APPENDIX A: Public Law 111-11, Title VIII, Subtitle A, Section 8001, Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area

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TITLE VIII—NATIONAL HERITAGE AREAS

Subtitle A—Designation of National Heritage Areas

16 USC 461 note.

SEC. 8001. SANGRE DE CRISTO NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA, COLORADO.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) HERITAGE AREA.—The term "Heritage Area" means the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area established by subsection (b)(1).

(2) MANAGEMENT ENTITY.—The term "management entity" means the management entity for the Heritage Area designated by subsection (b)(4).

(3) MANAGEMENT PLAN.—The term "management plan" means the management plan for the Heritage Area required under subsection (d).

(4) MAP.—The term "map" means the map entitled "Proposed Sangre De Cristo National Heritage Area" and dated November 2005.

(5) SECRETARY.—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior.

(6) STATE.—The term "State" means the State of Colorado.

(b) SANGRE DE CRISTO NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the State the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area.

(2) BOUNDARIES.—The Heritage Area shall consist of—

(A) the counties of Alamosa, Conejos, and Costilla; and

(B) the Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge, the Baca National Wildlife Refuge, the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, and other areas included in the map.

(3) MAP.—A map of the Heritage Area shall be—

(A) included in the management plan; and

(B) on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the National Park Service.

(4) MANAGEMENT ENTITY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The management entity for the Heritage Area shall be the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area Board of Directors.

(B) MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS.—Members of the Board shall include representatives from a broad cross-section of the individuals, agencies, organizations, and governments that were involved in the planning and development of the Heritage Area before the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) ADMINISTRATION.—

(1) AUTHORITIES.—For purposes of carrying out the management plan, the Secretary, acting through the management entity, may use amounts made available under this section to—

(A) make grants to the State or a political subdivision of the State, nonprofit organizations, and other persons;

(B) enter into cooperative agreements with, or provide technical assistance to, the State or a political subdivision

of the State, nonprofit organizations, and other interested parties;

(C) hire and compensate staff, which shall include individuals with expertise in natural, cultural, and historical resources protection, and heritage programming;

(D) obtain money or services from any source including any that are provided under any other Federal law or program;

(E) contract for goods or services; and

(F) undertake to be a catalyst for any other activity that furthers the Heritage Area and is consistent with the approved management plan.

(2) DUTIES.—The management entity shall—

(A) in accordance with subsection (d), prepare and submit a management plan for the Heritage Area to the Secretary; Management plan.

(B) assist units of local government, regional planning organizations, and nonprofit organizations in carrying out the approved management plan by—

(i) carrying out programs and projects that recognize, protect, and enhance important resource values in the Heritage Area;

(ii) establishing and maintaining interpretive exhibits and programs in the Heritage Area;

(iii) developing recreational and educational opportunities in the Heritage Area;

(iv) increasing public awareness of, and appreciation for, natural, historical, scenic, and cultural resources of the Heritage Area;

(v) protecting and restoring historic sites and buildings in the Heritage Area that are consistent with Heritage Area themes;

(vi) ensuring that clear, consistent, and appropriate signs identifying points of public access, and sites of interest are posted throughout the Heritage Area; and

(vii) promoting a wide range of partnerships among governments, organizations, and individuals to further the Heritage Area;

(C) consider the interests of diverse units of government, businesses, organizations, and individuals in the Heritage Area in the preparation and implementation of the management plan;

(D) conduct meetings open to the public at least semiannually regarding the development and implementation of the management plan; Public information. Deadlines.

(E) for any year that Federal funds have been received under this section—

(i) submit an annual report to the Secretary that describes the activities, expenses, and income of the management entity (including grants to any other entities during the year that the report is made); Deadline. Reports.

(ii) make available to the Secretary for audit all records relating to the expenditure of the funds and any matching funds; Records.

(iii) require, with respect to all agreements authorizing expenditure of Federal funds by other organizations, that the organizations receiving the funds make available to the Secretary for audit all records concerning the expenditure of the funds; and

(F) encourage by appropriate means economic viability that is consistent with the Heritage Area.

(3) PROHIBITION ON THE ACQUISITION OF REAL PROPERTY.—The management entity shall not use Federal funds made available under this section to acquire real property or any interest in real property.

(4) COST-SHARING REQUIREMENT.—The Federal share of the cost of any activity carried out using any assistance made available under this section shall be 50 percent.

(d) MANAGEMENT PLAN.—

Deadline.

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the management entity shall submit to the Secretary for approval a proposed management plan for the Heritage Area.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The management plan shall—

(A) incorporate an integrated and cooperative approach for the protection, enhancement, and interpretation of the natural, cultural, historic, scenic, and recreational resources of the Heritage Area;

(B) take into consideration State and local plans;

(C) include—

(i) an inventory of—

(I) the resources located in the core area described in subsection (b)(2); and

(II) any other property in the core area that—

(aa) is related to the themes of the Heritage Area; and

(bb) should be preserved, restored, managed, or maintained because of the significance of the property;

(ii) comprehensive policies, strategies and recommendations for conservation, funding, management, and development of the Heritage Area;

(iii) a description of actions that governments, private organizations, and individuals have agreed to take to protect the natural, historical and cultural resources of the Heritage Area;

(iv) a program of implementation for the management plan by the management entity that includes a description of—

(I) actions to facilitate ongoing collaboration among partners to promote plans for resource protection, restoration, and construction; and

(II) specific commitments for implementation that have been made by the management entity or any government, organization, or individual for the first 5 years of operation;

(v) the identification of sources of funding for carrying out the management plan;

(vi) analysis and recommendations for means by which local, State, and Federal programs, including the role of the National Park Service in the Heritage

Area, may best be coordinated to carry out this section; and

(vii) an interpretive plan for the Heritage Area; and

(D) recommend policies and strategies for resource management that consider and detail the application of appropriate land and water management techniques, including the development of intergovernmental and interagency cooperative agreements to protect the natural, historical, cultural, educational, scenic, and recreational resources of the Heritage Area.

(3) DEADLINE.—If a proposed management plan is not submitted to the Secretary by the date that is 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the management entity shall be ineligible to receive additional funding under this section until the date that the Secretary receives and approves the management plan.

(4) APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL OF MANAGEMENT PLAN.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of receipt of the management plan under paragraph (1), the Secretary, in consultation with the State, shall approve or disapprove the management plan. Deadline.

(B) CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL.—In determining whether to approve the management plan, the Secretary shall consider whether—

(i) the management entity is representative of the diverse interests of the Heritage Area, including governments, natural and historic resource protection organizations, educational institutions, businesses, and recreational organizations;

(ii) the management entity has afforded adequate opportunity, including public hearings, for public and governmental involvement in the preparation of the management plan; and

(iii) the resource protection and interpretation strategies contained in the management plan, if implemented, would adequately protect the natural, historical, and cultural resources of the Heritage Area.

(C) ACTION FOLLOWING DISAPPROVAL.—If the Secretary disapproves the management plan under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall—

(i) advise the management entity in writing of the reasons for the disapproval;

(ii) make recommendations for revisions to the management plan; and Recommendations.

(iii) not later than 180 days after the receipt of any proposed revision of the management plan from the management entity, approve or disapprove the proposed revision. Deadline.

(D) AMENDMENTS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall approve or disapprove each amendment to the management plan that the Secretary determines make a substantial change to the management plan.

(ii) USE OF FUNDS.—The management entity shall not use Federal funds authorized by this section to

carry out any amendments to the management plan until the Secretary has approved the amendments.

(e) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this section affects the authority of a Federal agency to provide technical or financial assistance under any other law.

(2) CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION.—The head of any Federal agency planning to conduct activities that may have an impact on the Heritage Area is encouraged to consult and coordinate the activities with the Secretary and the management entity to the maximum extent practicable.

(3) OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES.—Nothing in this section—

(A) modifies, alters, or amends any law or regulation authorizing a Federal agency to manage Federal land under the jurisdiction of the Federal agency;

(B) limits the discretion of a Federal land manager to implement an approved land use plan within the boundaries of the Heritage Area; or

(C) modifies, alters, or amends any authorized use of Federal land under the jurisdiction of a Federal agency.

(f) PRIVATE PROPERTY AND REGULATORY PROTECTIONS.—Nothing in this section—

(1) abridges the rights of any property owner (whether public or private), including the right to refrain from participating in any plan, project, program, or activity conducted within the Heritage Area;

(2) requires any property owner to permit public access (including access by Federal, State, or local agencies) to the property of the property owner, or to modify public access or use of property of the property owner under any other Federal, State, or local law;

(3) alters any duly adopted land use regulation, approved land use plan, or other regulatory authority of any Federal, State or local agency, or conveys any land use or other regulatory authority to the management entity;

(4) authorizes or implies the reservation or appropriation of water or water rights;

(5) diminishes the authority of the State to manage fish and wildlife, including the regulation of fishing and hunting within the Heritage Area; or

(6) creates any liability, or affects any liability under any other law, of any private property owner with respect to any person injured on the private property.

(g) EVALUATION; REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 3 years before the date on which authority for Federal funding terminates for the Heritage Area, the Secretary shall—

(A) conduct an evaluation of the accomplishments of the Heritage Area; and

(B) prepare a report in accordance with paragraph (3).

(2) EVALUATION.—An evaluation conducted under paragraph (1)(A) shall—

(A) assess the progress of the management entity with respect to—

(i) accomplishing the purposes of this section for the Heritage Area; and

(ii) achieving the goals and objectives of the approved management plan for the Heritage Area;

(B) analyze the Federal, State, local, and private investments in the Heritage Area to determine the leverage and impact of the investments; and

(C) review the management structure, partnership relationships, and funding of the Heritage Area for purposes of identifying the critical components for sustainability of the Heritage Area.

(3) REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Based on the evaluation conducted under paragraph (1)(A), the Secretary shall prepare a report that includes recommendations for the future role of the National Park Service, if any, with respect to the Heritage Area.

(B) REQUIRED ANALYSIS.—If the report prepared under subparagraph (A) recommends that Federal funding for the Heritage Area be reauthorized, the report shall include an analysis of—

(i) ways in which Federal funding for the Heritage Area may be reduced or eliminated; and

(ii) the appropriate time period necessary to achieve the recommended reduction or elimination.

(C) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—On completion of the report, the Secretary shall submit the report to—

(i) the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate; and

(ii) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives.

(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $10,000,000, of which not more than $1,000,000 may be made available for any fiscal year.

(i) TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY.—The authority of the Secretary to provide assistance under this section terminates on the date that is 15 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

APPENDIX B: The Planning Process 2
Environmental Compliance 2
The Scoping Process 2
Issues Identified through Scoping 5
Opportunities and Challenges 5
Issues and Goals 9
Table B-1: Issues, Strategies, and Projects Considered on May 4, 2011 11
Consideration of Scenarios 23
Scenario A — Current Conditions Continue 23
Scenario B — Action Scenario 24

APPENDIX B: The Planning Process

Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA), is required for projects with federal funding. NEPA requires that federal agencies study the impacts of "major federal actions having a significant effect on the environment" and alternatives to those actions, and requires that agencies make that information an integral part of their decision-making processes. NEPA also requires that agencies make a diligent effort to involve the interested and affected public before they make decisions affecting the environment.

Planning for the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area has been undertaken in a manner such as to fully comply with NEPA requirements. The use of the NEPA process has been an integral part of best planning practices for the heritage area with the goals of engaging organizations and residents and exploring alternative futures for the heritage area. This Appendix is a record of that planning process. It includes a description of the scoping process and public participation, the issues discovered during scoping, and scenarios developed to allow discussion of choices by the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area Board of Directors (SdCNHA Board) as a way of providing guidance for the detailed management plan.

Environmental Compliance

In terms of environmental compliance, the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area Management Plan qualifies for Categorical Exclusion 3.3 R, and there are no extraordinary circumstances that may cause a significant environmental effect.

Categorical Exclusions under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and National Park Service Director's Order 12, C*onservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis and Decision-making (DO-12, 2001* [1], apply to listed actions that have no potential for measurable effects to the human environment. As applies to the management plan, Categorical Exclusion 3.3 R is for the "adoption or approval of surveys, studies, reports, plans and similar documents which will result in recommendations or proposed actions which would cause no or only minimal environmental impacts." Note that actions categorically excluded under NEPA and Director's Order 12 must still be reviewed for compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The release of this management plan initiates that consultation process.

The Scoping Process

"Scoping" is a process through which existing conditions are assessed and potential issues are identified. In planning for the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area, scoping involved review of background materials, field observations, consultations with partners, public workshops, and workshops with the SdCNHA Board.

Scoping is an important part of any planning process, whether or not it is required by NEPA. Objectives of the scoping process included:

- Inventorying the historic, cultural, natural, scenic, and recreational resources within the heritage area;
- Becoming familiar with the type and range of organizations that may have an interest in participating in Heritage Area initiatives;

[1] See *DO-12 Handbook*, found at http://planning.nps.gov/document/do12handbook1.pdf

- Understanding the range of existing programs and initiatives that have the potential for partnership with the heritage area;
- Identifying the interests and needs of potential partners in implementing Heritage Area programs and initiatives that would support Heritage Area goals;
- Identifying opportunities and challenges that could influence management plan strategies, actions, and priorities; and
- Providing opportunities for participants to voice concerns, preferences, and views that could shape implementation of the management plan.

The scoping process began in advance of engaging the consulting team that produced the management plan. The National Park Service held a planning workshop with the National Heritage Area Board of Directors on August 1, 2009, and conducted a series of nine "community open house" meetings in March and April of 2010, in Alamosa, Blanca, Capulin, Conejos, Hooper, LaJara, Manassa, San Luis, and Sanford. These introductory public meetings included a brief PowerPoint show and a two-page color handout created by the NPS. Public comments were documented by NPS staff, who also provided a summary and an initial directory of interested parties.

The scoping process continued in the fall of 2010 when the consulting team conducted three initial field visits within the heritage area. These field visits included tours of the heritage area and a meeting with the board in November of 2010. The board meeting provided the venue for introduction of the planning process and an opportunity for board members to ask questions and provide general information about their interests and goals.

With the conclusion of these initial visits in November, the team began an eight-month period of information gathering and assessment of the heritage area's existing conditions, which took place between November 2010 and July 2011. Activities associated with the scoping process included:

- Stakeholder interviews held April 4-7, 2011 (which included a revised version of the handout created by the NPS):
    - Federal officials representing the valley's national wildlife refuges and the national park, and staff from the offices of Senators Bennet and Udall and Representative Tipton (the director of the USFS/BLM office serving the region could not attend; he was interviewed later);
    - A group of individuals interested in interpretation and educational opportunities related to recreation and public lands, including representatives of the CO Department of Wildlife and the US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management (USFS/BLM) and five current and former members of the National Heritage Area Board of Directors;
    - A meeting with three representatives of the Costilla County Economic Development Council, based in San Luis, a conversation that continued with the consulting team's attendance at the CCEDC's meeting later that day;
    - A meeting with a representative of the Land Rights Council, based in San Luis;
    - A meeting with the mayor and three other representatives of the Town of San Luis;
    - A meeting with six members and advisors of the Rio Culebra Agricultural Cooperative, based in San Luis;
    - A meeting with two representatives of the Fort Garland Revitalization Committee;

- A meeting with four representatives of the Conejos County Tourism Council;
- An interview with the owner of two hotels recently opened in Antonito;
- A meeting with four representatives of the Cumbres & Toltec Railroad, a local attraction;
- A meeting with two community leaders interested in establishing a Conejos County Heritage Center;
- A meeting with two community leaders participating in the Antonito Depot Task Force;
- A meeting with two representatives of the San Luis Valley Museum Association;
- A meeting with the executive director of the San Luis Valley Development Resources Group;
- A meeting with the mayor of Alamosa;
- A meeting with about a dozen of the volunteers serving the Colorado Welcome Center;
- A meeting with the executive director of the Local Foods Coalition;
- A meeting with the operations manager of the Rio Grande Railroad;
- A meeting with the director of the Alamosa Convention and Visitors Bureau (and a member of the SdCNHA Board);
- A meeting with five representatives of the Alamosa Convention and Visitors Bureau Board;
- A meeting with economic development experts, the director of the Small Business Development Council and the director of the Adams State College Community Partnerships Program;
- A meeting with the director and staff person for the San Luis Valley Water Conservancy District;
- A meeting with federal staff and volunteers associated with the Old Spanish Trail; one of the federal staff has also been assisting the Los Caminos Antiguos Historic and Scenic Byway; and
- A representative of The Nature Conservancy who discussed that organization's involvement in the valley.

- A Saturday retreat on April 9, 2011, with the SdCNHA Board, to review issues and goals;
- Three intensive "Main Street" workshops with representatives of San Luis, Antonito, and Alamosa on May 2 and May 3, 2011;
- A workshop with the National Heritage Area Board of Directors and staff on May 4, 2011, to review draft issues and goals in combination with previous analysis by the NPS, and to set a preliminary order of priority. Goals were largely derived from original NPS suggestions, with some adjustments and additions. The following were key questions addressed to the Board:
  - **Projects & Strategies:** What specific projects, kinds of projects, or strategies/programs should the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area make possible?
  - **Issues:** What issues or problems should the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area address and/or attempt to solve?

- **Focus:** The heritage area offers a wide range of possibilities for action – what kind of focus would you encourage?
- **Relationships:** What are key partners and relationships?
- **Role:** What should be the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area's role in addressing the opportunities you see?

- Guidance from the workshop was augmented by responses from several directors to a brief set of questions sent out via email in late May; and
- A workshop with the National Heritage Area Board of Directors and staff on June 14, 2011, which resulted in a near-final list of goals. These were refined by a committee of the board which met on July 19, 2011, working with a redline-edit version to show progressive changes, and made final edits; these were discussed and accepted by consensus by the Board at its July 27, 2011, meeting.

Issues Identified through Scoping

The scoping process identified issues — both positive and negative — that might influence the development of the management plan. These issues are outlined below and are based upon review of background materials, assessment of existing conditions, consultations with partner agencies and organizations, and input received through public workshops, focus group workshops, and workshops with the SdCNHA Board.

Opportunities and Challenges

The National Heritage Area Board of Directors developed list of opportunities and challenges at a workshop on April 9, 2011, reproduced below. It was organized under several broad topics related to the heritage area's mission, vision, and goals, and the purposes enumerated in the heritage area's enabling legislation.

Culture & Community

Protect living heritage resources – language, art, traditions, spiritual, etc., and sites associated with traditional cultural practices.

Opportunities

- Agriculture remains a central element of the region's heritage and economy. Most communities referenced their agricultural traditions as being both worthy of preservation and as a potential resource for tourism.
- SdCNHA could convene partners to help plan specific strategies for supporting and promoting traditional agricultural practices and products.

Challenges

- Public memory of land grants.
- Preservation of local dialect is being lost; words are different; standard Spanish is taught in schools – local dialect is not supported or acknowledged.
- Authenticity of stories/folklore; need place for folklore and oral tradition; but need accurate research.
- Loss of cultural crafts, food traditions; herbal traditions.
- Religious heritage (Sacred Circle tour, Penitentes, local festivals); need to talk to parish priests.
- Local foods – relationship to sustainability and economic development; branding, marketing and distribution issues; how to allow use of local products in local institutions like schools and prisons (local access = healthy community).

