

MONTELORES COALITION

Balancing Sustainable Outdoor Recreation and Conservation of Natural Resources to Serve the Unique Needs of Colorado's Southwest Corner.

Our Why



Mission

The Montelores Coalition is Founded on Principles for Collaborative Engagement in and around Dolores and Montezuma Counties, and with the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe.

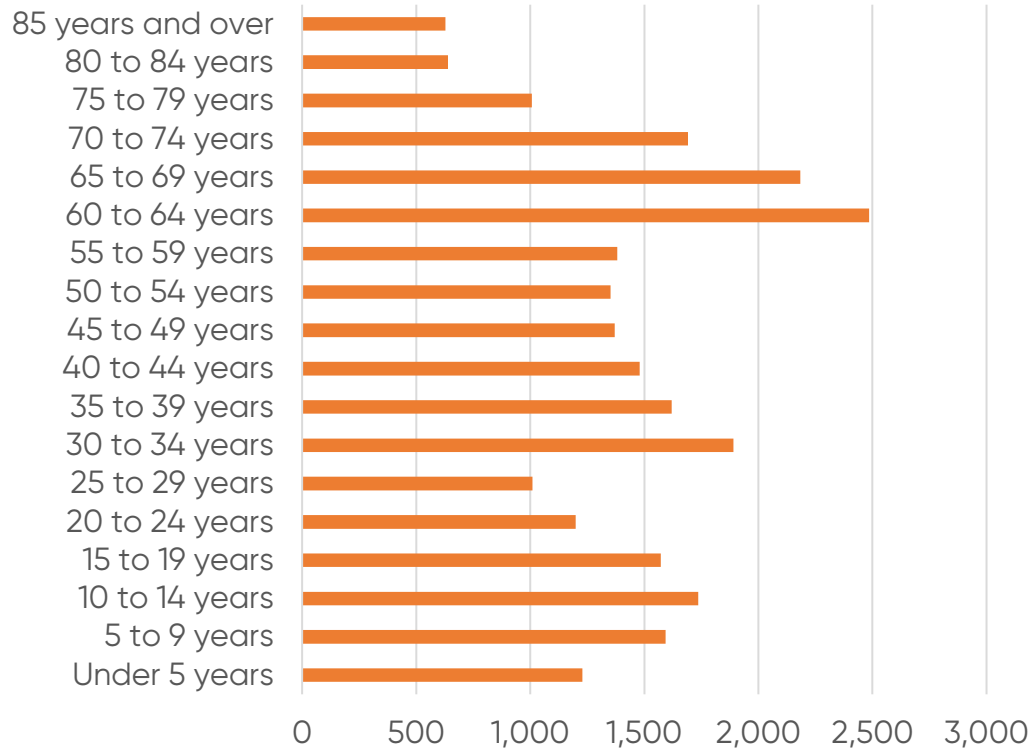
We are a Locally Diverse Group Working Together in Balancing Sustainable Outdoor Recreation, Conservation of Natural and Cultural Resources, and Economic Development Opportunities throughout Our Region.

Purpose

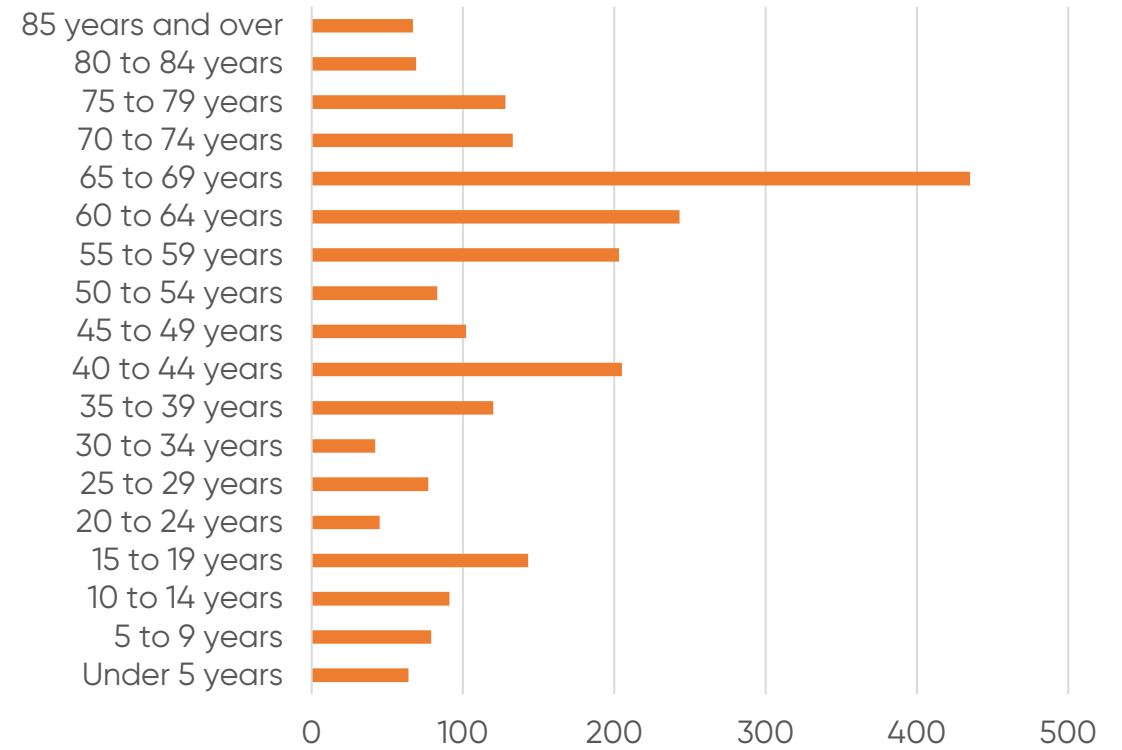
- bring together stakeholders, agencies, organizations and governing bodies in the southwest corner of Colorado.
- to create a comprehensive strategy that shares our common vision for the future.

