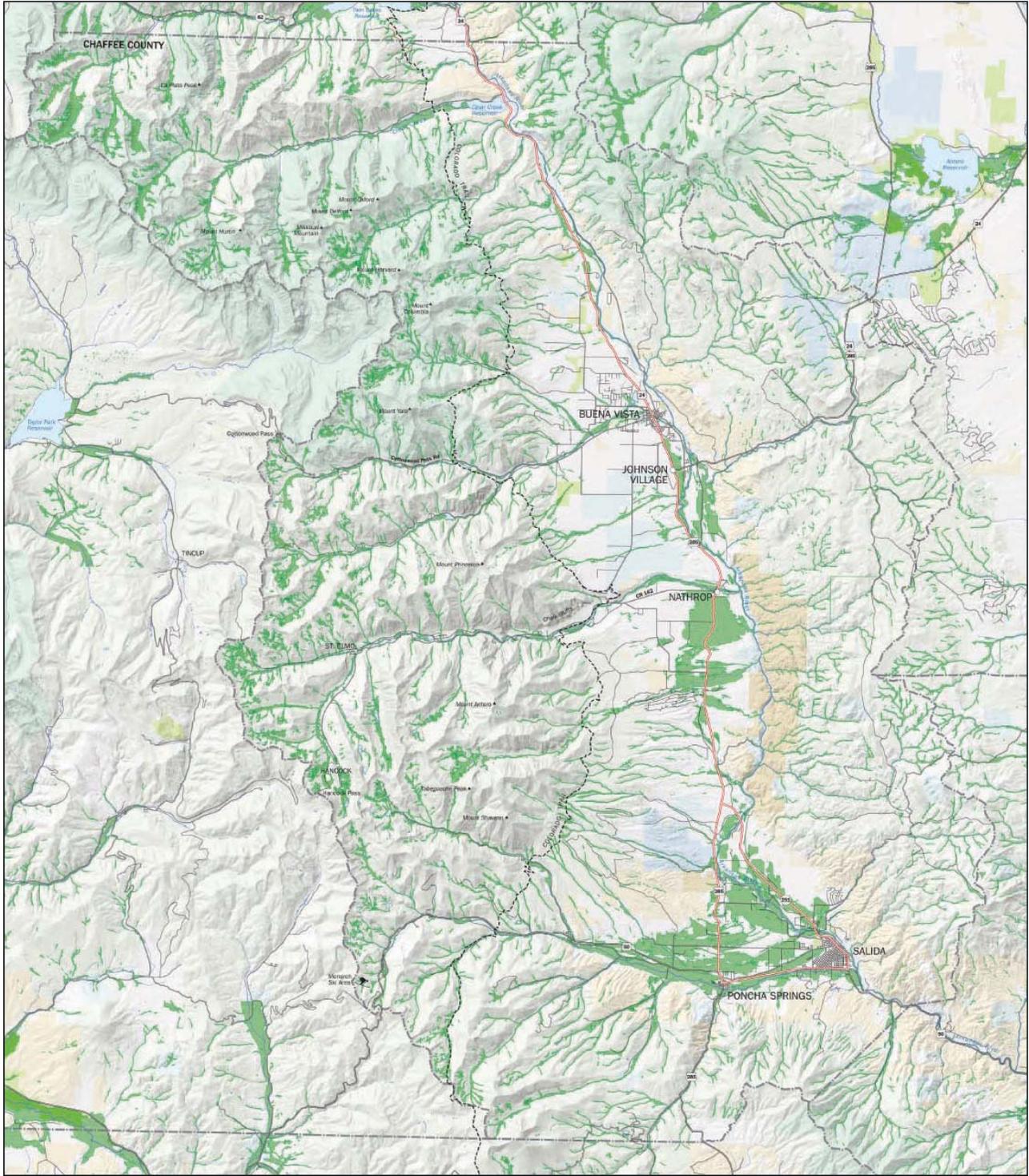


Figure 15

Potential Conservation Areas

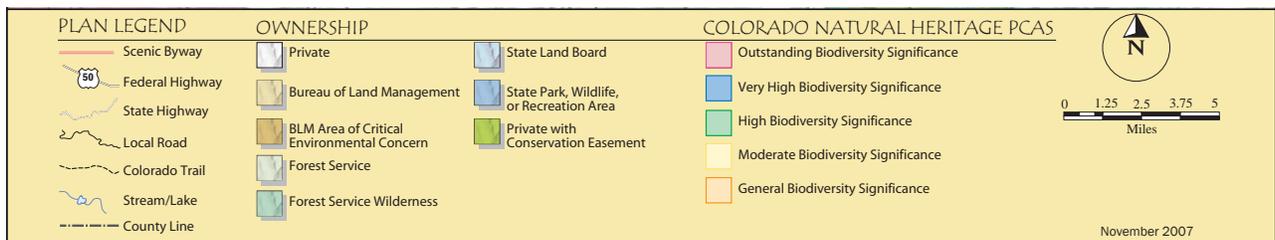
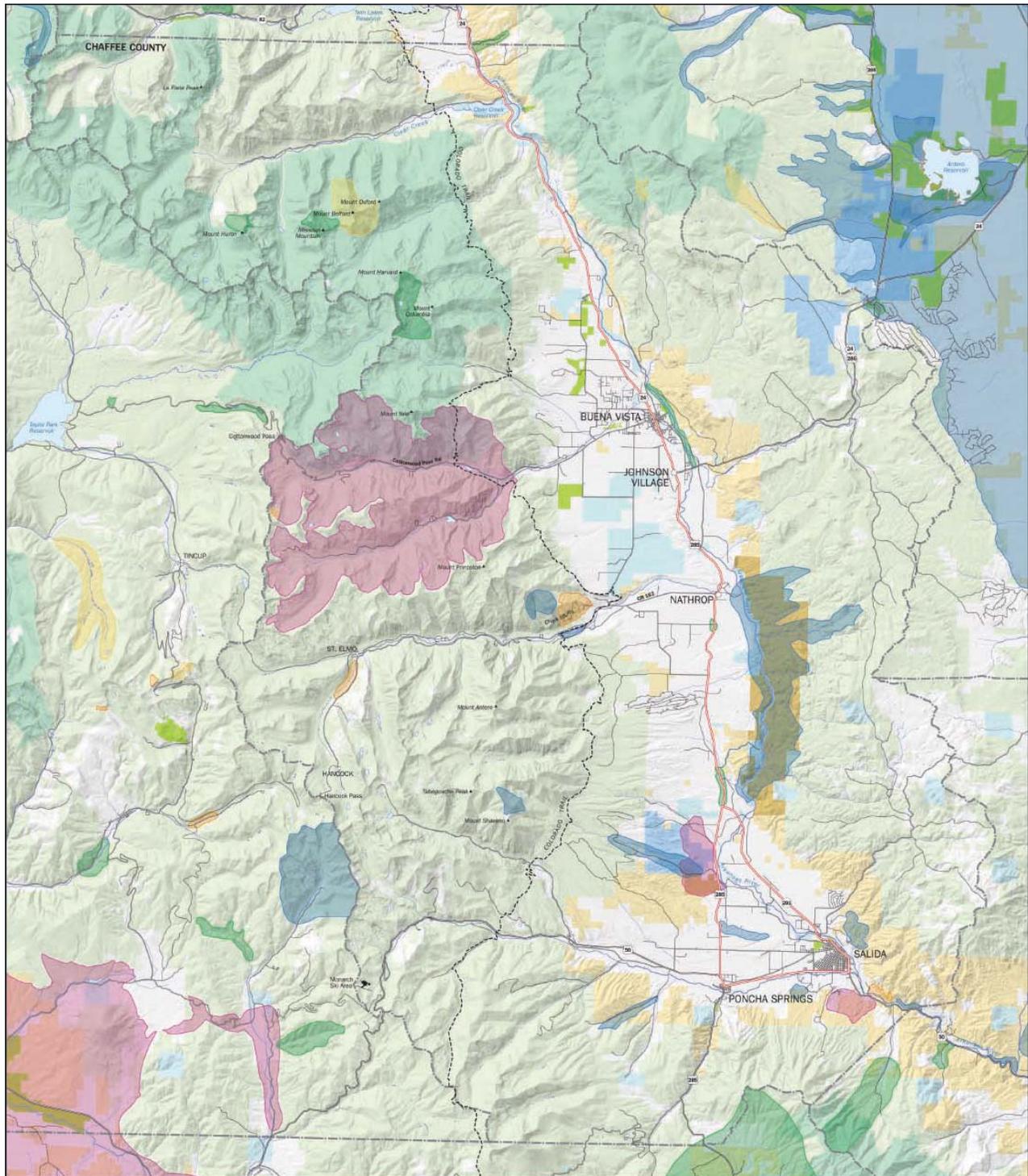


Figure 16

7.2 Cultural, Historical and Archeological Resources

Introduction

Chaffee County is a unique heritage landscape. The evolution of the Heritage Area is evidenced by numerous physical remains of its past, ranging from early indigenous sites to commercial buildings, private residences, schools, bridges, railroads, and stage routes.

Human occupation of the Arkansas Valley by indigenous peoples dates back thousands of years. By the 1600s, the Ute Indians, for whom many of the surrounding peaks are named, made the valley their home, taking advantage of the abundant water and wildlife. Decades of exploration followed, and included expeditions by notable explorers such as Spanish General Juan Bautista de Anza and Zebulon Pike. Historic records indicate that prospecting and placer operations were occurring near Granite as early as 1862, and by the late 1870s, the area had grown into a railroading, mining, farming and ranching region. In 1879, Chaffee County was established by a splitting of the older and larger Lake County and named for Jerome Chaffee who was a United States senator and a local investor. Buena Vista was also incorporated in 1879. Salida was established in 1880, and Poncha Springs, originally established as South Arkansas, was incorporated in 1880. Railroad operations and precious metal mining activities gradually diminished after the 1920s, the same year the Climax Mine near Leadville was established. By the mid-1950s, outdoor recreation and tourism began to grow in importance, primarily due to the scenic beauty of the county and the white water rapids of the Arkansas River.

Several organizations promote historic preservation in Chaffee County: Historic Salida Inc., Buena Vista Heritage, Salida Museum Association and Salida-area Parks Open-space and Trails. Historic Salida Inc. researches, preserves, interprets and promotes historic preservation in Salida and the surrounding community through workshops, grant sponsorships, scholarships and tours. Buena Vista Heritage is a membership organization that “exists to preserve and share the history of Buena Vista and Chaffee County for the education and enjoyment of the public,” through the ownership of select historic properties such as the Turner Farm, projects such as the restoration of the Buena Vista Depot, and programs such as historic tours and the Turner Farm APPLE FEST. Salida-area Parks Open-space and Trails encourages preservation of open space and historic sites such as Hutchinson Ranch.

Chaffee County maintains an historic sites database within its broad GIS collection of resource information. It is recognized that this database has not been updated since 2006. It is intended to be an inclusive list of all sites that have, or may have historic significance to the Heritage Area. These sites are primarily those that have received evaluation through the state’s Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHP) but also includes data from other sources such as local designation programs. It identifies resources listed on State and National Registers, but-very importantly-it also retains a record of other sites that have OAHP status such as “officially eligible” and