- Understanding of the unique characteristics of current agriculture here (e.g., vitality captured from the sun).
- Need to communicate understanding of changes in agriculture over time (loss of small farming/farmers; transitions, e.g., vegetables to alfalfa, sheep to cattle).
- Sustainability – gone from a sustainable system to a non-sustainable system today (began after WW2).
- Family ownership – loss of next generation for agriculture in entire valley (CSU extension has information on average age of farmers); farmers are selling their land and water rights.

Land Stewardship, Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation
Sustain, enhance, and promote outdoor recreation opportunities as a significant element of the heritage of the SdCNHA and as a means of stimulating heritage tourism.

Opportunities

- Shifts in recreation patterns (additional 'nonconsumptive' uses, e.g., photography, birding).

Challenges

- Limited access to public lands; roads being closed – partially a funding issue (George: not really a funding issue; don't need to be maintained).
- Shifts in recreation patterns (additional 'nonconsumptive' uses, e.g., photography, birding).
- Developing opportunities for recreation inside and outside of public lands (some areas do not have public lands – develop open space access, facilities, and use; trails, etc.).
- Safety.
- Lack of information or lack of communicating what is available; awareness of opportunities is an issue; support services and facilities not communicated or even organized (hiking, biking, boating, birding, fishing, hunting, etc.); need links to make research easier.
- Some public lands information is available in offices but not online; public lands center does not interface well; under-planned and under-funded.
- Issue of coordination across state lines (hunting/fishing licenses not coordinated; guidebooks should acknowledge users in both states).
- Issue of private land owners wanting their own access to adjacent public lands.
- Some BLM lands are not accessible; surrounded by private land (not really our issue); continuity of links between BLM and USFS lands.
- In Costilla, unintentional trespassing on private lands; need good information (stay positive: "where CAN you go?").
- Conflicts among interest groups (grazing vs. recreation).
- Forest beetle kill.
- Fire management use issues (older, outdated plans?); government lets it burn; forest management (not managing for healthy ecosystem); wildlife not managed for healthy ecosystem but for hunting (not our issue).

Engaging our Young People

Both through specific projects and as a general goal, community leaders identified engaging the region's youth with their heritage as a priority.

Opportunities

- Working with a variety of partner organizations – schools, YCC, recreation centers, churches, Cumbres/Toltec RR, etc. – SdCNHA could help to plan and develop programs for youth that use heritage as a basis for education, community service, employment, recreation, arts, multi-generational interactions, and leadership development.
- Engage youth in our mission and process.
- Engage youth in community activities.

Challenges

- Need to establish local curriculum – local history is not taught in schools; state history doesn't recognize Valley history
- Limits of standard curriculum and tests – needs to come from another source other than schools (community centers, etc.)
- Need to relate to school districts – how can we build partnerships?

Historic Preservation and Cultural Resources

Community leaders are strongly interested in – and actively working on – projects to restore and protect important sites and structures and document and preserve artifacts, oral and written histories, and artistic and other traditions. Some of the unique aspects of the region's heritage – cemeteries, moradas, land grants, historic settlements, agricultural traditions, etc – were identified as critically important research and preservation needs.

Opportunities

- The SdCNHA could work to secure financial and technical support for these projects and – as appropriate – sponsor efforts to promote understanding and use of the protected resources.

Challenges

- "Disease" of stucco; people installing stucco over brick and wood frame historic buildings because it is easy and inexpensive.
- Education and support for preservation; lack of awareness; lack of funding support.
- Empty and poorly cared-for buildings.
- Adobe is a dying art; lack of craftsmen (other skills, too – e.g., caring for brick).
- Historic structures in private hands not appreciated and cared for appropriately.
- Compatible land use for preservation – zoning resisted; historic districts resisted; no historic preservation in code; poor economic conditions do not encourage preservation; lack of design guidelines – voluntary or not – for new construction.
- Historic structures not recognized or preserved: bridges, cemeteries, etc.
- Need for inventory of historic structures.
- Lack of regional planning (2005/6 regional planning project was discouraged – Lincoln Institute from Cambridge, MA).

- Local contractors have trouble meeting bonding requirements; contractors are brought in from outside.
- Cost of preservation techniques.

Interpretation and Presentation

In all of the meetings, community leaders expressed interest in establishing or strengthening public facilities that serve – in a variety of different ways – as SdCNHA Heritage Centers.

Opportunities

- The region's existing museums, welcome centers, visitor centers, community centers, under-used or vacant historic structures, and other public amenities could be transformed into an inter-connected network of centers offering heritage-related information, events and activities, collections and exhibits, and other services to both residents and visitors. Coordinated administration, technical and financial assistance, and programming could help improve the quality and sustainability of operations. The SdCNHA could convene facility managers and community support groups to plan and develop interpretive themes, exhibits, professional support, training, youth interns or docent programs, and other aspects of the Center activities.
- Interpretation and artwork in communities branded to heritage and heritage area (8,000 artists in the Valley of 49,000 people?).
- Community would benefit from interpretation.

Challenges

- Little information available in communities for visitors – lack of appropriate outdoor interpretive exhibits and markers.

Visitor Experience, Heritage Tourism, and Economic Development

At both the regional and community level, a need was identified for identifying and promoting routes that connect heritage resources. An integrated system of regional corridors, designated gateways and roadside pullouts, and community walking or driving tours could help to identify key sites and provide information on the interpretive themes of the National Heritage Area. The National Heritage Area could work with the Caminos Antiguos Byway and other groups to support planning for these routes, including signage and design guidelines, which would help to establish a clear regional identity for the area. Identity is important – heritage area must become known to the public.

Opportunities

- Existing and desirable levels of tourism vary widely throughout the region, but nearly all communities have local businesses, heritage sites, or events that welcome visitors.
- The SdCNHA could strengthen this tourism by fostering a "heritage tourism network" of businesses, attractions, and community event committees and supporting promotion and marketing, sponsoring training and technical assistance, and perhaps even officially certifying/endorsing businesses and attractions that meet basic criteria.
- Cultural shift occurring.
- Board members are key to changing local attitudes.

Challenges

- People feel are losing cultural identity through tourism; some people don't want it ("fear of Telluride") – worried about being displaced; local families won't be able to be afford to live there if

tourism is successful and community changes (need to grow from within); scale issue; growth would create change; what are the consequences of success?.

- Where are/should visitors be welcome?
- Hospitality: people don't want aggressive sales people.
- Business coordination in terms of operation, etc.
- Need to satisfy visitor expectations – long way to go – e.g., seasonal, daily closure.
- Appearance of downtowns with empty buildings that are poorly maintained.
- Residents are hesitant to take the risk to implement a new idea; what is heritage area role?

Partnerships, Organization, and Management

Opportunities

- Community partners currently sponsor numerous events and activities for both residents and visitors. The SdCNHA could market and promote these events at a regional level, and support – through funding and/or volunteers – elements that explicitly perpetuate and celebrate the region's diverse cultural and natural heritage.

Challenges

- Local festivals – unique and high quality, but not marketed and would like visitors.

Issues and Goals

The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area Board of Directors and staff met on May 4, 2011, to review potential goals drawn from material developed so far, a combination of issues discussed by the Board on April 9, 2011, and earlier facilitation work provided by the NPS (a summary from nine public meetings, spring 2010; and a record of an August 2009 Board retreat). The "interleaved" ideas appear in Table B-1; draft goals were largely derived from original NPS suggestions, with some adjustments and additions. Directors participated in a priority-setting exercise that indicated high levels of support for tourism, historic preservation, and the preservation of "living heritage." The board also recognized that all activities are priorities – discussion suggested that the heritage area will ultimately address all of these points, strategically choosing elements for early, mid-term, and long term action, and that the reason for many of the directors' choices was their sense that by tackling that item first, many other items would be addressed because of perceived overlaps. The material considered on May 4 led directly to the goals shown in Chapter 1 of the management plan.

Potential Goals and Strategies to Address Issues, in Ranked Order

- **Tourism:** Increase visitation through interpretation, heritage development projects and events, and promotion of heritage tourism in order to stimulate heritage preservation and economic development. (Through discussion, the board added issues of cross-marketing, wayfinding, marketing overall.)
- **Historic Preservation:** Support the preservation, use/reuse, rehabilitation, and/or restoration of historic buildings as a top priority in all heritage development projects.
- **Living Heritage:** Protect living heritage resources—language, art, traditions, spiritual, etc., and sites associated with traditional cultural practices.
- **Agriculture:** Promote and interpret agriculture as a way of life a, vital aspect of the cultural and scenic landscape and experience of place, and critical element of the regional economy.

- **Interpretation:** Build a system for interpreting the themes of the National Heritage Area through existing attractions, visitor facilities, and development of interpretive projects using a variety of approaches, especially the development of touring routes.
- **Living Landscape:** (Added to original list through discussion)
- **Young people:** Stimulate involvement of young people in all aspects of the National Heritage Area's work, learning opportunities, and governance.
- **Awareness:** Foster an awareness, understanding and pride for the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area among its residents and Colorado residents in general. Workshop discussion/identity/values/community spirit
- **Business:** Foster business retention, expansion and creation through heritage development projects and partnerships.
- **Events:** Sustain, enhance, and promote existing events and celebrations.
- **Outdoor Recreation:** Sustain, enhance, and promote outdoor recreation opportunities as a significant element of the heritage of the SdCNHA and as a means of stimulating heritage tourism.
- **Communications:** Establish open and consistent communication with organizations and the public.
- **Downtown/Main Street:** (Added to original list through discussion)

Values and Role

On May 4, 2011, the board and staff also discussed the values they would expect to apply (or intangible results they would like to stimulate) as they undertake all programs and actions. The following words will provide guidance in a statement of values and roles:

- Inclusive
- Blend/share information
- Every part benefits from all other parts
- Hospitality/welcome (we are all "ambassadors")
- Lead by example
- Respect
- Interaction/sharing
- Solutions/actions/results
- Relationships

Table B-1: Issues, Strategies, and Projects Considered on May 4, 2011

Issues	General Direction, Policies and Programs	Specific Projects
Increase visitation through interpretation, heritage development projects and events, and promotion of heritage tourism to stimulate heritage preservation and economic development.		
Foster business retention, expansion and creation through heritage development projects and partnerships.		
Existing and desirable levels of tourism vary widely throughout the region, but nearly all communities have local businesses, heritage sites, or events that welcome visitors. The SdCNHA could strengthen this tourism by fostering a "heritage tourism network" of businesses, attractions, and community event committees and supporting promotion and marketing, sponsoring training and technical assistance, and perhaps even officially certifying/endorsing businesses and attractions that meet basic criteria.		
Cultural shift occurring	Improve "tourist readiness" by _____% in 5 years	Promote the NHA sites to the annual 300,000 Great Sand Dunes visitors
People feel are losing cultural identity through tourism; some people don't want it ("fear of Telluride") – worried about being displaced; local families won't be able to be afford to live there if tourism is successful and community changes (need to grow from within); scale issue; growth would create change; what are the consequences of success?	Support tourist and commuter train rides within the NHA	Interconnect the Los Caminos Antiguos Scenic and Historic Byway and the Old Spanish National Historic Trail
Where are/should visitors be welcome?	Technology: need to communicate what is available (websites); wireless connections needed	
Hospitality: people don't want aggressive sales people	Need to educate local officials to goals and policies to manage and support heritage tourism	
Board members are key to changing local attitudes	Need for hospitality training for frontline staff	
Business coordination in terms of operation, etc.	Idea: create a referral agency?	
Need to satisfy visitor expectations – long way to go – e.g., seasonal, daily closure	Wayfinding signage as a visual link; signage system (directional signs, entrance signs)	
Appearance of downtowns with empty buildings that are poorly maintained	Design standards for signage	
	Stabilize the economic viability of Visitor Centers in the NHA	
Residents are hesitant to take the risk to implement a new idea; what is heritage area role?	Create a "heritage tourism network" of businesses, heritage sites, and events that welcome visitors.	Support and promote the **Howard's Store (NHR) Gun Shop/Howard's Store Museum, Hooper –** Increase potential residential, commercial use
	Revitalize downtown districts within the NHA	
	Restore historic buildings	

Table B-1: Issues, Strategies, and Projects Considered on May 4, 2011

Issues	General Direction, Policies and Programs	Specific Projects
	Improve infrastructures such as parking, cleaning	
	Support retail development	
	Tie in economic strategies to partner history with tourism—business partnerships	
Promote and interpret agriculture as a way of life a, vital aspect of the cultural and scenic landscape and experience of place, and critical element of the regional economy.		
Agriculture remains a central element of the region's heritage and economy. Most communities referenced their agricultural traditions as being both worthy of preservation and as a potential resource for tourism. SdCNHA could convene partners to help plan specific strategies for supporting and promoting traditional agricultural practices and products.		
Agri-tourism potential	Support agri-tourism events such as **farmer's markets, roadside stands** – promote the heritage area's traditional farming practices and increase economic development to the area	Develop an **interpretive plan for agricultural history at the Wayside Dairy/the Ranch/Centennial Farm** – Utilize the site to educate the public on the significance of agricultural history
Local foods – relationship to sustainability and economic development; branding, marketing and distribution issues; how to allow use of local products in local institutions like schools and prisons (local access = healthy community)	Support **agricultural tours** – Develop partnerships and be involved in workshops, festivals and farmer's markets	
Understanding of the unique characteristics of current agriculture here (e.g., vitality captured from the sun)	Establish **organic farming** practices throughout the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area – Grow organics and sell organic products locally	
Need to communicate understanding of changes in agriculture over time (loss of small farming/farmers; transitions, e.g., vegetables to alfalfa, sheep to cattle)		
Sustainability – gone from a sustainable system to a non-sustainable system today (began after WW2)		
Potential of value-added agriculture		
Family ownership – loss of next generation for agriculture in entire valley (CSU extension has information on average age of farmers); farmers are selling their land and water rights		
Build a system for interpreting the themes of the National Heritage Area through existing attractions, visitor facilities, and development of interpretive projects using a variety of approaches.		

Table B-1: Issues, Strategies, and Projects Considered on May 4, 2011

Issues	General Direction, Policies and Programs	Specific Projects
Establish visitor facilities.		
In all of the meetings, community leaders expressed interest in establishing or strengthening public facilities that serve – in a variety of different ways – as SdCNHA Heritage Centers. The region's existing museums, welcome centers, visitor centers, community centers, under-used or vacant historic structures, and other public amenities could be transformed into an inter-connected network of centers offering heritage-related information, events and activities, collections and exhibits, and other services to both residents and visitors. Coordinated administration, technical and financial assistance, and programming could help improve the quality and sustainability of operations. The SdCNHA could convene facility managers and community support groups to plan and develop interpretive themes, exhibits, professional support, training, youth interns or docent programs, and other aspects of the Center activities.		
	Build information centers and visitor centers in the North, South, East and West points of the heritage area – Bring awareness of the heritage area	Establish a **Gateway to Colorado Heritage Center –** Promotion and education for residents and visitors
	Develop **displays at existing tourism information centers and museums** – Bring major awareness to the heritage area	Construct an **information center in San Luis** – Educate visitors on cultural events, authenticity; provide information in English and Spanish
		Establish a community center in **Hooper** at **Hooper Elementary School** – Rehabilitation of abandoned structure to serve as a community center, fine art center, B-&-B
		Revitalize the **Opera House** in **Manassa** to function as a community center – Use the community center to exhibit the **history of the city's settlement**.
		Restore the **SPMDTU in Antonito** to function as a community center – Support events and community activities within a historic structure
		Save and protect **Bishop's building and old fort in Manassa** – Use the structure to teach local residents and visitors of the significance of **Mormon history** to the area
		Restore **San Rafael Church in Mogote** – Utilize the site for education and promotion
		Establish a community center in **Mosca** at the **Mosca Gymnasium** – Rehabilitation of infrastructure to serve as community center

Table B-1: Issues, Strategies, and Projects Considered on May 4, 2011

Issues	General Direction, Policies and Programs	Specific Projects
		Restore **Capulin Community Center [is this a historic building?]** – Restore center to function for **recreational uses**
Interpret the themes of the National Heritage Area through a variety of approaches.		
Interpretation and artwork in communities branded to heritage and heritage area (8,000 artists in the Valley of 49,000 people?)	Restore, revitalize, and maintain **cemeteries** (i.e., in Capulin) – involve community with the restoration process and educate youth on the importance of respecting elders	Restore **Casa Salazar, homes, businesses, missions, and churches in San Luis** – Restore and promote these sites for tourists
Community would benefit from interpretation	Build strong partnerships	Create a **museum in Mosca or Hooper** at the **Hooper School** – Preserve and **interpret farming techniques and the significance of farming**
Little information available in communities for visitors – lack of appropriate outdoor interpretive exhibits and markers	Maintain local museums and artifacts	Construct a museum that encompasses the themes of the **history of the Mormon settlement** in **Manassa** – Create a space to develop exhibits that interpret the history and significance of Mormon history
	Restore museums in the NHA	Complete **structural work on the Sanford Museum** – Complete work on roof, landscaping, and heating system
	Interpret and promote the following historical themes and stories through brochures and/or tours: Japanese Internment Camp; German Prisoner Camp; Mining history; Historic churches; Medano/Zapata Ranch; Amish Culture; Traditional cultural practices such as shearing sheep, fiber arts, and Aspen graffiti; The creation and use of locations that serve as movie sets (old town streets, natural scenic areas); VIPs, local political leaders; Town planning and land use; Land Grant History (provide road signage with name and boundary information)	Rehabilitate the **San Luis Museum and Cultural Center** – Provide information on the history and culture of the heritage area through exhibits, events, and programs
	Fund **exhibits in local museums – Interpret moradas** and their significance to the areas	Create a **heritage repository for documents, records, and historic, archeological artifacts, farming implements** – Establish a **sustainable repository for research and education**

Table B-1: Issues, Strategies, and Projects Considered on May 4, 2011

Issues	General Direction, Policies and Programs	Specific Projects
	Develop a **museum consortium** of local museums – Provide a networking tool and professional development	
	Include historical education and interpretation of Railroad in SLV and our whole country	
	Idea: interpret Valley to high school senior class on train	
	Idea: docent core as guides (training and quality) – more knowledgeable docents needed	
	Create **brochure and signage at the Pike's Stockade** – provide general information at the site (hours, days, tours); establish an education component for visitors and school groups, make the site publicly accessible	
In building the interpretive system, focus on the development of touring routes.		
At both the regional and community level, a need was identified for identifying and promoting routes that connect heritage resources. An integrated system of regional corridors, designated gateways and roadside pullouts, and community walking or driving tours could help to identify key sites and provide information on the interpretive themes of the SdCNHA. NHA could work with the Caminos Antiguos Byway and other groups to support planning for these routes, including signage and design guidelines, which would help to establish a clear regional identity for the area.		
	Develop **driving and walking tours** – Allow for information to be publicly accessible to a wide variety of audiences	Develop interpretive and promotional **projects with Los Caminos Antiguos Byway** – Partnership with Los Caminos to promote the heritage area and develop road signage along the byway
	Road pull-offs with **interpretive signage and picnic tables** – Promote heritage tourism	Develop an educational **walking tour of the Antonito Railyard** – Promote the **significance of the railroad** to the town of Antonito and other heritage area sites
	Support and promote **the Public Art/Murals Tours** – Promote ongoing programs	Document the **Old Spanish Trail** through the heritage area – Create an interpretation of the significance of trail routes through the heritage area
	Create road stop **rest stops and kiosks** throughout various points in the heritage area – Entice visitors to stop	Develop **interpretive signage at the Mosca Cemetery, Mosca** – Develop signage for grave sites, historic marker at cemetery