Montelores age structure and trends

Montezuma County Age Structure



Dolores County Age Structure



- Median age in Montezuma County increased 4% from 2010 to 2022
- Median age in Dolores County increased 36.1% from 2010 to 2022

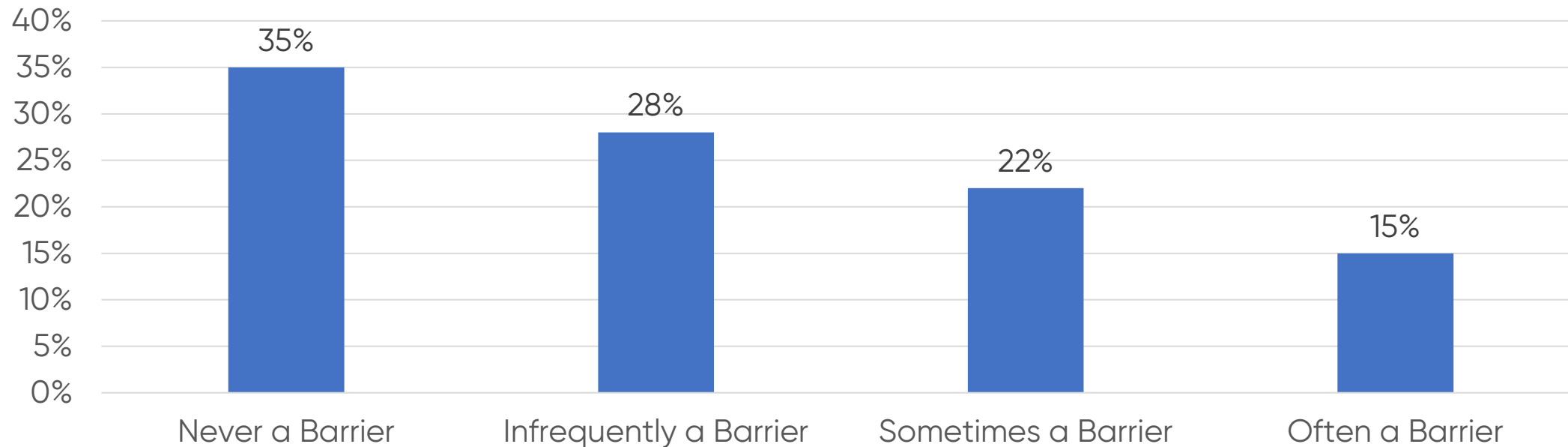
Montelores disability statistics

	Montezuma County	Dolores County	Total
With a Disability	4,692	187	4,879
With Ambulatory Difficulty	2,151	54	2,205

- 17% of regional population has a disability
- 7.8% of regional population has ambulatory difficulty
- 45% of disabled individuals have ambulatory difficulty