Table B-1: Issues, Strategies, and Projects Considered on May 4, 2011

Issues	General Direction, Policies and Programs	Specific Projects
	Establish **interpretive roadside signage** throughout the heritage area – develop signage with brief historical information about the heritage area	Construct **interpretive kiosks in Hooper, at the Great Sand Dunes Gateway** – interpret the natural, cultural history of the heritage area
	Establish **interpretive roadside signage** throughout the heritage area – develop signage with brief historical information about the heritage area	Construct **interpretive kiosks in Hooper, at the Great Sand Dunes Gateway** – interpret the natural, cultural history of the heritage area
Support the preservation, use/reuse, rehabilitation, and/or restoration of historic buildings as a top priority in all heritage development projects.		
Community leaders are strongly interested in – and actively working on – projects to restore and protect important sites and structures and document and preserve artifacts, oral and written histories, and artistic and other traditions. Some of the unique aspects of the region's heritage – cemeteries, moradas, land grants, historic settlements, agricultural traditions, etc – were identified as critically important research and preservation needs. The SdCNHA could work to secure financial and technical support for these projects and – as appropriate – sponsor efforts to promote understanding and use of the protected resources.		
"Disease" of stucco; people installing stucco over brick and wood frame historic buildings because it is easy and inexpensive	Promote a preservation ethic through education, training and publicity	Purchase the **Wachauer Mansion** to be used as a cultural center
Education and support for preservation; lack of awareness; lack of funding support	Seek funding for solar retrofit of historic buildings	Support the **Antonito Depot** project
Empty and poorly cared-for buildings	Restore the railroads within the NHA (rail beds and rails, historic depots)	Establish a community center in **Hooper** at **Hooper Elementary School** – Rehabilitation of abandoned structure to serve as a community center, fine art center, B-&-B
Adobe is a dying art; lack of craftsmen (other skills, too – e.g., caring for brick)	Provide **incentives** to property owners for structural improvements on historic structures	Revitalize the **Opera House** in **Manassa** to function as a community center – Use the community center to exhibit the **history of the city's settlement**.
Historic structures in private hands not appreciated and cared for appropriately	Repair work on historic structures and cultural symbols – Preserve historic and cultural resources to use as educational tools	Restore the **SPMDTU in Antonito** to function as a community center – Support events and community activities within a historic structure
Compatible land use for preservation – zoning resisted; historic districts resisted; no historic preservation in code; poor economic conditions do not encourage preservation; lack of design guidelines – voluntary or not – for new construction	Provide property owners with basic awareness and preservation tools; easy steps	Save and protect **Bishop's building and old fort in Manassa** – Use the structure to teach local residents and visitors of the significance of **Mormon history** to the area
Historic structures not recognized or preserved: bridges, cemeteries, etc.		Restore **San Rafael Church in Mogote** – Utilize the site for education and promotion

Table B-1: Issues, Strategies, and Projects Considered on May 4, 2011

Issues	General Direction, Policies and Programs	Specific Projects
Need for inventory of historic structures		Establish a community center in **Mosca** at the **Mosca Gymnasium** – Rehabilitation of infrastructure to serve as community center
Lack of regional planning (2005/6 regional planning project was discouraged – Lincoln Institute from Cambridge, MA)		Restore **Capulin Community Center [is this a historic building?]** – Restore center to function for **recreational uses**
Local contractors have trouble meeting bonding requirements; contractors are brought in from outside		Take care of the **McIntire Springs/Mansion** – Trade lands
Cost of preservation techniques		On the Alamosa Riverwalk, create facilities for events-concerts, festivals and symposiums
Protect living heritage resources—language, art, traditions, spiritual, etc., and sites associated with traditional cultural practices.		
Public memory of land grants	Create a heritage and arts program/coordination to support and promote community projects: • Work with local artists on the bench and mural project • Promote the community sculpture program (art on the corners) • Seek insurance to protect public art • Promote 1% for art for all public projects through ordinances and legislation • Infuse the Arts Council • Work with local artists to restore murals and create new murals • Organize and conduct workshops on living history and stage the presentation • Establish an **Art Program** – Work with local artists, schools and actors to develop theatrical productions	Support **Sanctuario de los Pobladores Shrine** (as a part of the proposed heritage and arts program)
Preservation of local dialect is being lost; words are different; standard Spanish is taught in schools – local dialect is not supported or acknowledged	Protect the San Luis Valley language	Develop a language and history curriculum for the first and secondary schools

Table B-1: Issues, Strategies, and Projects Considered on May 4, 2011

Issues	General Direction, Policies and Programs	Specific Projects
Need to establish local curriculum – local history is not taught in schools; state history doesn't recognize Valley history	Record and archive **oral histories** throughout the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area – Record local citizens' oral histories	Work with local artists on the bench and mural project
Limits of standard curriculum and tests – needs to come from another source other than schools (community centers, etc.)	Build a **digital historic photo archive** – Involve youth in the digitization process	Restore local murals in San Luis, Antonito, and Manassa (as a part of the heritage and arts program)
Authenticity of stories/folklore; need place for folklore and oral tradition; but need accurate research	Record **traditional songs** – Preserve the significance of music to the local history and culture	Create a **heritage repository for documents, records, and historic, archeological artifacts, farming implements** – Establish a **sustainable repository for research and education**
Loss of cultural crafts, food traditions; herbal traditions	Document land grant history and genealogy – Establish a repository for land grant resources to be used for research	
Religious heritage (Sacred Circle tour, Penitentes, local festivals); need to talk to parish priests	Organize food demonstrations	
	Inventory **information and artifacts of the First Nation** – Make information **accessible for researchers and tribes**	
	Inventory **information and artifacts of the First Nation** – Make information **accessible for researchers and tribes**	
Sustain, enhance, and promote existing events and celebrations.		
Community partners currently sponsor numerous events and activities for both residents and visitors. The SdCNHA could market and promote these events at a regional level, and support – through funding and/or volunteers – elements that explicitly perpetuate and celebrate the region's diverse cultural and natural heritage.		
Local festivals – unique and high quality, but not marketed and would like visitors	Support **heritage related activities at events and celebrations** – Increase understanding and appreciation of traditions and heritage	
Sustain, enhance, and promote outdoor recreation opportunities as a significant element of the heritage of the SdCNHA and as a means of stimulating heritage tourism.		
Limited access to public lands; roads being closed – partially a funding issue (George: not really a funding issue; don't need to be maintained)	***Create open space, pathways, and recreation areas for communities.***	Develop a riverwalk along the Rio Grande River through the NHA within the next 5 years, including interpretation and recreation opportunities–trails, boating and fishing

Table B-1: Issues, Strategies, and Projects Considered on May 4, 2011

Issues	General Direction, Policies and Programs	Specific Projects
Shifts in recreation patterns (EW note: additional 'nonconsumptive' uses, e.g., photography, birding)		Weave Alamosa Ranch into the NHA planning efforts
Developing opportunities for recreation inside and outside of public lands (some areas do not have public lands – develop open space access, facilities, and use; trails, etc.)		San Luis Valley Heritage Tourism itineraries [what is this? Is it related to recreation and public lands?]
Safety		
Lack of information or lack of communicating what is available; awareness of opportunities is an issue; support services and facilities not communicated or even organized (hiking, biking, boating, birding, fishing, hunting, etc.); need links to make research easier		
Some public lands information is available in offices but not online; public lands center does not interface well; under-planned and under-funded;		
Issue of coordination across state lines (hunting/fishing licenses not coordinated; guidebooks should acknowledge users in both states)		
Issue of private land owners wanting their own access to adjacent public lands		
Some BLM lands are not accessible; surrounded by private land (not really our issue); continuity of links between BLM and USFS lands		
In Costilla, unintentional trespassing on private lands; need good information (stay positive: "where CAN you go?")		
Conflicts among interest groups (grazing vs. recreation)		
Forest beetle kill		
Fire management use issues (older, outdated plans?); government lets it burn; forest management (not managing for healthy ecosystem); wildlife not managed for healthy ecosystem but for hunting (not our issue)		
Stimulate involvement of young people in all aspects of the National Heritage Area's work, learning opportunities, and governance.		

Table B-1: Issues, Strategies, and Projects Considered on May 4, 2011

Issues	General Direction, Policies and Programs	Specific Projects
Both through specific projects and as a general goal, community leaders identified engaging the region's youth with their heritage as a priority. Working with a variety of partner organizations – schools, YCC, recreation centers, churches, Cumbres/Toltec RR, etc. – SdCNHA could help to plan and develop programs for youth that use heritage as a basis for education, community service, employment, recreation, arts, multi-generational interactions, and leadership development.		
Engage youth in our mission and process	***Develop a locally based curriculum for K-12 students within 2-3 year.***	
Engage youth in community activities	Have an SdCNHA youth advisory board?	
Need to relate to school districts – how can we build partnerships?	Need to create network among groups that are doing things in isolation	
	Develop education criteria to include SdCNHA topics as part of Colorado history classes in middle school	
	Seek funding for K-12 curriculum	
	Work with local school districts to implement curriculum	
	Develop an **agricultural mentor program** expanding on existing programs – **Connect youth to agriculture**, and get them excited about careers	
	Develop a **curriculum on the history of the Valley** with the school districts – Educate youth on local history by using local resources as an educational tool	
Foster an awareness, understanding and pride for the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area among its residents and Colorado residents in general.		
Identity is important – heritage area must become known to the public	Identity and branding	
	Social networking	
	Be present at events – need to inventory and plan, figure out how to participate (booth or exhibit? Volunteers?)	
	Educate the community, especially youth, about cultural history and historic preservation and its importance	
	Promote a preservation ethic through education, training and publicity	
	Hold educational forums	
	Partner with KRZA for program funding	

Table B-1: Issues, Strategies, and Projects Considered on May 4, 2011

Issues	General Direction, Policies and Programs	Specific Projects
	Create, documenting model for novellas (stories) history told by elders	
	Support and build upon existing events	
	Create a system to share resources in all counties	
	Conduct workshops and classes on living history models	
	Conduct workshops and classes on living history models	
Establish open and consistent communication with organizations and the public		
	Press releases, list serve, newsletters, website, meetings, Web 2.0, etc.	
Strengthen the organization's capacity to achieve its mission		
		Create Vision/Mission statement (done)
	Develop strong advisory support, i.e. attorney, banker, political liaison	
		Hire an Executive Director (done)
	Expand funding to support the needs of the organization	
	Establish a strong and diverse board of directors to govern and support the SdCNHA	
	Develop alliances that enhance the capacity of the NHA	
	Create partnerships to assist in all aspects of NHA projects that are mutually beneficial	
		Establish SdCNHA as a 501(c)(3) organization by the end of 2009
		Identify 2-3 "early action projects" within six months
		Establish small matching grant program
		Develop a matching funds strategy for grants
		Develop a calendar of projects, events, meetings, grant deadlines, etc.
Develop a SdCNHA Management Plan		
		Finalize management plan within one year

Table B-1: Issues, Strategies, and Projects Considered on May 4, 2011

Issues	General Direction, Policies and Programs	Specific Projects
		Develop a public involvement strategy
		Meet with eight communities/areas by spring 2010
		Identify networks, partners and public groups
		Identify resources and projects in the three county area that are community priorities and coincide with the NHA effort by summer 2010
		Look for partner potential
		Identify actions to realize projects (achievable steps to success)
		Establish a fundraising strategy and timeline for project implementation
		Identify existing and potential funding sources and partners (local, state, federal, public and private)
		Meet with key partners and potential funders

Consideration of Scenarios

The planning process for the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area management plan included consideration of scenarios for how the heritage area would be organized, implemented, and managed. The purpose of the scenarios process is to follow the logical flow of various approaches that would meet the goals set by the SdCNHA Board; explore implications, benefits, and drawbacks of these approaches; and decide which, if any, are best suited to meet the goals of the heritage area and serve the interests and needs of the region. Although this process bore some resemblance to NEPA's requirement for exploration of alternatives, in this case it was employed simply as good planning practice. It allowed the heritage area board and its partners to explore different ideas and test the implications of contrasting priorities.

From August through October of 2011, the National Heritage Area Board of Directors and staff considered two scenarios for the future of the heritage area, based on input solicited from partners as described above. The purpose of creating scenarios was to explore possibilities for the heritage area's development.

On August 8, 2011, the National Heritage Area Board of Directors approved a version of the scenarios prepared for public meetings, which were conducted during the evening over the following three days (August 9, 10, 11). Approximately 15 people attended each meeting. Each meeting included two handouts (the scenarios plus the vision and goals). A PowerPoint presentation that broke down the scenarios into topics was followed by discussion keying off this general question: What topic do you want to see addressed first or most thoroughly in the plan? An additional comment concerning interpretation and preservation of Hispano traditions was received by email from a participant in one of the workshops.

The Board met again on September 12, 2011, to review the input from those workshops and meet with the consulting team to focus on how heritage tourism and community enhancement might play out under Scenario B. On October 10, 2011, the Board did the same for interpretive planning, approving a general concept to be put to a group of partners assembled on October 11. On October 27, the Board approved Scenario B as a general guide for the management plan.

The two scenarios considered are as follows:

> Scenario A assumes that existing conditions continue as they are, with current initiatives proceeding without the added component of a National Heritage Area. This is the baseline for comparison with the other scenario and serves as the "No Action" scenario with respect to NEPA compliance.
>
> Scenario B proposes a set of initiatives that, together, would create a comprehensive National Heritage Area program within the San Luis Valley as envisioned in the heritage area's enabling legislation. It was proposed that this scenario be the focus of discussion and that the nature and scope of its various separate but related initiatives be modified, shaped, and refined based upon the expressed interests and capabilities of the heritage area's partners.

For both scenarios, initiatives are organized under nine headings or topics representing potential areas of programmatic activity based upon the heritage area's enabling legislation and issues identified through discussions with local organizations and individuals.

Scenario A — Current Conditions Continue

Under *Current Conditions Continue* the San Luis Valley would continue to develop without programming offered through the National Heritage Area. Existing programs would continue to evolve as they are presently organized.

Interpretation and Presentation A:

- The Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, Fort Garland Museum, and Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad continue to be the Valley's primary attractions. All three collaborate with regional marketing initiatives. Other natural and historical interpretive sites continue to offer interpretive programming with occasional collaboration and coordination. Los Caminos Antiguos completes its interpretive wayside system and is marketed as an attraction.

Visitor Experience & Heritage Tourism A:

- Existing regional attractions are marketed primarily through the Alamosa Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Colorado Welcome Center in Alamosa, and individual web sites and marketing materials. The City of Alamosa continues to be the regional center for visitor services. Other towns provide visitor services through their own entrepreneurial and marketing initiatives.

Culture & Community A:

- Communities continue to develop cultural programming and strengthen their sense of place through local initiatives. Churches play a strong role in the cultural life of communities. Cultural groups coexist and interact but do not necessarily fully engage with each other.

Engaging our Young People A:

- Several museums such as Fort Garland and the San Luis Valley Museum offer educational programming for school groups. Churches and local cultural organizations offer programs to engage local young people in community life.

Economic Revitalization A:

- Specialized agriculture continues to be the leading economic sector within the Valley. Local business leaders coordinate cooperative initiatives within their respective communities. Solar energy production continues to develop in strategically placed locations.

Historic Preservation A:

- Historic preservation programs are initiated in Alamosa through nonprofit initiatives and tourism and commercial revitalization strategies but are dependent primarily upon isolated individual initiatives in most of the region's other communities.

Land Stewardship and Natural Resources A:

- Strong land preservation and stewardship collaborations continue Valley-wide through the efforts of local, state and federal governmental entities and regional and national nonprofit organizations. Water rights and the preservation of water resources are the driving factors related to natural resource conservation.

Outdoor Recreation A:

- Recreational opportunities are available on public lands within and surrounding the Valley. Hunting and fishing play a major role in the economies some local communities. Route 160 is a primary RV migration route through the Valley.

Organization & Management A:

- Alamosa, Conejos, and Costilla Counties continue separate programming initiatives. Alamosa County and city programs are most developed due to their larger economies. Some coordination, guidance, and support are available through a few regional organizations. Local nonprofit organizations struggle. Federal, state, and nonprofit land stewardship entities run successfully on a separate track.

Scenario B — Action Scenario

Scenario B proposes a set of initiatives that, together, would create a comprehensive National Heritage Area program within the Valley as envisioned in the heritage area's enabling legislation. The program outlined

below is focused upon 1) developing a strong, coordinated interpretive presentation within the heritage area, 2) establishing and marketing a high quality visitor experience, 3) recognizing and supporting local cultural values and interests, and 4) providing opportunities for entrepreneurial initiatives and community enhancement. The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area will be implemented through local, grassroots initiatives with regional coordination, guidance, and support. It will be managed through the cooperative efforts of a variety of local and regional entities.

Nine topics of interest are listed below drawn from the heritage area's enabling legislation and discussions with local organizations and individuals. Concepts around which heritage area programs could be developed are noted below each topical heading. Together, they are intended to create a coordinated approach to addressing each topic in a manner appropriate to the interests, needs, and capabilities of the region, its communities, and its people.

Interpretation and Presentation B:

- Create a **community interpretive program** in which participating communities develop comprehensive interpretive plans to tell their own stories based on themes, structure, and standards provided by the National Heritage Area for the sake of consistency and region-wide experience [based on the feasibility study and to be further developed during the next phase of management planning with stakeholders' participation]. Preparation and implementation of the community interpretive plans will be guided and supported by the heritage area, but developed by each individual community. Emphasize cultural and historical themes and the preservation of historic buildings and landscape features. Coordinate with local revitalization strategies, and incorporate local and regionally inspired artwork.

- Create a coordinated interpretive presentation and **tour of natural resource landscapes and sites** within the heritage area as the second critical element of the overall interpretive approach. Identify publicly accessible sites where a variety of types of interpretive media can be employed. Connect the sites with a recommended touring route with wayside exhibits strategically located at appropriate sites along the way. Provide published and media-based interpretive support materials. Develop and publicize recreational walking and hiking trails for various levels of physical abilities, including aggressive mountain hikes. Consider establishing a major visitor center(s) orienting visitors to public lands and natural resources.

- Incorporate interpretation of the **Old Spanish Trail**, along both east and west sides of the Valley, into the tours noted above. Coordinate with related national trail interpretation and programming.

- Develop **Phase 2 interpretation of Los Caminos Antiguos Scenic & Historic Byway**. Concentrate interpretation on cultural and historical themes and subjects emphasizing connections between communities. Create spur tours to other close-by communities that wish to participate. Expand the number, range, and quality of exhibits, incorporating landscaping, visitor amenities, and regionally inspired artwork.