SCORP Survey Results - barriers

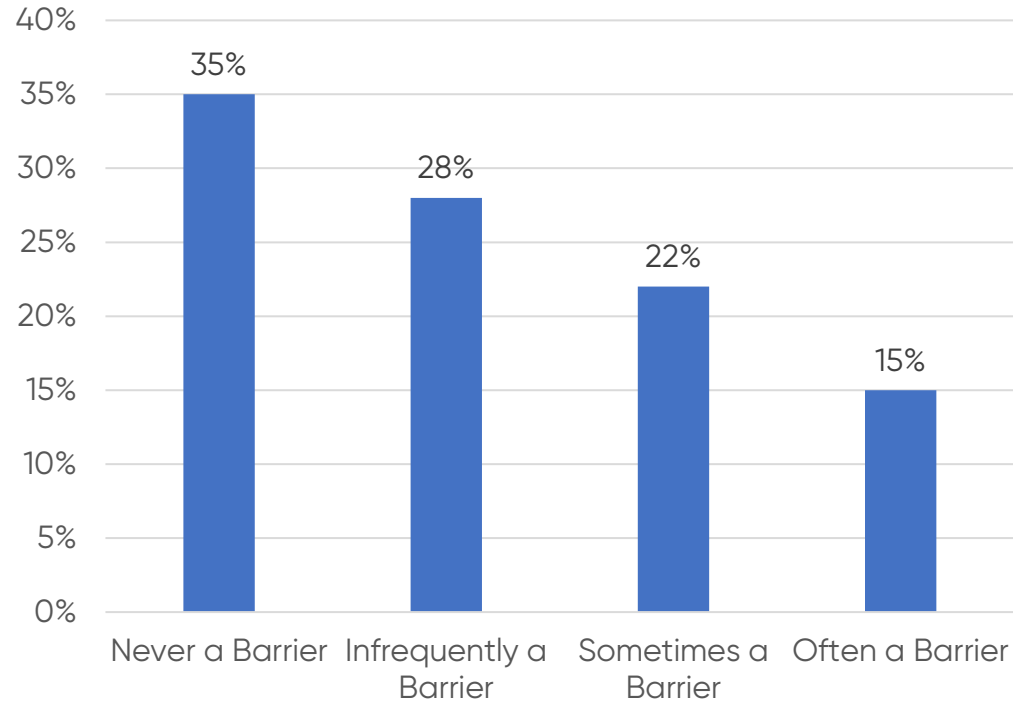
Personal health or mobility limitations as a barrier to participation in outdoor recreation statewide
(Western Slope survey respondents)



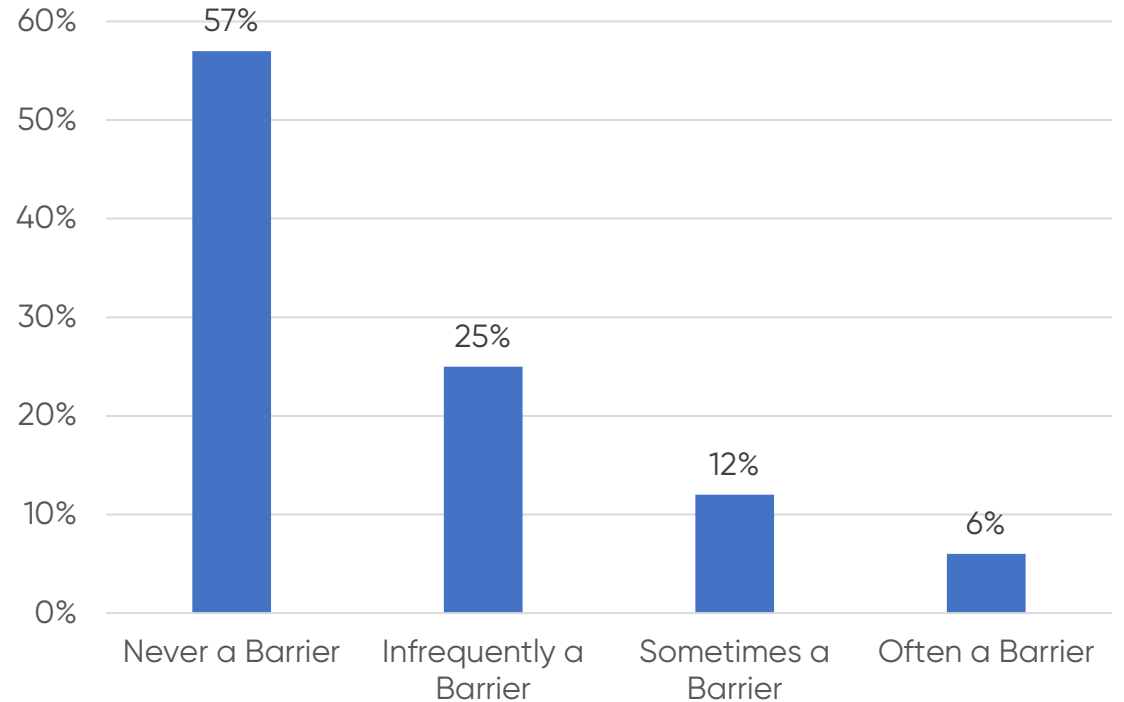
- 37% of Western Slope find that health and mobility is a barrier

SCORP Survey Results, barriers, Western Slope

Personal health or mobility limitations as a barrier to participation in outdoor recreation statewide



Lack of accessible options to travel to outdoor recreation sites for those with physical disabilities as a barrier to participation in outdoor recreation



- 37% of Western Slope respondents cited health and mobility is a barrier
- 18% of Western Slope respondents registered travel limitation due to physical disabilities as a barrier