- Create **themed itineraries** on specific interpretive subjects such as significant cultures, and birding, water resources, Pike's exploration, etc. Develop supporting interpretive materials and media.

- Develop **audio tours and social media programs to enable landscape exploration and to bridge distances** between towns and sites; employ oral history as well as story-telling. Cooperate with existing **oral history programs** to make such productions possible and to incorporate their work into exhibits and other means of sharing with audiences.

- Develop a **living history program** with groups of actors and re-enactors who can be featured within the heritage area at events and in other ways where a critical mass of visitors can support such programming.

- Create a program to support (financially & with technical assistance) interpretive partners' development of sites, exhibits, events, and management capacity.

Visitor Experience & Heritage Tourism B:

- Develop a single **graphic identity, branding, and messaging** plan for the National Heritage Area which includes brand management and brand integration strategies to identify how the brand for the National Heritage Area coordinates with other existing brands in the region. A key goal of this effort will be to allow for individual identity while minimizing the potential for visitor confusion. Coordinate with other local and regional partners, including Los Caminos Antiguos. Web site, signage, published materials, and other visual forms of communication should have the same graphic identity and convey the same messages. Create a family of wayfinding signage, interpretive exhibits, and graphic formats that can be used throughout the heritage area by partners.

- Support development of a **network of wayfinding signage** using the graphic identity noted above. Identify gateway entrance points into the heritage area. Mark touring routes building upon current precedents. Develop wayfinding signage to participating sites, attractions, and communities. Support entrance signs to communities and sites that wish to utilize them.

- Establish a system of **orientation exhibits** to be installed at entrances to the heritage area and within participating communities. Exhibits should be part of the family of signage mentioned above with respect to graphic identity.

- Create a **designation program for visitor service providers and interpretive sites**. Allow participating providers and sites to display a heritage area emblem on their signage, site, and in marketing materials. Establish criteria and guidelines for participation, and create programs for their development and support, such as an annual cook-off or "best of" event or awards program. Create a hospitality program and best practices guidelines for participating providers and sites and have them meet set standards for inclusion in the SdCNHA branding/marketing program.]

- Create a program of **designated visitor service communities** that wish to be marketed and promoted in heritage area forums. Establish criteria and guidelines for participation, and create programs for their development and support.

- Create and work with key tourism partners to promote tour packages that feature designated sites, services and communities to promote overnight stays within the National Heritage Area.

- Develop Phase 2 of the National Heritage Area web site to create **virtual visitation** through distant access with in-depth interpretive, cultural, and educational content. Make use of **social media, Google Earth, web-based trip planners** and other electronic applications to promote exploration.

- Develop a **family of visitor information materials** to support interpretation and visitor experience that complement existing tourism marketing materials for the region. In addition to media, include brochures, guidebooks, maps, and other materials tailored to specific audiences and uses. Include **trail guides** for back-county exploration.

- Create a program to foster, through technical and financial support, partners' development of events, public outreach, promotions, and marketing.

Culture & Community B:

- Collaborate with and support communities and local cultural organizations in **preserving their cultural values** and in presenting them to residents and visitors. Provide interpretation.
- Collaborate with Adams State College and others in developing a comprehensive program of **research into and preservation of cultural traditions**. Support existing **oral history programs** and other partner programs in documenting the history and the stories of the Valley's many cultures. Encourage and support the development of at least one repository for documents, objects, and oral histories; train sites in accessioning, cataloging, and conservation standards for their collections.
- Encourage and support the **development and promotion of local arts, crafts, foods, and services** related to heritage area themes as a component of preservation, interpretation, heritage tourism, and economic revitalization initiatives.
- Encourage, support, and promote **cultural programming** and heritage events in local communities.
- Incorporate locally created art into interpretive presentations throughout the heritage area.

Engaging our Young People B:

- Work directly with schools on educational opportunities. Review and revise the **educational curriculum** related to local history in the national context and existing school offerings, working with local educators. Support the addition of interpretive/heritage elements to local food-to-schools initiatives. [Board: need to find out soonest "what would it take" to make this happen?]
- Collaborate with existing interpretive sites in developing and implementing **educational programming** about the history and cultural of the region that supports local curriculum goals and needs.
- **Collaborate with communities and organizations** in developing activities and programs for local youth featuring heritage area themes.
- Encourage the training of **a corps of young people to serve as tour guides** for visitors to the Valley at interpretive sites, in communities, and during events.
- Encourage and help connect young people to **volunteer and employment opportunities** at interpretive sites, visitor service businesses, and local businesses related to the heritage area brand designation noted below.
- Support the establishment of a **mentoring program** combined with scholarship and/or internship opportunities.

Economic Revitalization B:

- Support economic revitalization through **heritage tourism.** Collaborate with state and regional organizations in state and national marketing and promotion.
- Support community enhancement and revitalization through the **community interpretive presentation** and **designated visitor service communities** programs outlined above. Hospitality training, especially, has great potential for economic impact.
- Collaborate with regional organizations in creating a San Luis Valley/Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area brand designation for local products representative of local character and culture. Develop cooperative marketing for the brand designation's affiliated products.

- Work with local communities, organizations, and individuals to support and promote entrepreneurial initiatives related to **local arts and crafts**.

- Work with local communities, organizations, and individuals to support and promote entrepreneurial initiatives related to **agri-tourism and growing and processing local foods**. (Board: "food overcomes boundaries – if you can't speak the language, you can still eat the food.")

Historic Preservation B:

- Work with the three counties and local communities to undertake a **comprehensive inventory and analysis of existing conditions** of historic resources within the heritage area. Update the existing database to serve the San Luis Valley, creating programs and incentives that promote and implement historic preservation in partnership with counties and local communities and organizations. [Board: "make it our own"]

- Develop a close working relationship with Colorado Preservation, Inc., History Colorado and the National Trust for Historic Preservation as regional partners and conduits to local communities. Working with these organizations and others, become the regional historic preservation advocate in the San Luis Valley, creating programs and incentives that promote and implement historic preservation in partnership with counties and local communities and organizations. [Board specifically requested combining two points into this single one.]

Land Stewardship and Natural Resources B:

- Forge close ties with land stewardship entities. **Partner with and support stewardship and land conservation initiatives** led by these organizations.

- **Build public awareness** of stewardship and conservation issues and subjects through the interpretive and educational programs outlined above as well as through marketing of the heritage area. Enable visitors and residents to understand not only the land, but human connections to nature. Seek collaborative opportunities with eco-tourism initiatives offered by organizations, clubs, and private providers.

- Feature publicly accessible lands in the interpretive programming mentioned above. Seek opportunities for **cooperative programming**.

Outdoor Recreation B:

- **Promote recreational opportunities and events** into the interpretive programming and materials offered through the heritage area and its partners, as outlined above.

- Coordinate with federal and state agencies managing public lands and the Adams State College outdoor recreation program on recreational opportunities and programming within the heritage area. Coordinate the heritage area's programs with the U.S. Department of the Interior's Great Outdoors designation of lands in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. Serve as a supporting resource on developing opportunities, facilities, and best practices.

- Working with recreational clubs active in the San Luis Valley and other organizations, such as the Friends of the Great Sand Dunes National Park, develop a **corps of local guides** who can lead visitors on **backcountry hikes** and other outings of varying lengths and degrees of difficulty.

- Collaborate with local outfitters and hunting guides and the Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) Watchable Wildlife programs.

- Support **development of local recreational trails**, including a more extensive trail and interpretive network on the Alamosa Ranch and the implementation of the Costilla/ Conejos County trails plan currently under development.

Organization & Management B:

- Develop a lean but vibrant organization with **strong regional partnerships such that most programming can be undertaken by partners** in accordance with heritage area standards and guidelines. **Encourage that partners work collectively** as well as individually toward heritage area goals.
- Become a regional leader with strong relationships and perceived public value Valley-wide.
- Engage in a wide variety of fundraising activities using a development plan, business plan, and annual work program led by the Board of Directors. Encourage local public investment as well as donations and grants.
- Develop a strong Board-development program that includes recruitment, training, retreats, committees and other **standard practices for excellence in nonprofit administration**.
- **Encourage young leaders** drawn from each county for participation in programmatic activities.
- Sustain a staffed organization to administer a program of partner development and capacity-building that includes technical assistance and training; networking and other relationship-building among partners; Engagement of the Board of Directors in partners' ongoing work. Support partner development by asking that partners engage in heritage-area-wide committees focusing on such specific topics as interpretation and outdoor recreation. Encourage towns to engage the heritage area with committees that develop a direct relationship with the heritage area.
- **Measure and publicly report progress** toward implementation of this management plan on an annual basis.

APPENDIX C: Existing Socio-economic Conditions

Population 2
Race and Ethnicity 4
Income 6
Education 8
Employment 9
Summary 13

APPENDIX C: Existing Socio-economic Conditions

The following report was prepared by Heritage Strategies, LLC, to provide basic socio-economic background information for all management planning for the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area.

The socioeconomic environment of a given region or place describes the way in which social and economic conditions of that place combine and interact. Some factors that contribute to socioeconomic environment may be easily detected by spending time "on the ground" in a place. Others, however, are more difficult to discern through observation and are, therefore, more effectively analyzed through quantitative data.

This section presents the socioeconomic environment of the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area based on quantitative data provided by the U.S. Census Bureau and other governmental agencies. Data is presented in narrative, tabular, and graphic formats in order to present a brief but thorough account of the socioeconomic environment relevant to this management plan and to show the rich diversity of the region's social and economic landscape.

Social and economic conditions presented in this memorandum include the following factors:

- Population (Population Density, Urban and Rural Populations, Population Growth)
- Race and Ethnicity
- Income (Per Capita Income, Median Household Income, Poverty and Low-Income Populations)
- Education
- Employment (Rates of Employment, Occupation, Industry)

The purpose of the socioeconomic analysis presented in this section is to provide a snapshot of the current social and economic dynamics in the heritage area. This analysis will provide the planning team with an important context in which to consider management goals and strategies. It will assist the planning team in developing appropriate policies for the management plan and provide a baseline against which policies and strategies developed in the management planning process may be measured over time.

About the Data

One of the best resources for information about population, income, employment and other aspects of the socioeconomic environment is the U.S. Census. Every ten years, the Census Bureau conducts the Decennial Census, which surveys every household in the nation. The Census Bureau also conducts the American community Survey every three years. The American Community Survey interviews only about three million households, a fraction of the Decennial Census. The Decennial Census is useful in providing the most comprehensive data at the most detailed level, while the American Community Survey is important for providing the most recent data. Data in this section is based on both the U.S. Decennial Census (1990, 2000, 2010) and the American Community Survey (2005-2009 5-Year Estimates).

In addition to the U.S. Census, other resources have also been consulted for this section, including the State of Colorado website, which provides state-wide statistics and data related to socioeconomic conditions.

Population

Demographics encompass a study of the size, structure and distribution of a population, as well as spatial and temporal changes in it. The following analysis of population examines the size, age, and growth of the population of Colorado, generally, and the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area, specifically. The section also examines urban versus rural population dynamics.

Population Size and Age

According to the U.S. Census 2000, Colorado is ranked 22nd in the nation in terms of its population with 5,029,196 people living in its 64 counties. Between 1980 and 2010, the population of Colorado has almost doubled, growing from 2.8 million residents. The majority of that growth occurred in the 1980s and 2000s when the growth rate exceeded 13 percent. Over the last decade, population has increased 16.9 percent, making it the seventh fastest growing state behind Nevada, Idaho, Texas, North Carolina, Utah, and Arizona.

The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area, however, falls well below the average growth rate of the state, increasing less than one percent over the last decade. More than half of the population of the heritage area lies within Alamosa County, with more than 15,445 residents. Population growth within Alamosa County has risen more than three percent over the last decade, while both Costilla and Conejos County lost population. Table 1 shows the total population of the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area compared to the population of Colorado and the United States between 1980 and 2010.

Table 1: Population Change within the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area, 1980-2010

	1980	Pop Change	1990	Pop Change	2000	Pop Change	2010	Pop Change
Alamosa	11,799	3.30%	13,617	15.41%	14,966	9.91%	15,445	3.2%
Conejos	7,794	-0.66%	7,453	-4.38%	8,400	12.71%	8,256	-1.71%
Costilla	3,071	-0.65%	3,190	3.87%	3,663	14.83%	3,524	-3.79%
Sangre de Cristo NHA	22,664	1.27%	24,260	6.58%	27,029	10.24%	27,225	.73%
Colorado	2,889,964	30.9%	3,294,394	14.0%	4,301,261	30.6%	5,029,196	16.9%
United States	226,545,805	11.5%	248,709,873	9.8%	281,421,906	13.2%	308,745,538	9.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Decennial Census, CensusScope (www.censusscope.org).

The largest towns and cities in the Heritage Area based on size of population are Alamosa, Manassa, Antonito, La Jara, Sanford, San Luis, and Mosca. The City of Alamosa is by far the most populated with more than 10,000 residents. Combined with Alamosa East, these two municipalities make up more than 37 percent of the heritage area's population. Manassa is the third largest community with a little more than 1,000 residents; all others are under 1,000. Table 2 illustrates population change within the largest towns found in the Heritage Area. By comparing these numbers with population change within the counties, it is clear that the growth within Alamosa County has occurred within the city limits, whereas the rural portion of the county has lost population. Conversely, all growth within Costilla County has occurred within the rural areas. Only three communities – Alamosa, Romeo, and Sanford – have gained population over the last decade.

The U.S. Census 2000 revealed that the median age varies by almost ten years within the Heritage Area. Within Alamosa County, the median age is only 30.6, whereas in Costilla County it is 40.2 with almost 17 percent of the population over 65.

Table 2: Population Change of Cities and Towns within the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area				
	Population		Change, 2000 to 2010	
Town/City	2000	2010	Number	Percent
Alamosa	7,960	8,780	820	10.30%
Alamosa East	1,528	1,458	-70	-4.58%
Antonito	873	781	-92	-10.54%
Blanca	391	385	-6	-1.53%
Capulin	-	200	-	-
Conejos	-	58	-	-
Fort Garland	432	433	1	0.23%
Hooper	123	103	-20	-16.26%
La Jara	877	818	-59	-6.73%
Manassa	1,042	991	-51	-4.89%
Romeo	375	404	29	7.73%
San Acacio	-	40	-	-
San Luis	739	629	-110	-14.88%
Sanford	817	879	62	7.59%

"-" refers to geographies which were not recorded during the 2000 census
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year (2005-09) Estimates; Colorado Department of Local Affairs State Demography Office, December 2010.

Population Density

The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area encompasses approximately 3,563 square miles. Population density within each of the three counties is relatively low, but varied. Alamosa averages 21 people per square mile. Conejos averages six people per square mile whereas Costilla County averages only three. http://www.sangres.com/colorado.htm

Urban and Rural Populations

The U.S. Census Bureau uses the term "urban areas" to collectively refer to both *urban clusters* and *urbanized areas*. An urban cluster is a densely settled territory that has between 2,500 and 50,000 people. An urbanized area is an area consisting of a central place(s) and adjacent territory with a general population density of at least 1,000 people per square mile of land area that together has a minimum residential population of at least 50,000 people. The Census Bureau uses the term "rural area" to describe population and housing units not classified as urban. Based on this definition most of the Heritage Area is considered rural, with the only urban area being the City of Alamosa.

Race and Ethnicity

The Census Bureau collects race and Hispanic origin information following the U.S. Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) standards for collecting and tabulating data on race and ethnicity. In

October 1997, the OMB issued the current standards, which identify five race groups: white, black or African-American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. The Census Bureau also utilized a sixth category - "some other race." Respondents who reported only one race are shown in these six groups.

Table 3: Race and Ethnicity in the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area, 2000-2010										
	2000					2010				
	Alamosa	Conejos	Costilla	SdCNHA total	SdCNHA %	Alamosa	Conejos	Costilla	SdCNHA total	SdCNHA %
White non-Hispanic	8,139	3,266	1,027	**12,432**	46.0%	7,667	3,451	1,086	**12,204**	44.8%
Black or African American	82	11	10	**103**	0.4%	138	12	6	**156**	.6%
American Indian and Alaska Native	157	108	46	**311**	1.2%	134	47	29	**210**	.8%
Asian	117	6	41	**164**	0.6%	130	18	34	**182**	.7%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	15	2	6	**23**	0.1%	6	4	0	**10**	.04%
Some Other Race*	26	3	0	**29**	0.1%	33	24	12	**69**	.3%
Two or More Races	208	39	64	**311**	1.2%	227	80	30	**337**	1.2%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	*6,222*	*4,965*	*2,469*	***13,656***	*50.5%*	*7,110*	*4,620*	*2,327*	***14,057***	*51.6%*
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census.										

Individuals were first presented with the option to self-identify with more than one race in the 2000 Census, and this continued in the 2010 Census. People who identify with more than one race may choose to provide multiple races in response to the race question. The 2010 Census results provide new data on the size and makeup of the nation's multiracial population.

Respondents who reported more than one of the six race groups are included in the "two or more races" population. There are 57 possible combinations of the six race groups. The Census Bureau included the "some other race" category for responses that could not be classified in any of the other race categories on the questionnaire. In the 2000 Census, the vast majority of people who reported only as "some other race" were of Hispanic or Latino origin. Data on Hispanics or Latinos, who may be of any race, were obtained from a separate question on ethnicity.

Within the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area, approximately 52 percent of the population identifies itself as Hispanic or Latino, whereas approximately 45 percent identifies itself as White, non-Hispanic. Over the last decade, there has been a slight (one percent) increase in the Hispanic population that corresponds with the same percentage drop in the White population. All other races account for less than four percent of the population of the Heritage Area. Compared to Colorado as a whole, the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area's total Hispanic population is more than double the state average of 20.6 percent.

At the county scale, Alamosa's Hispanic or Latino population accounts for 46 percent of the total, whereas in Conejos and Costilla Counties it is 56 percent and 66 percent respectively. In the 2000 Census, approximately 30 percent of those who identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino consider themselves to be of Mexican origin, with Alamosa having the highest percentage (37 percent). Spanish/Spaniard and Spanish-American origins account for an average of more than 18 percent throughout the heritage area, with Costilla County being the highest in this category at 23 percent. The 2010 Census statistics for these categories were not yet available.

Income

Statistics related to income, such as Per Capita Income, Median Household Income, and Poverty, can serve as indicators for the overall economic health of a geographic region. The following analysis examines these three indicators and their implications for the heritage area.

Per Capita Income

Per capita personal income is a measure of the average income for every person in a community or geographic area and is calculated by dividing total personal income for an area by the population of that area. Table 4 illustrates that the per capita income for Colorado has consistently been slightly higher than that of the United States overall, both in 1999 and 2009, whereas the per capita income for the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area is significantly lower (59 percent of the state average), with Costilla County being the lowest overall. The disparity is even greater when looking at per capita income by race, which illustrates that Hispanics and Latino income is less than half of both the national and statewide averages.