Montelores demographic statistics

	Montezuma County	Dolores County
People below poverty	3,231	389
Families below poverty	550	71

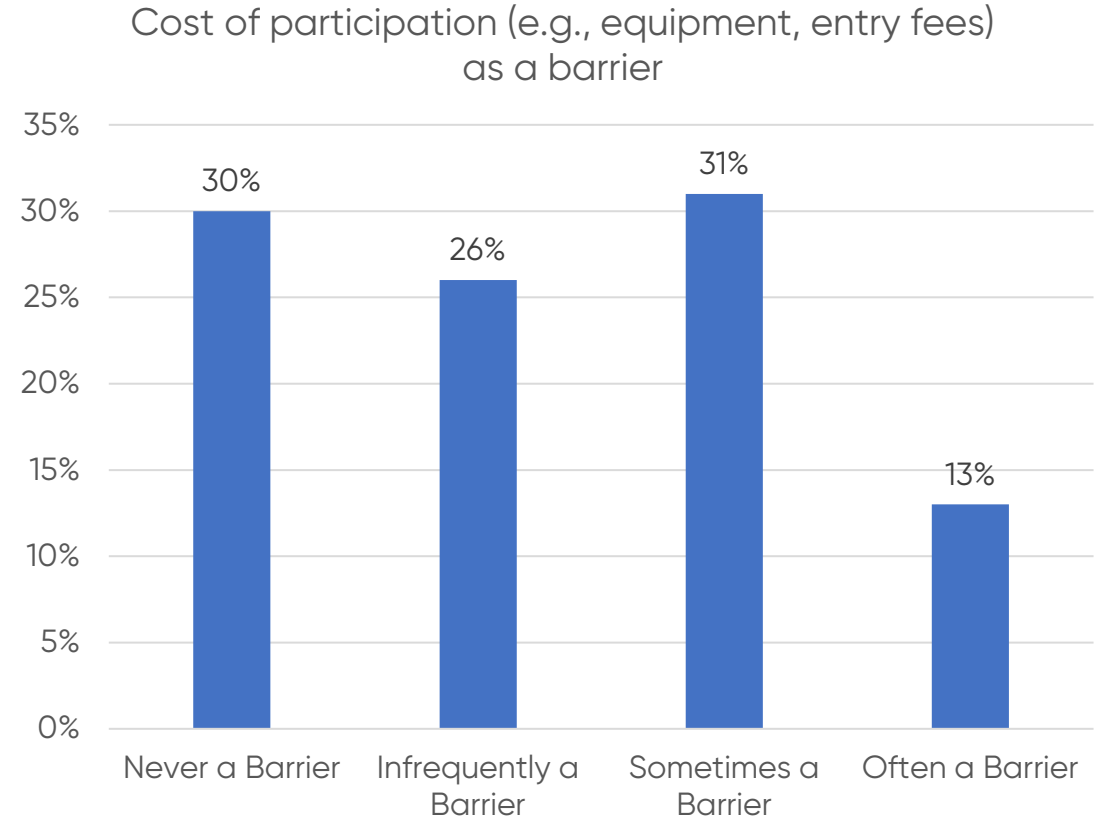
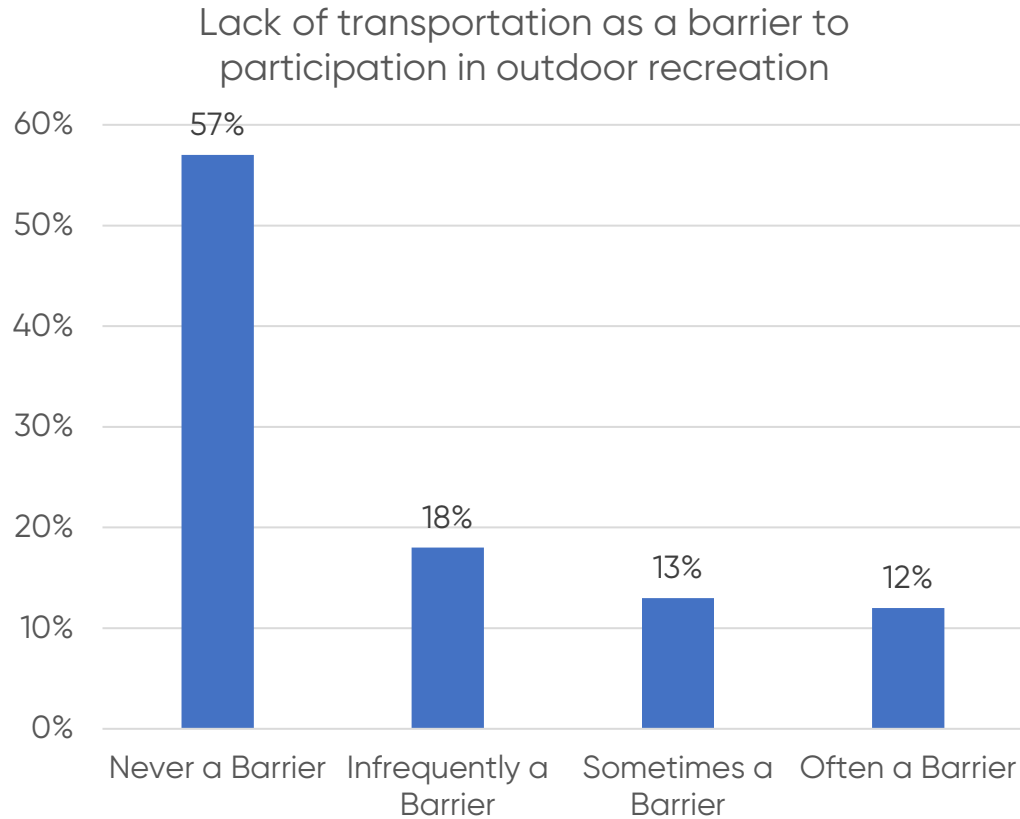
- Poverty prevalence in Montezuma County was 7.8% in 2022
- Poverty prevalence in Dolores County was 8.8% in 2022
- Over 3,620 individuals and 621 families in poverty in Montelores Region