Table 4: Per Capita Income of the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area 1999-2009

	Alamosa	Conejos	Costilla	SdCNHA (average)	Colorado	US
1999	15,037	12,050	10,748	13,278	24,049	21,587
2009	17,798	16,668	16,148	17,541	29,679	27,041
2009 White, not Hispanic or Latino	*22,110*	*19,512*	*18,063*	*19,895*	*34,700*	*31,599*
2009 Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	*14,051*	*14,334*	*12,003*	*13,463*	*15,122*	*15,505*

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census, 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Median Household Income

Median household income is the income level at which half of an area's households earn more than the median figure and half of the area's households earn less than the figure. Statistically, the measure of median income is different than an average (or per capita) income because an extremely high or extremely low value does not dramatically alter the median.

Similar to patterns of per capita income, median household income in Colorado has been slightly higher than that of the United States over the past two decades. However, the Heritage Area as a whole has a median household income that is slightly more than half of the state's median. Table 5 illustrates this

Table 5: Median Household Income of the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area 1999-2009						
	Alamosa	**Conejos**	**Costilla**	**SdCNHA (average)**	**Colorado**	**US**
1999	29,447	24,744	19,531	24,574	47,203	41,994
2009	32,362	33,141	23,041	29,515	56,222	51,425
2009 White, not Hispanic or Latino	*$33,301*	*$31,610*	*$23,750*	*$29,554*	*$50,546*	–
2009 Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	*$24,971*	*$21,034*	*$17,976*	*$21,327*	*$34,740*	–
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census, 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates						

Table 6: Rates of Poverty for Individuals and Families in the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area 1999-2009					
	Alamosa	**Conejos**	**Costilla**	**Colorado**	**US**
1999					
Families	15.6%	18.6%	21.3%	6.2%	12.4%
Individuals	21.3%	23%	26.8%	9.3%	9.2%
2009					
Families	18%	14.7%	17.3%	8.2%	9.9%
Percent Change	2.4%	-3.9%	-4.0%	2%	-2.5%
Individuals	27.6%	19.5%	25.2%	11.9%	13.5%
Percent Change	6.3%	-3.5%	-1.6%	2.6%	4.3%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census, 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates					

disparity. Within the heritage area itself, that Alamosa County has the highest median household income, whereas Costilla County has the lowest. As with per capita income, Hispanic and Latinos have a significantly lower median household income (almost 30 percent less) than whites.

The region also has a lower percentage of households with earned income, as compared to the state, and a higher percentage dependent on Social Security sources and public assistance. The amount of disposable income left after providing for basic living needs such as housing, food, health, transportation, and other necessities is extremely limited.

Poverty and Low-income Populations

Statistics related to poverty are often used to compare economic health among nations, states, and communities. The poverty threshold, or poverty line, is considered to be the level of income below which a person or family lacks adequate subsistence and defined as the money income level that is three times higher than a basic food budget. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the poverty threshold for a family of four in 2009 was $ 22,050 in annual income, whereas in 1999 it was $17,029. The poverty rates shown below represent the percent of the overall population that lives below the poverty threshold for that year.

Table 6 shows that between 1999 and 2000, the poverty rate for both families and individuals was much higher within the heritage area than within the state and nation as a whole. Families with a female householder and those with children go even higher. It is interesting to note that the poverty rate for both

individuals and families has grown in Alamosa County to make it the county with highest poverty rates within the heritage area, even though that county maintains the highest per capita income. This suggests that differences in income are great among county residents. It is also interesting to note that poverty rates in Conejos and Costilla Counties actually dropped slightly over that same time period. It is possible that the 2009 statistics may have been influenced by sampling variability, although the Alamosa County increases are beyond the margin of error of 3.9 percent for individuals. The Conejos and Costilla County decreases are very close to or within the margin of error, 3.3 percent and 4.8 percent respectively. http://dola.colorado.gov/dlg/demog/acs/tables/Percent%20Total%20Population%20in%20Poverty%20County.pdf

Education

Level of educational attainment can serve as an indicator for the nature and quality of a region's labor force. Often, a correlation exists between educational attainment and income within a given region.

Table 7: Educational Attainment for the Population 25 Years and Over in the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area 2000-2009

	Alamosa		Conejos		Costilla		SdCNHA		Colorado		US	
2000	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Population 25 Years and Older	8,567		4,979		2,506		16,052		2,776,632		182,211,639	
HS or Higher	7,078	83%	3,588	72%	1,708	68%	12,374	77%	105,838	87%	146,498,157	80%
BS or Higher	2,310	27%	717	14%	320	13%	3,347	21%	907,755	33%	44,459,639	24%
2009												
Population 25 Years and Older	8,572		5,026		2,378		15,976		3,155,677		197,440,772	
HS or Higher	7,178	84%	4,018	80%	1,755	74%	12,951	79%	2,804,317	89%	166,995,595	85%
BS or Higher	2,280	27%	868	17%	406	17%	3,554	20%	1,118,768	35%	54,365,177	28%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census, 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. While 2010 data exists for state and national statistics, it is not yet available at the county level

Employment

Table 7 indicates that between 2000 and 2009, the level of educational attainment in Colorado was higher than that of the United States overall. Over the same time horizon, educational attainment in both the state and the nation increased. Within the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area, Alamosa County comes close to meeting the national averages. Both Conejos and Costilla Counties are well below the state and national averages in both high school and college educational attainment, although there has been a significant rise over the last decade (8 percent and 6 percent rise respectively) in the population receiving a high school degree or higher. Less progress has been made in the population of those counties receiving a bachelor's degree or higher (3 percent and 4 percent rise respectively) and both county percentages are less than half of the state average of 35 percent.

The U.S. Census Bureau collects data regarding employment levels, occupation, and industry.

Because the most recent year for which this particular Census data is available is 2009, the statistics do not fully reflect the drastic economic changes that have resulted from the recent recession. As such, 2011 Bureau of Labor Statistics data augment the unemployment rates to provide a more current comparison for some statistics.

Employment status indicates how much of the population is employed. The civilian labor force comprises all civilians 16 years of age. Employed persons are defined as all civilians who work as paid employees, in their own business, profession, or on their own farm, or who worked 15 hours or more as unpaid workers in an enterprise operated by a member of the family. People who are not in the labor force are considered to be those who have no job and are not looking for one – such as full time students or retirees, or those who have family responsibilities that keep them from working.

Employment Status

Table 10 shows that the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area as a whole has much less of its population in the civilian and military labor forces the state and national averages. These statistics have not changed significantly over the last decade, except in Conejos County, where the percentage of the population in the labor force has grown more than 5 percent. In Costilla County, the majority of the population 16 years and older (54.4 percent) are not in the labor force. Only Alamosa County's unemployment rate is lower than the current national average of 8.8 percent.

Occupation

The U.S. Census Bureau defines occupation as the type of work a person does on the job and provides a rough indicator of the types of jobs available within the economy. Table 9 shows the types of occupations held by the employed labor force of the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area. In general, the heritage area reflects the occupational profile of Colorado and the United States as a whole, where management, professional, or related occupations, and sales and office occupations make up the greatest percent of the workforce. It is notable, however, that in Costilla County the construction, extraction, maintenance, repair, production, and transportation occupations make up a much higher percentage (6 to 7 percent) of the population's workforce than both the state and national averages. In all three counties of the heritage area, farming is approximately 3 to 4 percent higher than the state and nation as a whole.

Class of Worker

As indicated in Table 10, self-employed (10.5 percent) and government workers (26.5 percent) make up greater shares of the heritage area's employed labor force, compared with only 7.3 percent and 14 percent in Colorado. Wage and salary jobs usually providing higher wages and benefits are in short supply (62.8 percent), compared to Colorado's (78.5 percent).

Table 8: Employment Status of Population 16 years and older in the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area 2000-2009*

	Alamosa	Conejos	Costilla	Colorado	US
2000	Percent of Population				
In Labor Force	66.3%	55.1%	45.7%	70.1%	63.9%
Unemployment Rate	8.8%	6.0%	13.2%	4.3%	5.8%
Armed Forces	0%	0%	.1%	.8%	.5%
Not in Labor Force	33.7%	44.9%	54.3%	29.9%	36.1%
2009	Percent of Population				
In Labor Force	61.7%	60.2%	45.6%	70.0%	65.0%
Unemployment Rate*	8.1%	10.1%	11.4%	9.2%	8.8%
Armed Forces	0%	.6%	0%	.7%	.5%
Not in Labor Force	38.3%	39.8%	54.4%	30.0%	35.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census, 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.
*Because the most recent year for which this Census data is available is 2009, the statistics do not fully reflect the drastic economic changes that have resulted from the recent recession. As such, Feb/March 2011 Bureau of Labor Statistics data is provided here to provide the most recent unemployment rates.

Table 9: Occupation (% of Employed Population) in the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area, 2009

	Alamosa	Conejos	Costilla	Colorado	United States
Management, professional, and related	35.8%	33.6%	28.4%	38.1%	34.5%
Service	14.1%	15.3%	16.5%	16.3%	16.8%
Sales and office	29.4%	23.5%	19.2%	25.3%	25.6%
Farming, fishing, and forestry	3.6%	3.8%	4.0%	.6%	0.7%
Construction, extraction, maintenance, and repair	10%	13.1%	16.7%	10.5%	9.6%
Production, transportation, and material moving	7.1%	10.8%	15.2%	9.3%	12.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2005-2009

Table 10: Class of Worker (Civilian Population 16 years or Older) in the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area, 2009

	Alamosa	Conejos	Costilla	SdCNHA	Colorado	US
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	6,531	3,324	1,129	10,984	2,454,468	141,303,145
Private wage and salary workers	63.9%	63.7%	53.8%	62.8%	78.5%	78.6%
Government workers	28.9%	19.6%	32.6%	26.5%	14.0%	14.6%
Self-employed in own not incorporated business workers	7.1%	15.9%	13.6%	10.5%	7.3%	6.6%
Unpaid family workers	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%	0.2%	0.2%	.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census, 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. While 2010 data exists for state and national statistics, it is not yet available at the county level

Table 11: Industry (% of Employed Population) in Colorado and the U.S., 2009

Industry	Alamosa	Conejos	Costilla	SdCNHA	Colorado	United States
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	7.8	12.0	11.6	8.1	2.2	1.8
Construction	6.7	8.8	19.7	7.4	9.3	7.4
Manufacturing	5.7	2.6	6.9	4.2	7.3	11.2
Wholesale trade	1.3	1.8	.4	1.1	3.1	3.2
Retail trade	15.2	18.4	8.3	13.3	11.4	11.5
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	3.9	3.3	5.8	3.3	4.8	5.1
Information	2.5	1.5	.7	1.7	3.5	2.4
Finance and insurance, and real estate	3.0	4.0	2.9	1.7	7.7	7.1
Professional, scientific, and management	5.9	5.0	1.4	4.4	12.8	10.3
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	33.5	27.2	21.6	26.1	18.4	21.5
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation, and food services	4.9	4.5	11.1	4.7	10.0	8.8
Other services, except public administration	3.8	6.5	4.3	4.0	5.0	4.8
Public administration	5.8	4.3	5.3	4.6	4.5	4.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2005-2009.

Industries

Table 11 shows the types of industries in which the employed labor force of the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area is involved, as it compares to the profile of Colorado and the nation as a whole. The U.S. Census Bureau defines industry as being the kind of business conducted by a person's employing organization. The largest industry within the heritage area as a whole, in terms of percent of population employed, is the educational services, health care and social assistance industry which employs 26 percent of the work force. Retail trade and agriculture are the second and third largest industries with 13.3 percent and 8.1 percent of the employed population, respectively. Together, these three industries account for nearly half (47.5 percent) of the employed work force in the heritage area. In Costilla County, the arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services industry employs a substantial portion (11.1 percent) of the population, and is almost equal with the county's agriculture industry.

Employers within the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area

When considering where income is being generated within the heritage area it is important to also consider the types of business establishments that employ the workers. As noted in Table 10, almost 90 percent of the employed workforce is wage and salary employees or government workers. Within the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage area, the largest employers are found within the City of Alamosa, with the San Luis Valley Medical Center being the largest (see Table 12).

Nonemployers, or persons in business for themselves only with no paid employees, make up slightly more than 10 percent of workers within the heritage area. In some cases, this may be the main source of employment. For persons who hold other jobs, non employer activities may be performed on a part-time basis, such as cosmetic sales, carpentry, or accounting.

The 2007 Economic Census data does not provide non-employer income for all industries. However, research conducted on behalf of the 2007 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy noted several key non-employer income sources within the greater San Luis Valley that were documented in 1999. These included construction contractor specialties; jewelry wholesaling; independent truckers; real estate

Table 12: Top Employers within the Heritage Area, 2011

Major Employers	Location	Number Employed
San Luis Valley Medical Center	Alamosa	530
Adams State College	Alamosa	325
Valley-Wide Health Systems, Inc.	Alamosa	303
Rakhra Mushroom Farm Corp.	Alamosa	300
City Market	Alamosa	135
Conejos County Hospital	La Jara	120
Monte Vista Coop	Monte Vista	100

Source: Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, 2011.
http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite?blobcol=urldata&blobheader=application%2Fpdf&blobheadername1=Content-Disposition&blobheadername2=MDT-Type&blobheadervalue1=inline%3B+filename%3D234%2F544%2FED+Tour+-+Region+8.pdf&blobheadervalue2=abinary%3B+charset%3DUTF-8&blobkey=id&blobtable=MungoBlobs&blobwhere=1251692264576&ssbinary=true

agents; professional & technical businesses; health care professionals; independent artists; auto and other repair services; and beauty shops. http://www.slvdrg.org/ceds/CEDS2007/D.%202007%20Labor,%20Employment, %20and%20Wages.pdf

The 2007 Economic Census data indicates that (for the industries reported), nonemployer receipts generated $28.7 million in revenue for the heritage area, with retail trade and other services being the highest.

Summary

The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area has a population of approximately 27,225 people, and has grown less than one percent over the past decade. While much of the population growth over the last decade has occurred within Alamosa's city limits, the rest has occurred primarily in unincorporated areas. The heritage area, which comprises more than 3,245 square miles, is predominantly rural, with Alamosa and Alamosa East serving as home to more than 37 percent of the population. Another 21 percent of the heritage area lives in small communities of less than 1,000 people. With a few exceptions, these small communities are declining in population. The average population density of the heritage area is 8 people per square mile, but without factoring in the City of Alamosa, the population density of the rest of the heritage area is approximately half that.

The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area is an economically disadvantaged region. As part of the greater San Luis Valley region, it consistently ranks lowest in state income. The average per capita income in 2009 (latest available) was $17,541, which is more than 40 percent lower than the U.S. average. All counties in the region had per capita income levels below both the Colorado and U.S. average. Incomes among the Hispanic and Latino populations, which comprise 52 percent of the population, are even lower. The heritage area's median household income of $29,515 is also more than 40 percent less than the U.S. average. Because of these lower incomes, poverty rates for both families and individuals within the heritage area are approximately twice the national average.

The heritage area's population (over the age of 25) is also less educated than the state and nation as a whole. Only 79 percent of the population has completed high school, which is 10 percent less than the state population and 6 percent less than the national population. This disparity among the population receiving a college degree (20 percent) is even greater, as this is 15 percent and 8 percent less than the state and national population, respectively. Overall, however, the level of education has been on the rise, reflecting the national trend.

The heritage area has suffered job losses as a result of the recent recession, but the unemployment rate has actually decreased slightly over the last decade. Top industry sectors for jobs in the heritage area are educational, health care, social services, retail trade, and agriculture. The San Luis Valley Regional Medical Center, a full service acute-care hospital and specialty physician clinic, is the largest employer in the heritage area with more than 500 employees. The top five employers are all located in Alamosa.

Table 13: Non Employer Statistics, 2007

		Alamosa		Conejos		Costilla		SdCNHA	
2007 NAICS code	**Industry description**	# of Non Employer Est.	Receipts ($1,000)	# of Non Employer Est.	Receipts ($1,000)	# of Non Employer Est.	Receipts ($1,000)	# of Non Employer Est.	Receipts ($1,000)
44-45	Retail trade	106	2,710	69	1,850	33	2,178	208	6,738
51	Information	11	150	N	N	D	D	-	-
53	Real estate and rental and leasing	91	4,573	15	411	N	N	-	-
54	Professional, scientific, and technical services	116	2,270	46	519	32	387	194	3,176
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Mgmt	86	891	49	513	10	116	145	1,520
61	Educational services	49	348	N	N	24	59	-	-
62	Health care and social assistance	109	2,314	39	320	13	160	161	2,794
71	Arts, entertainment, and recreation	47	3,165	N	N	D	D	-	-
72	Accommodation and food services	21	550	11	378	12	463	44	1,391
81	Other services (except public administration)	180	4,763	108	2,723	36	627	324	8,113

Source: 2007 Economic Census
D: Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual companies; data are included in higher level totals.
N: Not available or not comparable.

APPENDIX D: Existing Conditions – Tourism 2
National Trends in Heritage Tourism 2
Tourism in the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area 3
Visitor Profile 3
Attractions 3
Visitor Centers 5
Tourism Opportunities 5
Tourism Challenges 6
Tourism Marketing 6
Branding 8
Proposed Sangre de Cristo Heritage Centers 9
Sangre de Cristo Heritage Center/San Luis Cultural Center 9
Gateway Heritage Center 9
Antonito Depot 9
Figure 1: Other Destinations Visited by Great Sand Dunes Visitors 4

APPENDIX D: Existing Conditions – Tourism

The following report was prepared by Amy Jordan Webb of the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Heritage Tourism Program, experts in the enhancement and management of small downtowns and commercial areas, to report on existing conditions, issues, and community interests in tourism in the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area. This investigation was completed early in the management planning process, in June 2011, and has provided background for the planning for heritage tourism, interpretation, and historic preservation described in the management plan.

National Trends in Heritage Tourism

In 2009, travel and tourism directly contributed $704.4 billion to the U.S. economy. Travel and tourism is one of America's largest employers, directly employing more than 7.4 million people and creating a payroll income of $186.3 billion, and $113 billion in tax revenues for federal, state and local governments. (*Source: U. S. Travel Association, 2010)*

In addition to creating new jobs, new business and higher property values, well-managed tourism improves the quality of life and builds community pride. According to a 2009 national research study on U.S. Cultural and Heritage Travel by Mandela Research, 78 percent of all U.S. leisure travelers participate in cultural and/or heritage activities while traveling translating to 118.3 million adults each year. Cultural and heritage visitors spend, on average, $994 per trip compared to $611 for all U.S. travelers. *(Source: Cultural & Heritage Traveler Study, Mandela Research, LLC)* Perhaps the biggest benefits of cultural heritage tourism, though, are diversification of local economies and preservation of a community's unique character.

The Cultural & Heritage Traveler Study also identified activities of interest to cultural and heritage travelers. This study reconfirmed the findings of earlier national studies for this market segment, emphasizing that cultural heritage travelers are seeking a well-rounded visitor experience offering a variety of options and opportunities. Specifically, the study found that among cultural heritage travelers:

- 40% experienced local cuisine
- 39% visited historic sites
- 39% explored small towns
- 38% visited state/national parks
- 34% took a self-guided walking tour
- 33% visited historic buildings
- 32% shopped for local arts and crafts
- 31% visited history museums/centers
- 28% visited arts museums/galleries
- 25% visited natural history museums/centers

The National Trust for Historic Preservation defines cultural heritage tourism as *"traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present."* The National Trust's Heritage Tourism Program has also developed five guiding principles for successful and sustainable cultural heritage tourism programs, including efforts such as National Heritage Areas. These principles include:

- Collaborate. The value of the collective National Heritage Area is greater than the sum of its parts. By working together in partnership towards shared goals that benefit everyone, much more can be accomplished than by working alone.