Montelores demographic statistics

American Indian alone or in combination with other races, Montezuma County	3,955
Ute Mountain Ute Tribe Enrollment	2,070
Households w/ 80% or less of Area Median Income, Ute Mountain Housing Authority Service Area	579

- 2020 Census has 502 housing units on Ute Mountain Reservation

SCORP Survey Results, barriers, Western Slope



- 25% of Western Slope respondents cited transportation as a barrier
- 44% of Western Slope respondents registered cost as a barrier

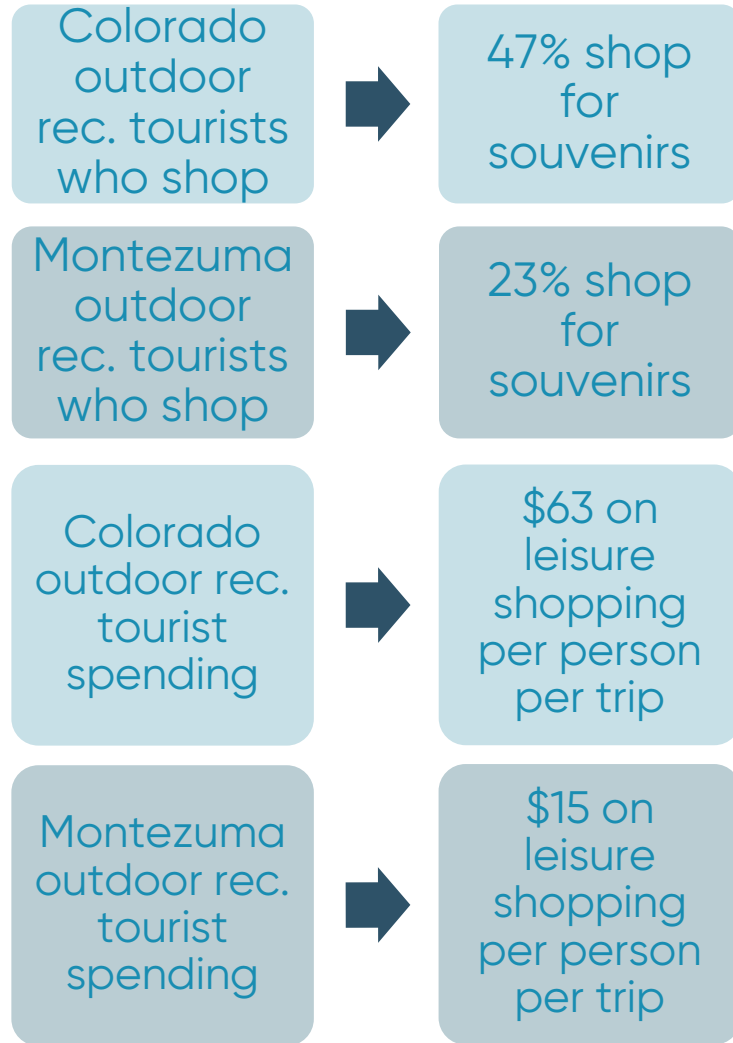
Outdoor Recreation Businesses 2023

Sector	Montezuma County Businesses
Retail	Dolores Outfitter Run + Hike Carrouth Armory Mesa Verde Motorsports High Desert Life Outdoors & Exchange Goods for the Woods Fun Center Cortez Kokopelli Bike & Board
Retail and manufacturing	Sorrel Top Cowboy Supply Dolores River Rifles Tipi Supply
Manufacturing	Osprey Dusty Roads Gear Alpaca Wanderlust Vans
Tours	Ute Mountain Tribal Park
Youth organization	High Desert Devo Open Sky Wilderness Therapy Deer Hill Expeditions San Juan Bible Camp Four Corners Christian Camp

Outdoor Recreation Businesses 2023 (cont.)