- Make Sites and Programs Come Alive. Cultural heritage travelers have higher expectations, and it is vital that the visitor experiences offered to these travelers are exciting and engaging so they stay longer, plan return visits, and encourage others to visit the area.

- Focus on Authenticity and Quality. Cultural heritage travelers have higher expectations when they travel, and they are looking for high quality, authentic experiences that reflect the unique heritage of the region.

- Find the Fit Between the Community and Tourism. A good cultural heritage tourism effort makes the destination a better place to live as well as a better place to visit.

- Preserve and Protect Resources. The natural, historic and cultural resources that led to the designation of this region as the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area are irreplaceable treasures. If lost, they can never be replaced. Preservation and conservation of valued historic, cultural and natural resources should be a core ethic for the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area.

Tourism in the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area

The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area includes three counties (Alamosa, Conejos and Costilla) in the San Luis Valley in southern Colorado. The majority of the visitor services for the region (lodging, restaurants and retail) are clustered in Alamosa. While this creates opportunities for hub-and-spoke experiences throughout the San Luis Valley using Alamosa as a base, it also means that Alamosa captures the lion's share of the economic impact of tourism for the region.

Visitor Profile

According to the Alamosa Convention and Visitors Bureau, the top five states of origination for travel to the San Luis Valley in 2010 were (in order of popularity): Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas. In 2010, the Colorado Welcome Center had visitors from 44 different countries, and the top five countries of origin were Germany, England, Canada, France and Switzerland.

Great Sand Dunes completed their most recent visitor study in 2003 (Figure 1). This study identified the top U.S. states of origin as Colorado (38%), Texas (13%), California (5%) and New Mexico (4%). The Great Sand Dunes Visitor Study found that 4 percent of their visitors in 2002 were international, with Germany, Holland and England being the most popular states of origin.

As part of the Great Sand Dunes Visitor Study, visitors were asked to identify other locations visited as part of their trip. This information indicates that the vast majority of visitors are traveling to other National Parks. While the other destinations visited do not specify the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area (it was not yet in existence in 2002), the information about cross-over visitation to other attractions within the Sangre de Cristo NHA will provide good baseline data to measure the impact of the National Heritage Area over time.

Attractions

The biggest tourism draw in the region is Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve. In addition to other popular public lands, another draw is the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad which travels between Chama, New Mexico and Antonito, Colorado. As the Cumbres & Toltec depot is located a half mile south of Antonito, Antonito's downtown has not benefitted from the scenic railroad passengers to the same extent that Chama's downtown has.

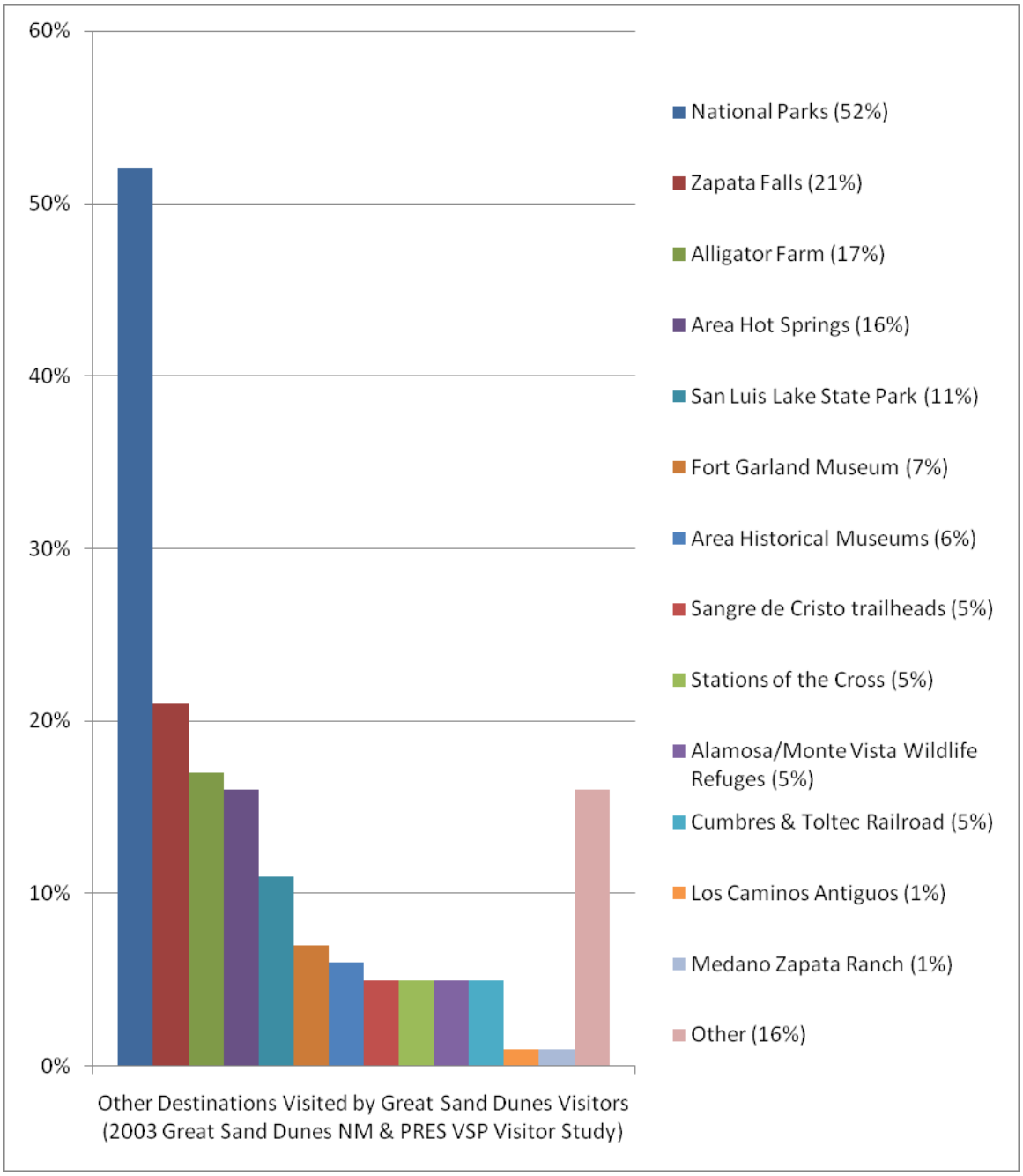

Figure 1: Other Destinations Visited by Great Sand Dunes Visitors

Table 1: Annual Visitation at Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area Attractions		
Attraction	**Location**	**Annual Visitation**
Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve	Mosca	270,000
Cumbres & Toltec Railroad	Antonito	38,000
Colorado Welcome Center	Alamosa	37,500
Rio Grande Railroad	Alamosa	25,000
Monte Vista Wildlife Refuge	Monte Vista	22,000
Fort Garland Museum	Fort Garland	20,000
Pioneer Days (event)	Manassa	10,000
Santana Festival (event)	San Luis	2,000
San Luis Valley Museum	Alamosa	2,000
Luther Bean Museum	Alamosa	2,000
Jack Dempsey Museum	Manassa	1,340
Pike Stockade	Sanford	<500

Visitor Centers

The primary welcome center for the region is the Colorado Welcome Center located in a historic depot in downtown Alamosa. The Colorado Welcome Center has 27 volunteers who help staff the center. The Entrada Visitor Center in Fort Garland is open from Memorial Day to Labor Day, seven days a week from 10-4. The center, which opened in 2004, is staffed by volunteers. San Luis also has a storefront visitor center on the main road through town which is staffed seasonally by volunteers.

Table 2: Distance to Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area from Metropolitan Areas		
City	**Population**	**Travel Time to Sangre de Cristo NHA**
Denver, CO	600,100	3 hours 30 minutes
Albuquerque, NM	528,497	3 hours 45 minutes
Colorado Springs, CO	399,827	2 hours 15 minutes

Tourism Opportunities

- Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve is included within the boundaries of the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area. This popular destination attracts an estimated 270,000 visitors annually, and there may be opportunities to encourage those travelers to extend their stay to experience the heritage area as well.
- Another major tourism attraction in the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area is the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad. The Cumbres & Toltec travels between Chama, New Mexico and Antonito, Colorado and carries and estimated 38,000 passengers each year.
- The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area also has undeveloped tourism development opportunities in the areas of agritourism and religious tourism.
- The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area is within driving distance of several metropolitan areas (Table 2)
- Travelers pass through the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area on their way to other major destinations. For example, one of the fastest routes from the Denver area to Taos, NM passes through Fort Garland and San Luis. One of the routes from the Denver area to Mesa Verde National Park passes through Fort Garland and Alamosa.

Tourism Challenges

- The National Heritage Area encompasses a large geographic area with considerable distance between attractions and even between communities. This necessitates factoring in additional time just to get from place to place within the region.
- While the region has a rich heritage, many of the region's important stories are not easy for travelers to discern as they pass through.
- There are a number of historic churches in the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area. Some of these sacred treasures are off on unmarked side roads, and many are not staffed or open on a regular basis. While there are efforts to create opportunities for groups to experience these sacred sites, they are less accessible for independent travelers (who make up the bulk of the travel market). Actively promoting these churches could potentially put them at risk for vandalism.
- Conejos and Costilla counties are two of the poorest counties in Colorado, and economic resources are scarce in this region overall.
- There is a history of competition rather than collaboration between the three counties in the National Heritage Area. Stakeholders have indicated that there is a sense that Alamosa County has greater resources and tends to benefit the most when new regional initiatives are launched.

Tourism Marketing

The largest tourism organization in the San Luis Valley is the Alamosa Convention and Visitors Bureau. The Alamosa CVB has three staff members, an annual budget of $350,000 and an active corps of volunteers. Funding for the CVB comes from a 1.9 percent lodging tax and a 4 percent market district tax on lodging in Alamosa County. The Alamosa CVB maintains a website at www.alamosa.org, manages social media for Alamosa (Facebook, Flickr and Twitter) and produces an annual four-color *Alamosa Visitor Guide.* 50,000 copies of the *Visitor Guide* were printed and distributed in 2010. The 2011 Alamosa Visitor Guide includes a two-page four-color spread devoted to the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area. The *Visitor Guide* includes attractions throughout the entire San Luis Valley and lodging facilities in Alamosa County, promoting Alamosa as an overnight "hub" for a variety of experiences throughout the entire San Luis Valley. One of the three Alamosa CVB staff manages the Colorado Welcome Center. The Welcome Center is housed in Alamosa's historic depot building, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Alamosa County Events & Facilities Marketing District has an Event Grant Program that provides funds for events that demonstrate that they will help fill hotel rooms and have an economic impact on Alamosa County.

Conejos and Costilla Counties also have a county lodging tax, though revenues generate more modest income than the lodging tax in Alamosa County. Conejos County has expanded their lodging tax board into a tourism council. The Conejos County Tourism Council uses their lodging tax for targeted advertising, a website (www.conejosvacation.com), a Conejos County tourism brochure as well as other projects such as a self-guided tour of Conejos County murals and small grants. The Conejos County Tourism Council has a part-time contract staff person who manages the Tourism Council and oversees the development of an annual marketing plan. Many of Conejos County's tourism marketing efforts focus on the county as a destination for outdoor recreation in the San Juan wilderness, including the Gold Medal waters for catch and release fishing as well as access to several of Colorado's "fourteeners," or mountain peaks of 14,000 feet or higher, for hiking enthusiasts. Costilla County also generates several thousand dollars in lodging taxes each year. Lodging tax funds are given out as mini grants to support tourism related projects such as the Entrada Visitor Center or one of the festivals in Costilla County.

A regional tourism marketing organization, the San Luis Valley Tourism Association (SLVTA), was formed in 2009 to help promote tourism for the entire San Luis Valley. SLVTA is a membership based organization that also offers members fee-based marketing opportunities. The organization serves all six counties in the San Luis Valley, and the organization produced a San Luis Valley heritage brochure, a region-wide visitor guide, has sponsored an annual tourism conference for the past two years, and manages a website at www.slvheritage.org that includes attractions listed in the Colorado Heritage Tourism Database. Due to the cost of producing the visitor guide and concern about

duplicating other visitor guides such as the Alamosa visitor guide, SLVTA may not produce another visitor guide in 2011.

While SLVTA is only a few years old, this organization is the most recent iteration of a regional tourism organization for the San Luis Valley. In the 1990s [?] a six-county organization called Valley Six was created. The six counties pooled lodging tax revenues and the organization provided advertising, printed collateral materials and other marketing for the six counties. Some years later, Valley Six was disbanded when the San Luis Valley Information Center was created by government entities in the valley. These government entities, including the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management and others, had visitor information to share but didn't have a place to share it. Using funds from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, an information center was built in Monte Vista. While the San Luis Valley Information Center did get some lodging tax revenues from the six counties, many of the counties began to keep a greater share of the lodging tax to market each county. In the early 2000s as it became increasingly difficult to raise the operating funds required to keep the San Luis Valley Information Center open, the center was closed.

A few years after the San Luis Valley Information Center was disbanded, the San Luis Valley was selected by the Colorado Tourism Office as a pilot heritage tourism region for a three-year initiative (2007-2009). The pilot region was originally led by the director of the Alamosa CVB. Selection as a pilot region included funding to create a heritage brochure, a heritage tourism website for the San Luis Valley, themed itineraries, and funds to add heritage sites in the San Luis Valley to a statewide online Colorado Heritage Tourism Database. Sites in the database feed the San Luis Valley website (www.slvheritage.com) as well as the state's tourism website at www.colorado.com. In 2009, the then director of the Alamosa CVB and lead contact for the San Luis Valley heritage tourism pilot region left the Alamosa CVB and created the San Luis Valley Tourism Association.

The Colorado Heritage Tourism Database currently includes detailed information for 61 sites in the six-county San Luis Valley, 29 of which are in the three-county Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area (see Table 3). The database also includes detailed information about the Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge in Rio Grande County.

Table 3: Heritage Sites in the Colorado Heritage Tourism Database in Alamosa, Conejos and Costilla Counties as of June 2011

Attraction	County
Alamosa National Wildlife Refuge	Alamosa
Blanca Wildlife Habitat Area (Blanca Wetlands)	Alamosa
Denver & Rio Grande Railroad Locomotive No. 169	Alamosa
Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve	Alamosa
Historic Downtown Alamosa Walking Tour	Alamosa
La Sierra Blanca	Alamosa
Luther Bean Museum	Alamosa
Montville Nature Trail and Mosca Pass Trail	Alamosa
Rio Grande Scenic Railroad	Alamosa
San Luis Lakes State Park	Alamosa
San Luis Valley Museum	Alamosa
Zapata Falls Recreation Area	Alamosa
Conejos Plaza	Conejos
Cumbres Pass	Conejos
Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad	Conejos

Table 3: Heritage Sites in the Colorado Heritage Tourism Database in Alamosa, Conejos and Costilla Counties as of June 2011	
Denver & Rio Grande Railroad Antonito Depot	Conejos
Downtown Antonito: Architecture and Murals	Conejos
Jack Dempsey Museum and Park	Conejos
Our Lady of Guadalupe Church	Conejos
Pike's Stockade	Conejos
Rio Grande: Vargas Crossing	Conejos
SPMDTU: Sociedad Proteccion Mutua De Trabajadores Unidos	Conejos
Fort Garland Museum	Costilla
La Vega	Costilla
Los Caminos Antiguos Scenic & Historic Byway	Costilla
San Acacio Mission Church	Costilla
San Luis Museum and Cultural Center	Costilla
San Luis People's Ditch	Costilla
Shrine of the Stations of the Cross	Costilla

A grant proposal was submitted to the National Scenic Byways Program by the Colorado Tourism Office in the summer of 2011 that, if funded, would provide funds to add any missing heritage sites along the Los Caminos Antiguos Byway to the Colorado Heritage Tourism Database. The grant would also provide funding to create an Online Wayfinding Tool to let travelers create customized maps and travel itineraries for each of Colorado's 25 byways including Los Caminos Antiguos. It is anticipated that National Scenic Byway grant announcements will be made in late October 2011.

Branding

There are several overlapping tourism brands in this region. The six-county region has an identity as the San Luis Valley, though some local stakeholders argue that Great Sand Dunes or Alamosa may be better known than the San Luis Valley. For example, the 2011 *Official Visitors Guide for Alamosa* uses the tag line "Great Sand Dunes Country" as a hook at the top of the cover page along with "Discover Alamosa." Within this six county region is the three-county area including Alamosa, Conejos and Costilla counties which includes the Los Caminos Antiguos byway corridor as well as the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area. The Los Caminos Antiguos Byway (translated as "the ancient roads" to reflect the northernmost end of the Spanish territorial expansion in the 16th century) has existed for a number of years as part of Colorado's Scenic and Historic Byways program through the Colorado Department of Transportation. The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area was officially designated in 2009, making it the most recent designation for this three-county region. Los Caminos Antiguos currently exists within the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area's organizational structure with a separate board, an arrangement which should allow for good coordination of efforts in the future.

As tourism marketing efforts go forward, it will be important to consider these different existing and overlapping identities for this region. This is important both in terms of avoiding duplication of efforts in creating marketing materials, and also in terms of avoiding confusion on the part of visitors about the identity for this region. Local stakeholders have already cited overlap in the visitor guides produced by the Alamosa CVB and the San Luis Valley Tourism Association as one example, and the similar brochures produced by the Los Caminos Antiguos Byway and the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area as another example of overlap and duplication.

Proposed Sangre de Cristo Heritage Centers

In addition to the existing Colorado Welcome Center in Alamosa, the visitor center at Great Sand Dunes and volunteer-run visitor centers in Fort Garland and San Luis, plans have been discussed for more substantial welcome centers as part of the National Heritage Area effort. The National Park Service led Community Scoping Meetings held in 2010 indicated a strong interest across the heritage area in creating a network of heritage centers using existing museums, welcome centers and public buildings as well as developing new dedicated heritage centers. Follow up interviews in 2011 indicated progress in developing several new heritage centers, including:

Sangre de Cristo Heritage Center/San Luis Cultural Center

In Costilla County, the all volunteer Costilla County Economic Development Council is heading up efforts to restore the 1930s San Luis Cultural Center in downtown San Luis. The vision is to restore this Works Progress Administration building as the Sangre de Cristo Heritage Center to serve all three counties. The 20,000 square foot building originally served as a high school, and has additions from the 1950s as well as solar additions from the 1980s. 15,000 square feet of the building houses a museum (now closed) as well as a small auditorium space and two good sized meeting rooms, one equipped with a private courtyard and a kitchen. Exhibits in the now-closed museum include a "morada room" with a room set up to feel like the interior of a morada, a diorama to depict San Luis' early days, various historical exhibits and other collections.

Funding for the first phase of exterior renovation for the building has been secured from a Colorado State Historic Fund grant, funds from the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area and other sources. A second grant to the Colorado State Historic Fund is pending to help cover the cost of repairing and replacing internal systems such as heating, electric, lighting, floors, plumbing and an elevator. The project still needs a business plan to look at operations and sustainability for the facility once the renovation work is complete, as well as funding for an additional phase of repairs for the courtyard area.

The Costilla County Economic Development Council (CCEDC) has also developed plans to create a Sacred Circle tour, featuring a guided tour of 8 mission churches in Costilla County. While original plans to work with San Luis Valley Transit to secure small 15 passenger vans for the Sacred Circle tours fell through, Costilla County Economic Development has offered step-on guide services for several tour groups in recent years. Discussions about the viability of a small convention center for 100-200 people have also been explored, with an emphasis on religious retreats to tie into the Stations of the Cross in San Luis. There are several annual events held in Costilla County, the biggest of which is Santana in July, which attracts an estimated 2,000 people. This event serves as a homecoming for people with family ties to San Luis. While this event has been successful, it is often not organized until the last minute and the capacity to plan and implement events in the county is currently very limited.

There are other Costilla County events which could be expanded to maximize their tourism potential, including the Pastores and Posades that take place around the Christmas holidays, the Harvest Festival that used to be run by the Rio Culebra Agricultural Collaborative and is now defunct, an expanded version of Studio Tours which currently feature artists in southern Costilla County, bringing back the Oktoberfest which used to be held in the county, and considering new events such as the "Sabor de San Luis" with a focus on local restaurants or a religious themed event around Lent.

Gateway Heritage Center

In addition to the proposed Sangre de Cristo Heritage Center in San Luis, local stakeholders are exploring possibilities to create a Gateway Heritage Center in Conejos County. Several sites in Conejos County are currently being considered as potential locations for this center. The Center would include an archive for artifacts, a large assembly room for political speakers, visitor orientation, and possibly another compatible business use.

Antonito Depot

Local stakeholders are also exploring opportunities to restore and reuse the historic Antonito Depot in downtown Antonito. The Depot has been listed on Colorado Preservation Inc.'s list of Colorado's Most Endangered Places and

has been empty for many years. A grant has been secured from the Colorado State Historic Fund to complete an interior restoration, and an additional grant from the Colorado Department of Transportation has been secured to restore the exterior. As an additional challenge, the depot is located in the middle of several active rail lines, creating access challenges that could impact proposed uses.

No formal operations or business plan has been developed for the adaptive reuse of the Antonito Depot, though possible uses under discussion have included a heritage center for the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area or an auxiliary depot for the Cumbres & Toltec and the Rio Grande Scenic Railroads. Although the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad terminates just a half mile south, extending the narrow gauge tracks to the Antonito Depot would entail expensive compliance measures because the narrow gauge rail line would then be connected to the standard gauge rail line.

APPENDIX E: Existing Conditions –Downtown San Luis, Antonito and Alamosa 2
The Role of Downtowns in the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area 2
Downtown San Luis 2
Background 2
Opportunities and Assets 3
Challenges 4
Town of San Luis Demographic Summary 5
Downtown Antonito 5
Background 5
Opportunities and Assets 6
Challenges 6
Town of Antonito Demographic Summary 7
Alamosa 8
Background 8
Opportunities and Assets 8
Challenges 9
Town of Alamosa Demographic Summary 9
Business & Property Owner Outreach: Strengths, Weaknesses, and Areas for Downtown Improvement 10
Existing Characteristics, Downtown San Luis, Antonito, and Alamosa 13
Sample Organizational and Financing Strategies for Downtown San Luis, Antonito, and Alamosa 15

APPENDIX E: Existing Conditions – Downtown San Luis, Antonito and Alamosa

The following report was prepared by the consulting firm P.U.M.A., experts in the enhancement and management of small downtowns and commercial areas, to report on existing conditions, issues, and community interests in the downtown areas of the three county seats serving the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area. This investigation was completed early in the management planning process, in June 2011, and has provided background for the planning for community commercial areas, historic preservation, and heritage tourism described in the management plan.

The Role of Downtowns in the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area

The three county-seat downtowns located in the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area (SdCNHA) – San Luis, Antonito and Alamosa – will all play a critical role in providing both the organizational and economic framework to support the National Heritage Area. Conversely, the SdCNHA is poised to provide a boost to the long-term economic sustainability of the three downtowns. This unique relationship requires a reciprocal collaboration for each to achieve long-term economic health, growth and sustainability.

Each of the downtowns provides a unique and complementary contribution to the SdCNHA: San Luis has a rich agricultural, communal, and spiritual history; Antonito has access to historic train journeys, outstanding recreational opportunities and cultural diversity; and Alamosa's history and beauty are augmented by the town's access to Valley-wide economic resources, commerce, lodging and amenities.

In order to fully realize the enhanced visitation and related economic opportunities that could be catalyzed by the SdCNHA, each downtown has an opportunity to leverage those benefits by creating – or building upon existing – strong organizational entities that will provide a way for the downtowns to elevate themselves, each other and the SdCNHA as a whole. It is recommended that each downtown use this opportunity to become organized in a way that will provide long-term, tangible benefits.

The following narrative outlines the existing context of each of the downtowns, their opportunities and challenges and a demographic summary and provides summary tables outlining major points of group discussions held with business and property owners, residents and stakeholders in each of the three downtowns.

Downtown San Luis

Background

San Luis, the county seat of Costilla County, is located on Colorado Highway 159 in the San Luis Valley of southern Colorado, about 35 miles southeast of Alamosa. Downtown San Luis is situated in a picturesque setting with the majority of the commercial buildings located along the traditional Main Street that is approximately four blocks long. The town of San Luis has approximately 650 residents and Costilla County has approximately 6,500

residents. San Luis was part of the Sangre de Cristo Land Grant, and was founded in 1851. It is the oldest continuously occupied town in Colorado.

San Luis sits at the foot of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains on the east. Just to the south and east of San Pedro Mesa are Sanchez Reservoir and Sanchez State Wildlife Area. Just to the west are the San Luis Hills with the San Juan Mountains acting as a backdrop. To the north is Mount Blanca, one of Colorado's "fourteeners" (mountains that are 14,000 feet or more).

Opportunities and Assets

San Luis is rich in historical assets and the town itself is a historic district listed in the National Register. Many buildings in downtown San Luis have been built in the Spanish Colonial architectural style or in other compatible historic styles, giving San Luis a distinct look with enduring appeal. San Luis claims many "oldest" distinctions in Colorado including the oldest continually operated mercantile, oldest adobe courthouse, and oldest adjudicated water right.

Costilla County, like the rest of the San Luis Valley, is primarily agricultural. The agricultural heritage runs so deep that some members of families owning "Centennial" farms (where families have farmed the same land for more than 100 years) mentioned that different personality types in the Valley can often be traced to the soil type that they farm.

La Vega is a unique agricultural and community asset in San Luis. It is a collectively owned agricultural commons that dates back to the original land grant from the Spanish viceroy. La Vega is served by one of the *acequias* (collectively owned agricultural ditches) that are found in the San Luis Valley and a few other locations in Colorado and New Mexico. Both La Vega and several acequias may be viewed from the downtown, and a walking path begins just outside of town that enables pedestrian access to this beautiful working landscape.

There is a strong movement to market local food that is grown and raised in the Valley that has potential to become a greater economic force in San Luis. Locals and tourists alike can provide markets for locally produced food. The Rio Culebra Cooperative (see more at http://www.rioculebra.com), located in downtown San Luis, brings together Costilla County farmers and ranchers with a common vision to revitalize community agriculture by integrating old and new practices, sustainable economics, youth education and use of renewable fuels. Through building upon the efforts of the Rio Culebra Cooperative, San Luis can provide demonstration gardens, expand on its summer farmers market and provide locally produced food throughout the year such as dried beans and grains as well as honey and frozen meat. As the local food movement gains momentum throughout the country, San Luis is well positioned as a leading edge example of how local food can enhance local economies.

San Luis is also home to several cultural assets. Sitting just above the town of San Luis, along a steep trail to the San Pedro Mesa overlooking the town, is a beautiful sculptural representation of the Catholic tradition of the Stations of the Cross, twelve sculptures by internationally acclaimed local artist Huberto Maestas depicting the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The trail, approximately one-third of a mile long starting from the upper end of Main Street, leads visitors from sculpture to sculpture. Completing the shrine at the top of the trail is an adobe church, La Capilla de Todos los Santos. It was hand built by the community and dedicated in 1997. The church and another small structure, designed as a meeting center or retreat, provide exquisite views of the town and the rest of the Valley below. Thousands of people visit this shrine annually and it appeals to locals and tourists alike.

The physical connection to the shrine offers downtown San Luis tremendous potential to encourage people to spend more time and explore the town and Main Street. Just across from the entrance is a small visitor center operated by the town, open when the adjacent town office is open and simply stocked with brochures from time to time. With more attention, this visitor center has great potential for guiding visitors to other points of interest in the town and across the Valley.

The Sacred Circle Mission Churches are a collection of nine late-nineteenth- and early twentieth-century churches located throughout Costilla County, detailed in a colorful brochure by the Costilla County Economic Development Council (CCEDC) and created in cooperation with the local parish. The EDC is working to create tours packaged around these assets, with the town of San Luis uniquely positioned as the portal to this unique religious destination.

Downtown is home to a civic complex to be known as the Sangre de Cristo Heritage Center, originally constructed in the 1930's as a school. The complex, renovated in the 1980's with an early solar technology, once housed a local history museum among other uses. The CCEDC has been awarded a State Historic Grant in the amount of $450,000 to begin Phase I of a planned three-phase rehabilitation designed around the structure's original character. Several nonprofit and civic organizations are currently housed in the heritage center including the Land Rights Council, Rio Culebra Agricultural Cooperative, the Acequia Association, and CCEDC. There is a courtyard area that can host events, farmers markets and other community gatherings that appeal to local residents and tourists alike.

When finalized the Heritage Center renovation will be a tremendous asset for the town of San Luis to showcase its unique heritage while providing information, maps and tours of the eastern part of the National Heritage Area.

Challenges

San Luis is the smallest of the three county seats in the National Heritage Area. It is also relatively geographically isolated, as Highway 159 is not a major through-route in the Valley. There is limited directional signage to alert travelers entering the Valley that San Luis exists, much less indicating the tremendous religious, artistic and cultural assets the town has to offer. The R&R Mercantile – which has been in continuous operation in San Luis since 1857 – is slated to close at the end of the summer tourist season (2011). Its closure will have a significant impact not only on attracting heritage tourists but also on the town's economic vitality, as it is the only full service store of its kind in San Luis.

Due to its relatively limited overall commercial activity, the economic well-being of San Luis is very vulnerable. There are several commercial vacancies in town. Just one or two additional stores or restaurants closing would have a significant, detrimental impact on the town. A Family Dollar store has recently opened just north of the center of downtown, and will likely prove to be an important contributor to the town's economy both through sales tax generation and by keeping local dollars in San Luis.

Currently, visitors to the Stations of the Cross do not spend much additional time in the town. The downtown must position itself to be better equipped to attract and serve visitors through additional shops, restaurants, hotel rooms and information about local culture, heritage and recreational opportunities. Some challenges to the visitor experience that discourage visitors to stop in San Luis or stay longer include the following:

- Difficulty finding available parking, especially for large vehicles;
- Intermittent and poorly coordinated business hours that leave no dining options at some times of the week and day; and
- Inconsistent availability of information at the existing Visitor Center about what is available in San Luis.

Land in Costilla County is almost entirely privately owned, which is an asset in that it generates property taxes and other revenues for the county. However, there is no major recreational draw in Costilla as on the public lands in many other areas of the Valley. Thus, San Luis must carefully preserve, enhance and market its unique cultural and heritage qualities to attract visitors.

Town of San Luis Demographic Summary[1]
2009 Estimates:

- Population: 619
- Males: 300
- Females: 319
- Median Resident Age: 42.6 Years
- Estimated Median Household Income: $18,200
- Estimated Median Home Value: $97,820
- Population Density: 1,303 People per Square Mile
- 2011 Cost of Living Index for San Luis: 91.8
- Unemployed: 15.6%

San Luis Resident Racial Breakdown:

- White Non-Hispanic: 18.8%
- Hispanic: 78.8%
- Two or More Races: 2.4%

Education:

- High School or Higher: 55.9%
- Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 10.0%
- Graduate or Professional Degree: 3.2%

Major Industries:

- Agriculture
- Government
- Educational Services
- Natural Resources

Downtown Antonito

Background

Antonito, the county seat of Conejos County, is located on US 285, 25 miles south of Alamosa. The town has about 900 residents; Conejos County as a whole has approximately 8,200 residents. Conejos is a beautiful area with breathtaking views and an appealing agricultural landscape. Antonito serves as the eastern terminus of the Cumbres & Toltec Narrow Gauge Railroad and the southern terminus of the San Luis and Rio Grande Railroad, a scenic railroad company that also hauls freight to Alamosa. Antonito benefits from its location at a crossroads of several of the more significant through-routes in the San Luis Valley. South of town, US 285 crosses into New Mexico, passes San Antonio Mountain and heads for Tres Piedras, NM. West of town, CO17 follows the Conejos River up into the San Juan Mountains/San Juan National Forest and crosses Mogote Pass and Cumbres Pass before crossing the New Mexico line and descending into Chama, the western terminus of the Cumbres & Toltec Railroad.

[1] Source: sangres.com

Opportunities and Assets

Downtown Antonito was originally established in 1880 as a stop of the Denver and Rio Grande "Chili Line." Main Street (also US Highway 285) is approximately six blocks long. The town's historic character is largely preserved in many of the existing buildings. The downtown has two restaurants, a library branch, two hotels and a bed & breakfast, a full service grocery and – like San Luis – a newly constructed Family Dollar Store slated to open in September, 2011.

Antonito is the Colorado home to the Cumbres &Toltec Railroad that draws upwards of 30,000 annual visitors. The train leaves daily from a station just south of Antonito's downtown (constructed when the railroad became a scenic railroad, and the historic depot, located downtown, was still in use). It traverses the scenic Cumbres Pass and ends up 64 miles away in Chama, NM, where riders catch a bus back to the starting point. It is also possible to ride to the halfway point in Osier, NM, and return to Antonito by train.

The Rio Grande Scenic Railroad departs from La Veta and Alamosa, with occasional stops in Antonito beyond. There are approximately 25,000 boardings in Alamosa. During the high season (June –August), the Rio Grande line offers a weekly steam special to Antonito that allows passengers to transfer to the Cumbres & Toltec line.

The historic train depot downtown, now unused, has been awarded Colorado State Historic funding to begin to renovations to allow its reuse as a visitor center.

Unlike Costilla County, most (about two-thirds) of Conejos County is public land. Recreational opportunities in the County, including hiking, biking, wildlife viewing and camping, are abundant. The Conejos River is an acclaimed gold medal trout fishing river.

The Colorado Scenic Byway *Los Caminos Antiguos* connects Antonito to San Luis, a breathtaking drive that showcases the Sangre de Cristo and the San Juan mountain ranges. The scenic byway is a tremendous asset that could attract bikers, bird watchers or day trippers and could provide an opportunity for visitors to extend their stay in both San Luis and Antonito.

Challenges

While Antonito's downtown has a strong, historic character, it lacks several assets that could make it a more appealing destination for visitors, investors and consumers, including:

- Limited opportunities to linger;
- Lack of town identity;
- Main Street as a highway stifles pedestrian movement;
- Inadequate small business support including technical and financial assistance to help attract new businesses and support existing ones; and
- Inconsistent operating hours that discourage spontaneous patronage of businesses.

While the Cumbres & Toltec Railroad attracts tens of thousands of visitors annually, train riders spend little time in Antonito for several reasons, including:

- Logistics surrounding the boarding and alighting of the train and the accompanying bus shuttle service that that takes train riders back to their vehicles in Chama or to their vehicles in Antonito;
- The location of the new depot, which is about one-half mile from town. Despite its being just a few hundred yards away, the average train rider may not even be aware that downtown exists; and
- Limited offerings in the downtown as noted above.

Key county services in Antonito are not concentrated in the downtown core. For historical reasons to do with establishment of the town in a more favorable location for commerce once the railroad was built, most of the county services, including the courts and post office, are located about one mile east of downtown. County residents utilizing county services are too far from downtown to encourage their patronage of Antonito's restaurants and shops.

Town of Antonito Demographic Summary[2]

2009 Estimates:

- Population: 761
- Males: 378
- Females: 383
- Median Resident Age: 36.5 Years
- Estimated Median Household Income: $25,705
- Estimated Median Home Value: $75,080
- 2011 Cost of Living Index for Antonito: 90.4
- Unemployed: 8.4%

Resident Racial Breakdown:

- White Non-Hispanic: 13.1%
- Hispanic: 86.1%
- Two or More Races: 0.8%

Education:

- High School or Higher: 65.2%
- Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 10.4%
- Graduate or Professional Degree: 3.0%

Major Industries:

- Educational Services
- Agriculture
- Natural Resources
- Government
- Social Assistance

[2] Source: sangres.com

Alamosa

Background

Alamosa sits in the center of the San Luis Valley, surrounded by views of high mountains in all directions. It is the County seat of Alamosa County and functions as the "Valley Seat" of the entire San Luis Valley. The City of Alamosa was established in 1878 as a railroad center when the Denver & Rio Grande Western first came to the Valley. The Denver & Rio Grande Western headquartered much of its narrow gauge service for northern New Mexico and southwestern Colorado in Alamosa and had a large construction, repair and shipping facility here for many years.

Alamosa is the primary shopping center in the Valley and generates the majority of the sales tax. Alamosa is the only city in the SdCNHA and is much larger than any of the other towns, with a population of 8,756. Alamosa is located at the crossing of US 160 (east and west) with US 285/State Highway 17 (north and south) and is the center of commerce and resources for most of the Valley. Alamosa is also the center for the arts, culture, entertainment and education in the San Luis Valley. The historic Train Depot been refurbished and houses a variety of nonprofits and recently began serving as a Colorado Welcome Center.

Opportunities and Assets

Downtown Alamosa has many restaurants, coffee shops, city and county facilities, arts venues and seasonal events. It has the majority of the hotel rooms in the Valley. Even for those lodging elsewhere, the convenience and critical mass of retail and restaurant venues brings the vast majority of Valley visitors to Alamosa. Alamosa currently offers several events such as the summertime farmers market and an ice sculpture festival during the holiday season that are well attended by locals and visitors.

Alamosa is often considered the main portal to the San Luis Valley due to its size, services and amenities. Alamosa is the closest of the downtowns to the Great Sand Dunes National Park, which is about 35 miles northeast of Alamosa. With approximately 300,000 annual visitors, Great Sand Dunes National Park is one of the most popular attractions in the SdCNHA.

There are myriad economic and business development resources available in downtown Alamosa including an active Visitor and Convention Bureau, the Alamosa Chamber of Commerce, Small Business Development Center and the San Luis Valley Economic Development Council, which offers a wide variety of financing and small business support. Many of the provider organizations are housed in the historic Train Depot building located in the heart of downtown.