Sector	Montezuma County Businesses
Trails	Mancos Valley Resources (Mancos Trails Group, Friends of Chicken Creek) San Juan Trail Riders Southwest Colorado Cycling Association Big Loop Maps, Big Loop Trails
Event organizer	Fairgrounds Speedway 12 Hours of Mesa Verde
Guest ranch/resort	Echo Basin RV Resort Lost Canyon Lake Lodge
Hunting outfitter	Colorado Elk Camp Outfitters Rough Canyon Outfitters T Bar M Outfitters
Commercial campground	19 campgrounds/RV parks throughout the county

Outdoor recreation and local retail sector



- Shopping is a top activity for CO visitors, including outdoor recreation visitors
- Data indicates significant unmet demand for retail shopping among outdoor rec visitors.
- Unmet demand = opportunity

Outdoor Recreation and Conservation Strategic Plan

Montelores Coalition Roundtable

January 21, 2025

Purpose: Develop Goals and Strategies for Topics 2 & 3

Coalition Process

Plan Structure

Goal 1 - ...what we want to achieve...

Meetings 1 and 2

Meeting 3

Strategy 1.1 ...how we're going to achieve it...		
Action	Implementation Team	Timeline
The actions needed	Who takes responsibility	When will it happen

- Meetings 1 and 2 – develop goals and strategies for all topics
- Meeting 3 – action planning

Schedule

Meeting/Event	Topic	Date
Roundtable Meeting 1	Topic 1 – Outdoor Recreation Use and Impacts. Topic 2 – Equitable Access to Outdoor Recreation.	November 12, 2024
Roundtable Meeting 2	Topic 2 (cont.) – Equitable Access to Outdoor Recreation. Topic 3 –Capacity, Workforce and Funding for Outdoor Recreation Management and Infrastructure.	January, 21 2025
Roundtable Meeting 3	Topic 3 (cont.) –Capacity, Workforce and Funding for Outdoor Recreation Management and Infrastructure. Topic 4 – Outdoor Recreation Business Growth and Development.	February 18, 2025
Roundtable Meeting 4	Fill Remaining Gaps, Review Goals and Strategies	March 25, 2025
Roundtable Meeting 5	Action Plans	April 15, 2025

Development of Goals and Strategies



Topics

- Topic 1 – Outdoor Recreation Use and Impacts.
- Topic 2 – Equitable Access to Outdoor Recreation.
- Topic 3 – Capacity, Workforce and Funding for Outdoor Recreation Management and Infrastructure.
- Topic 4 – Outdoor Recreation Business Growth and Development.

Topic 1 – Outdoor Recreation Use and Impacts

- Goal 1 – Accommodate outdoor recreation visitors from outside of the region without degrading locals' outdoor recreation experiences.
- Goal 2 – Manage the near-term and long-term impacts of outdoor recreation on natural resources, heritage resources and outdoor recreation infrastructure.
- Goal 3 – Continue to collaborate with public lands managers for multiple use.
- Goal 4 – Reduce barriers to outdoor recreation access.

Goal 1 – Accommodate outdoor recreation visitors from outside of the region without degrading locals' outdoor recreation experiences.

From Montezuma OREC May 2023 Community Meetings

- "Do not over-develop nor over-promote Montezuma OREC ('not like Moab')"
- "Develop and manage outdoor recreation more for residents than visitors"
- "Not displacing locals with tourist use"
- "Don't promote locals' favorite spots"
- "Continue to support planned and responsible growth"
- "Expand trails and access in CANM including outside of Sand Canyon"
- "Plan for and build more trails and trail systems"
- "Use of public land without needing a permit"

From Montelores stakeholder session #1

- "Balance between trying to make money & trying to keep what we have for outdoors and wildlife for future generations"
- "Reduce marketing the area"
- "Knowledge of which areas people can access and spread out more"
- "Consider reservations for parks, trails, rec areas"
- "Loss of solitude and wildness"
- "Develop better signage and wayfinding tools to guide visitors to lesser-known sites"

Goal 1 – Accommodate outdoor recreation visitors from outside of the region without degrading locals' outdoor recreation experiences.

Strategy 1.1 – Divert visitation away from areas that cannot accommodate visitation and toward areas that can accommodate them.

Action notes – get in front of other sources of information; establish a communications forum; active social media presence; signage directing visitors; selective marketing; identify areas that have excess capacity; identify areas that are at or near capacity.

Strategy 1.2 – Minimize the loss of opportunities for solitude.

Strategy 1.3 – Avoid degradation of dispersed camping experiences.

Action notes – minimum quality standards for dispersed camping areas; rationally based and/or quantitative carrying capacity

Strategy 1.4 – Develop new access and trails to accommodate the growing regional population.

Action notes – level of service standards for regional population;

Strategy 1.5 – Develop low-effort, easy-to-find attractions for tourists.

Action notes – roadside heritage attractions, parking areas, restrooms, short hikes

Notes from prior community meetings: 1) market less busy areas and not busy areas/local favorites 2) expand, build more trails and access 3) signage directing visitors to “lesser-known sites”

Goal 2 – Manage the near-term and long-term impacts of outdoor recreation on natural resources, heritage resources and outdoor recreation infrastructure. infrastructure.

From Montezuma OREC May 2023
Community Meetings

“Mitigate impact of trail development on wildlife”

“Foster local stewardship ethic”

“Stewardship education and management instead of restricting access”

“Don't need more trails”

“No OHV/ATV”

“Highest quality of trail construction”

“Work with community groups/non-profits to maintain OREC infrastructure”

From Montelores stakeholder session #1

“Do more to promote Leave No Trace and preserve and protect cultural resources”

“Dolores County – How do we afford to maintain roads, provide Search & Rescue, trash on county roads and roads that lead to rec areas – with no income? ”

“Trash. Destruction of lands by off-road vehicles”

“Dispersed camping impacts/ Enforcement with limited resources”

“Recreation timing impacts all wildlife species. How to address timing restrictions”

“Too many trails are endangering habitat”

“Habitat loss/overuse, Critical winter/fawning/calving areas, migration corridors, game fencing roadways.

“Growth of newcomers and tourists means we need to teach conservation and impacts to them, especially in high use areas like Sand Canyon”

Goal 2 – Manage the near-term and long-term impacts of outdoor recreation on natural resources, heritage resources and outdoor recreation infrastructure. infrastructure.

Strategy 2.1 – Explore and implement stewardship education

Action notes – education topics: protect heritage resources, leave no trace, stay the trail, impacts on wildlife, seasonality, multi-use (e.g. cattle grazing)

Strategy 2.2 – Use the best available science and information to gauge impacts of outdoor recreation use on natural and heritage resources.

Action notes – wildlife mapping, recreation infrastructure inventory, carrying capacity thresholds

Strategy 2.3 – Improve and expand the collection of outdoor recreation use data.

Action notes – track use at key sites consistently/permanently, secondary sources such as cellular phone data

Notes from prior community meetings: : 1) stewardship/education 2) community groups and non-profits to help maintain OREC infrastructure 3) enforcement in dispersed camping areas 4) BMPs for trail construction

Goal 3 – Continue to collaborate with public lands managers for multiple use.

From Montezuma OREC May 2023 Community Meetings

"Multi-use, non-exclusive opportunities and access"

"Non-motorized areas remain non-motorized"

"Safe trails for horses"

"No E-bikes"

"Designated E-bike trails"

"No OHV/ATV"

"Keep allowing/maintain dispersed camping"

"Separate users (hike, bike, horse, motorized)"

"Unique balance of ag-community and rec-community"

"Keep fostering county support for outdoor recreation"

From Montelores stakeholder session #1

"Unified & Managed growth & development process across user groups"

"Educate recreationists about the benefits of cattle"

"Educate the public in cattle rotation, cattle etiquette and peaceful union"

"Educating the public to close gates to keep cattle where they should be"

"Getting a diversity of groups involved w/planning"

"Layered Use Opportunities: "High, Med., Low"

Goal 3 – Continue to collaborate with public lands managers for multiple use.

- Strategies..... TBD

Notes from prior community meetings: : 1) educate recreationists about cattle grazing 2) engage diversity of people and interests in public lands planning 3) designate routes for rec user groups

Topic 2 – Equitable Access to Outdoor Recreation

Goal 1 – Increase outdoor recreation visitation by historically underrepresented populations.

Goal 2 – Increase outdoor recreation visitation by disabled individuals.

Goal 2.1 – Increase outdoor recreation visitation by historically underrepresented populations.

Goal 2.2 – Increase outdoor recreation visitation by disabled individuals.

From Montezuma OREC May 2023
Community Meetings

“Public transit to trailheads/outdoor rec”

“Pathway and/or bike lanes to trailheads”

“Transportation and other support for disadvantaged youth outdoor rec”

From Montelores stakeholder
session #1

“Lack of public transportation to access natural areas”

“Populations & consumers who don’t feel welcome in some aspects of outdoors”

“Networking with schools”

“More ADA access. Better photos or videos of site-to-site access for users to determine accessibility”

“Non-profit organizations working on getting more diverse populations access”

“Getting a diversity of groups involved w/planning”

Goal 2.1 – Increase outdoor recreation visitation by historically underrepresented populations.

- Strategies..... TBD

Notes from prior community meetings: 1.) transportation to outdoor recreation 2.) diversity of people involved in outdoor recreation planning 3.) engage with underrepresented populations to encourage outdoor recreation

Goal 2.2 – Increase outdoor recreation visitation by disabled individuals.

- Strategies..... TBD

Notes from prior community meetings: 1) Better info and photos of existing ADA facilities and outreach strategy 2) Build more ADA compliant access

Topic 3 – Capacity, Workforce and Funding for Outdoor Recreation Management and Infrastructure

Goal 3.1 – Develop an outdoor recreation operations, maintenance and capital improvements plan and cost estimates.

Goal 3.2 – Develop and implement a funding strategy for outdoor recreation.

Goal 3.3 – Implement workforce development services that meet the needs of job seekers and public lands agencies and other entities who employ outdoor recreation maintenance and management personnel.

Goal 3.4 – Increase outdoor recreation stewardship volunteerism and its impact.

Topic 3 – Capacity, Workforce and Funding for Outdoor Recreation Management and Infrastructure

From Montezuma OREC May 2023 Community Meetings

“Sales tax or other tax for outdoor recreation stewardship and development”

“Sales tax for outdoor recreation development and maintenance”

“Need more staff managing public lands recreational users”

“Appreciate county support for outdoor recreation.”

From Montelores stakeholder session #1

“How are we to provide search & rescue and also maintain county roads that lead to recreation areas with no income?”

“Resistance to change with regard to funding, recognizing need for land management changes”

“Need more funding/staff for public land”

“More users = increasing costs”

“Lots of money in industry – relatively little for management”

Goal 3.1 – Develop an outdoor recreation operations, maintenance and capital improvements plan and cost estimates.

- Strategies..... TBD

Notes from prior community meetings: 1.) transportation to outdoor recreation 2.) diversity of people involved in outdoor recreation planning 3.) engage with underrepresented populations to encourage outdoor recreation

Goal 3.2 – Develop and implement a funding strategy for outdoor recreation.

- Strategies..... TBD

Notes from prior community meetings: 1) Better info and photos of existing ADA facilities and outreach strategy 2) Build more ADA compliant access

Goal 3.3 – Implement workforce development services that meet the needs of job seekers and public lands agencies as well as other entities who employ outdoor recreation maintenance and management personnel.

- Strategies..... TBD

Notes from prior community meetings: 1) Better info and photos of existing ADA facilities and outreach strategy 2) Build more ADA compliant access

Goal 3.4 – Increase outdoor recreation stewardship volunteerism and its impact.

- Strategies..... TBD

Notes from prior community meetings: 1) Better info and photos of existing ADA facilities and outreach strategy 2) Build more ADA compliant access

Topic 4 – Outdoor Recreation Business Growth and Development

Goal 4.1 – Facilitate the growth of outdoor recreation industry establishments and startups.

Goal 4.2 – Facilitate the growth of visitor services establishments and startups serving outdoor recreation visitors.

Goal 4.3 – Use outdoor recreation marketing to help manage outdoor recreation and to help local businesses increase sales.

Topic 4 – Outdoor Recreation Business Growth and Development

From Montezuma OREC May 2023
Community Meetings

More exposure for businesses through event sponsorship

Acknowledge and accept outdoor recreation

Additional outdoor recreation retail

Additional retail shops

Better quality of lodging

More variety of food/restaurant choices

Occupy vacant downtown buildings

Occupy vacant commercial buildings

Establish towns as meeting places and information hubs for outdoor recreation

Need guiding businesses

Market food and beverage establishments to outdoor recreationists

"Tour de partners" coordinate trail tour events with local partners.

Develop more events and festivals

"Live-work-play" marketing emphasizing outdoor recreation

Foster partnerships between public lands agencies and marketing groups

Expand business hours for downtown businesses (weekends, evenings)

Market to increase overnight stays

Promote local businesses at trailheads

Goal 4.1 – Facilitate the growth of outdoor recreation industry establishments and startups.

- Strategies..... TBD

Notes from prior community meetings: 1.) outdoor rec. special events that have a positive impact 2.) need more outdoor guiding services 3.) market visitor services offerings to outdoor recreationists

Goal 4.2 – Facilitate the growth of visitor services establishments and startups serving outdoor recreation visitors.

- Strategies..... TBD

Notes from prior community meetings: 1.) improve offerings for retail, eating/drinking and lodging 2.) get vacant commercial buildings occupied 3.) towns as hubs for outdoor rec. 4.) keep downtown businesses open during evenings and weekends

Goal 4.3 – Use outdoor recreation marketing to help manage outdoor recreation and to help local businesses increase sales.

- Strategies..... TBD

Notes from prior community meetings: 1.) Foster partnerships between public lands agencies and marketing groups 2. Recommend outdoor recreation sites to visitors strategically to reduce impacts