Adams State College is just outside of the center of town. Adams State is a four year college that is home to 2,500 on-campus undergraduates with an additional 7,000 enrolled extended study students. The College offers Associate's, Bachelor's and Master's degrees in 50 areas of study. Trinidad State Junior College also has a satellite campus in town.

The City has begun construction on a new City Hall/Public Safety Complex. This project will bring all of the City services to one location including Public Works, Finance, City Manager, Clerk, Court, Police, Fire and Library.

Challenges

While downtown is generally a bustling center, there are several vacant storefronts as well as underutilized land.

Due to inadequate capacity, the Colorado Department of Transportation recently converted the previously two-way Main Street to a one-way couplet street, with State Street completing two-way travel. This change reduces traffic and may increase travel speed on Main Street, both of which can be detrimental to businesses. However, it has made pedestrian movement across Main Street somewhat easier and has opened up State Street to new investment.

Visitation to Alamosa drops sharply in the winter months, and many downtown businesses report negative profitability for several months of the year. The truncated tourist season forces businesses to generate enough revenue during the tourist season to allow them to stay open year-round. By offering unique retail and seasonal events, downtown Alamosa can entice locals and visitors to stay longer and visit beyond the warm-weather months.

Town of Alamosa Demographic Summary[3]

2009 Estimates:

- Population: 8,756
- Males: 4,181
- Females: 4,575
- Median Resident Age: 27.7 Years
- Estimated Median Household Income: $28,583
- Estimated Median Home Value: $115,359
- Population Density: 2,195 People per Square Mile
- 2009 Cost of Living Index for Alamosa: 84.3
- Unemployed: 11.9%

Resident Racial Breakdown:

- White Non-Hispanic: 48.2%
- Hispanic: 46.8%
- African-American: 1.1%
- Native American: 1.1%
- Other: 1.3%
- Two or More Races: 1.6%

Education:

- High School or Higher: 82.5%
- Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 29.5%
- Graduate or Professional Degree: 12.9%

Major Industries:

- Educational Services
- Health Care
- Construction

[3] Source: sangres.com

- Lodging & Food Services
- Government
- Automotive Services
- Finance & Insurance Services
- Social Assistance
- Professional Services

Business & Property Owner Outreach: Strengths, Weaknesses, and Areas for Downtown Improvement

In early May, 2011, with extensive logistical support from community members, the consulting team held three community meetings to get a sense of what local residents and business owners consider to be the strengths, weaknesses and potential areas of improvement in their respective downtowns. At the end of each meeting, the small group participants were asked to vote for their top priorities for downtown improvements. The priority votes are recorded at the end of each summary table below.

Table 1: SAN LUIS Business and Property Owners meeting - May 2, 2011

San Luis Strengths/Opportunities	San Luis Weaknesses/Challenges
National Historical Sites	Empty storefronts
Streetscape, sidewalks w/CDOT funding up to 7th – can walk through town Funding may be avail for remaining segments	CDOT streetscaping eliminated some parking – no maintenance money or for some areas; on north end, not complete to the new school
Avail parking behind business	Parking need? Management/signage (Uncontrolled for courthouse)
Renovation of museum to Sangre de Cristo Heritage Center to house several orgs: cooperative effort in community. Acequia Assn./Vega Assn./Rio Culebra Coop/Land Rights Council/Info center for local sites, recreation, services, etc. 3 yrs to opening	Closure of the museum (phase 1 to December 2011, then phase 2 interior starts) approx. 3 yrs. Total anticipated time of the closure is due to renovation project
Stations of the Cross/Shrine (visit ½ day) Strong community effort	Lack of signage/information of what is in town
Park with plans for improvement, no funding for construction or maintenance	Park not maintained due to funding. Unclear if owned by school, town, or Rio Culebra Recreation board
4 full service restaurants	Decreasing population. 3663 in county 10 yrs ago, 3100 now.
Hotel and B&B lodging	Not enough visitors
County historical restoration of the pedestrian/bike path	Maintenance on Stations of Cross walkway also funding challenges. Donation boxes not secure.
History, education, word of mouth – some business owners etc. are great resources for visitors	Lack of understanding of local population of what is needed for education
	Lack of interpretation of resources
Easy to get across the street, easy to walk, streetscape narrows and calms.	County Road along the western edge of La Vega a beautiful drive but County closed off vehicle access from the town because of erosion issues. Now have to drive way around, can't send visitors in autos there.

Table 1: SAN LUIS Business and Property Owners meeting - May 2, 2011	
San Luis Strengths/Opportunities	**San Luis Weaknesses/Challenges**
Lots of great local ideas and energy!	Restaurants closed at the same time, poorly coordinated. Not enough patrons for businesses to guarantee regular hours.
Vibrant mix of stores and businesses for the size of the town	Lack of recreation center or other activities/venues for the children or community programming for school facilities
New School	Med Marijuana dispensary, tattoo parlor
Businesses that offer wireless for visitors (VOP, Café Rosa Mystica)	Lack of technology and access – lack of providers, poor quality/bottlenecks from the internet and cell phone providers
Visitor center (though erratic hours/approach)	Limited funding resources and capacity to go after grants

Table 2: SAN LUIS Business and Property Owners meeting - May 2, 2011	
San Luis Solutions & Improvements	**Prioritization "Votes"**
Organizational capacity building to respond to potential visitors Communication/collaboration between the Town, businesses, Church, School Chamber of Commerce or some kind of business group/coordination Timing/coordination on restaurants/business hours	11
Signage	7
Marketing, Information that San Luis exists even within the Valley. Quasi public information is not even included on maps and information	6
Funding – variety of options (seed money and maintenance)	5
Presence, profile, marketing, more events – planning, coordination and marketing	2
Beautification: Façade improvements for empty buildings, trash pick-up, flowers, etc.	1
Community education on what to say when someone asks what to do in San Luis	0

Table 3: ANTONITO Business and Property Owners meeting - May 2, 2011	
Antonito Strengths/Opportunities	**Antonito Weaknesses/Challenges**
Highway - people coming through	Traffic, equipment, CDOT control of signs
CDOT controls on billboards	Drainage issue
Historic buildings including but not limited to Train Depot, rich history	Lighting in town inadequate for pedestrians
Momentum, positive thinking, new businesses	Underutilized/abandoned buildings on Main St (absentee owners)
Adequate parking areas available (but not paved or signed)	Not enough RV/trailer/truck parking, no parking management, large vehicles end up in front of businesses blocking from view
Access/ Gateway to Conejos and mountains, Gateway to CO/Taos	Weed Control and other maintenance on RR ROW.
Historic trains and train travelers	Beautification especially trash control

Table 3: ANTONITO Business and Property Owners meeting - May 2, 2011	
Antonito Strengths/Opportunities	**Antonito Weaknesses/Challenges**
Friendly people, potential	Perception, reputation, image
Good food	Loose dogs and no animal control in town, people know it.
Library	Cultural differences
Depot restoration grant	
Cano's Castle	
Lodging tax that generates $20K – dedicated to marketing	

Table 4: ANTONITO Business and Property Owners meeting - May 2, 2011	
Antonito Solutions & Improvements	**Prioritization**
Public Relations/Marketing/Education (tourists, locals, kids)	7
Beautification (volunteer day) trash, lighting, façade improvements, fillers for empty storefronts, more murals	4
Connect trains/travelers to town, address logistical & timing challenges, reconnect narrow gauge to depot (reinstall third rail to permit this)	4
Building cross-cultural trust among elements of community, consistent community involvement	4
More arts & artists	3
Stronger business, more join Chamber, better tax base, business enhancement	0
Design guidelines/animal ordinance	0

Table 5: ALAMOSA Business and Property Owners meeting - May 3, 2011	
Alamosa Strengths/Opportunities	**Alamosa Weaknesses/Challenges**
Recent vacancies filled with independent local businesses	Economic uncertainty - weariness & burn out
Façade and finish improvements	No merchants association or collective marketing efforts
Rio Grande RR has helped business, invested a lot – opened 4 years ago (25,000, of which 65% are from Front Range)	Business mix not bad but some missing such as hardware (may go into shopping center) could use another anchor
Depot	
CDOT changed to one-way couplet 3 years ago because of high traffic volume. Has improved ability to cross the street, reduced noise. Avoided a truck by-pass. Opened up option for more development on same side as depot	
Sunshine	Wind
Wal-Mart brings people, issues hunting licenses	Wal-Mart hurt some of the DT merchants and locally owned businesses. 6 mi west of town
Adams State 3,200 students and 800 faculty/staff, also brings conferences	
History	
National Wildlife Refuge, birding, lots of attractions	

Table 5: ALAMOSA Business and Property Owners meeting - May 3, 2011	
bring people to downtown	
Quality of life	
Alamosa is compact enough that if visitors come to anywhere in the city for any reason, they will likely come downtown to eat, etc.	

Table 6: ALAMOSA Business and Property Owners meeting - May 3, 2011	
Alamosa Solutions & Improvements	**Prioritization "Vote"**
More retail downtown – ground floor activation	7
Marketing more specific and web presence for reaching Front Range and northern New Mexico, other key geographic areas	5
Special events – increase quality and attendance, not necessarily quantity.	1
Signage: directional, informational, gateway (existing can't be read from cars), inviting pedestrian lighting	0
Off-season business enhancement to offset poor profitability/losses in off-season	0
Parking for RVs/trailers – supply and management; not easy to find	0
Attracting & retaining desirable demographic: diverse professionals, young people including the doctors recruited through the rural practitioners loan forgiveness programs	0
Regional event/civic center (non-hotel)	0

Existing Characteristics, Downtown San Luis, Antonito, and Alamosa

Table 7 summarizes a range of economic development-related characteristics of the three downtowns of the SdCNHA and provides a brief description of each downtown's unique niche, focus and organizational capacity.

Table 7: Summary of Economic Development Characteristics of SdCNHA Downtowns

	District Niche	Areas of Focus	Goods & Services Focus	Organizational Capacity
San Luis	• Oldest town in CO • Unique religious & cultural resources • Distinct character • Compact, four-block downtown	• Heritage interpretation • Enhance visitor experience • Presence/profile/ promotion	• Heritage Center • Locally produced foods • Local arts & crafts • Religious-based gifts & mementos	• Costilla County Economic Development Council (CCEDC) active and has made efforts to be inclusive, but volunteer staff is over-tasked and member participation inconsistent. • Heritage Center committee a good model for other projects • No San Luis merchants group • Lack of coordination between Town, Church, and CCEDC
Antonito	• Trains – Cumbres& Toltec and Rio Grande lines • Local arts • Outdoor Recreation • Agriculture	• Connections between trains and downtown • Enhance visitor experience • Town identity • Arts	• Local arts & crafts • Locally produced foods • Amish goods • Outdoor recreation goods	• Conejos Chamber appears to be reinvigorating with new merchants. • No Antonito merchants association • Town capacity is limited, poor coordination with merchants, train companies
Alamosa	• Downtown to the SLV • Information, lodging & commerce center • Gateway to multiple Valley attractions • Trains - history & Rio Grande line • Agricultural history & products	• Vibrant mix of businesses • Identity & roles of CVB, Chamber, other groups • Effective merchants group • Identity/profile	• SLV locals' needs • Dining and lodging • Locally produced foods • Professional services	• Home to many Valley-wide economic development resources and organizations. • No independent merchants group. • Chamber does not serve the purpose(s) that downtown merchants want.

Sample Organizational and Financing Strategies for Downtown San Luis, Antonito, and Alamosa

In order to maximize the economic development opportunities the SdCNHA brings to the three downtowns, each must increase its organizational and financial capacity and demonstrate its ability to serve as a strong partner for heritage and cultural projects that will promote and enhance the SdCNHA. Although it can be expected that SdCNHA will bring new funding resources to the San Luis Valley, the number and cost of eligible and desirable projects that would contribute to the overall cohesion of the SdCNHA will undoubtedly exceed the available annual federal funding available through the National Heritage Area program.

SdCNHA will need to leverage project funding and direct it where local partners have demonstrated initiative and capacity through volunteer activities, downtown enhancements, on-going organizational efforts, fundraising and partnerships. The success of the projects will ultimately reflect on the SdCNHA and affect the amount of federal funding allocations in future years. Therefore stakeholders will need to demonstrate their commitment, capacity and ability to collaborate with each other and the SdCNHA in order to gain the support and financial backing of the SdCNHA.

Table 8 provides recommended actions and associated phasing that the existing downtown groups can take to achieve their goals and priorities and demonstrate an ability and willingness to create stronger organizational capacity to support and implement projects that are funded (on a matching basis) by the SdCNHA.

Table 8: Sample Downtown Economic Development and Capacity-building Strategies

Immediate Term (6-12 months)	Near-Term (1-3 years)	Mid-Term (3-5 years)
San Luis, Costilla County		
CCEDC (Costilla County Economic Development Corporation) forms sub-committees and recruits chairs/members to address the following projects: • Stations of the Cross (with Church and Town representation) maintenance and upkeep • Sacred Circle Tour • Local Foods (with Rio Culebra Cooperative) and Visitor Experience (with Visitor Center, merchants, and Town representation).	• HC committee expands HC plan to include capitalization, operation, maintenance, and programming for phases 2 and 3 with technical assistance.	• CCEDC Heritage Center committee oversees Phase 3 restoration and implements the business plan.

Table 8: Sample Downtown Economic Development and Capacity-building Strategies		
Immediate Term (6-12 months)	**Near-Term (1-3 years)**	**Mid-Term (3-5 years)**
• Heritage Center committee develops a business plan and feasibility study and business plan for the capitalization and operation of the HC phases 2 and 3 with technical assistance from for-profit entities, SBDC, SLVDRC, DOLA and others. Oversees phase 1 rehabilitation.	• HC committee oversees phase 2 restoration and coordinates match funding for phase 3.	• Heritage Center occupant organizations form alliance for ongoing management and programming. Heritage Center organizations interpret unique local religious, cultural, and heritage resources for visitors including Acequias, La Vega, Sacred Circle Tour, Heritage Foods, Stations of the Cross, etc. Collaborate with CCEDC, SdCNHA for marketing.
• Heritage Center committee coordinates match funding for phase 2 from sources such as Department of Local Affairs, El Pomar, Colorado Historical Society, SdCNHA, Federal allocations.	• Town adopts downtown design guidelines to protect the unique, historic character of San Luis as a collective asset.	• Town considers development standards for areas surrounding downtown to ensure that future development will not erode the unique identity of San Luis.
• Stations of the Cross committee enhances way-finding signage and donation box security to stabilize maintenance.	• Town regulates downtown uses to keep vitality-killing uses off Main Street (e.g., parking lots.)	• Merchants organization establishes a reliable revenue stream to provide coordination and ongoing financing mechanism for maintenance and improvements, either through a tax, mill levy, or special district (such as a Downtown Development Authority, Business Improvement District, or Urban Renewal Authority – see attached table outlining Colorado financing mechanisms that may be applicable).
• Sacred Circle Tour (SCT) committee develops a plan to manage and implement the Sacred Circle Tour with technical assistance.	• Local Foods committee begins a summer farmers market featuring local foods that does not conflict with others in SLV.	
• CCEDC collaborates with SdCNHA staff to enhance awareness and marketing of San Luis offerings, location, and events (e.g., Stations of the Cross, Sacred Circle Tour, Acequia, La Vega, Heritage Center, Santana).	• Visitor Experience committee addresses issues such as coordination of business hours and parking availability.	

Table 8: Sample Downtown Economic Development and Capacity-building Strategies		
Immediate Term (6-12 months)	**Near-Term (1-3 years)**	**Mid-Term (3-5 years)**
• Visitor Experience committee addresses parking management for RVS and trailers, availability of informational materials at Visitor Center.	• Local merchants form an alliance, either stand-alone or as a committee of EDC, and expand focus to include cooperative marketing and complete sidewalk connections.	
• SBDC provides technical assistance to existing and potential merchants one day/week to enhance viability and profitability of individual businesses.	• CCEDC Sacred Circle Tour committee implements Sacred Circle Tour plan. Explore funding as a project of SdCNHA.	
	• CCEDC coordinates with Conejos Chamber of Commerce, SdCNHA for joint marketing of Antonito and San Luis offerings such as Los Caminos Antiguos, local foods, arts, and other products.	
Antonito, Conejos County		
Chamber forms committees and recruits chairs/members to address • Train Connections (with merchants, trains, and Town representation), • Clean & Safe (with merchant, residents, Town and County representation), and • Marketing (including Town, trains, and merchant representation).	• Marketing committee coordinates with Costilla County EDC for joint marketing of Antonito and San Luis offerings utilizing Los Caminos Antiguos to connect the two communities, and enhance the local foods, arts, and other products.	• Merchants organization establishes a reliable revenue stream to provide coordination and ongoing financing mechanism for maintenance and improvements, either through a tax, mill levy, or special district (such as a Downtown Development Authority, Business Improvement District, or Urban Renewal Authority see attached table outlining Colorado financing mechanisms that may be applicable).
• Train Connections committee explores options for better visitor staging logistics with Cumbres& Toltec RR, works with Rio Grande line from Alamosa to arrive earlier so passengers have time to visit downtown Antonito.	• Marketing committee engages local artists in developing a logo, identity and unique signage for Antonito and works with the train lines to distribute quality marketing materials to passengers.	• Restored Depot opens with a sustainable tenant/use.

Table 8: Sample Downtown Economic Development and Capacity-building Strategies		
Immediate Term (6-12 months)	**Near-Term (1-3 years)**	**Mid-Term (3-5 years)**
• Clean & Safe committee develops strategies to address trash, stray dogs, and vandalism.	• Downtown merchants join together for a stand-alone alliance or membership organization.	• Train Connections committee oversees restoration of 3rd rail and the Cumbres& Toltec once again offers a stop in downtown Antonito.
• Marketing committee collaborates with SdCNHA staff to enhance awareness and marketing of Antonito offerings.	• Train Connections committee develops interim connections between current train depot and downtown, such as walking path, signage, Amish buggy rides, bikes for loan/rent, etc .	• Artists' cooperative opens and runs a cooperative offering high quality locally produced fine arts and crafts.
• Depot Task Force develops a business and programming plan for the Depot with technical assistance from SBDC, SLVDRC, and others.	• Depot Task Force oversees restoration of the Depot and, with technical assistance, expands business plan to include programming, operation, and maintenance of the restored facility.	
• SBDC provides technical assistance to existing and potential merchants one day/week to enhance viability and profitability of individual businesses.	• Clean & Safe committee implements strategies and projects to address trash, stray dogs, and vandalism.	
• Local merchants work with the Town and CDOT to improve traffic and parking management, especially for RVs and trailers.	• SLV food cooperative and Amish community coordinate to offer a summer farmers market featuring local products on a day that does not conflict with others in SLV.	
	• Chamber convenes artists to plan and organize a multi-artist cooperative gallery in downtown Antonito.	
Alamosa, Alamosa County		
• Downtown merchants form a membership organization to concentrate on Downtown marketing and beautification.	• Merchant's organization and City create a special district, such as a Downtown Development Authority, Business Improvement District, or Urban Renewal Authority to provide coordination and ongoing financing mechanism for maintenance and improvements.	• SLV Food Cooperative runs a year-round commercial kitchen that serves to incubate local small businesses selling food-based products.

Table 8: Sample Downtown Economic Development and Capacity-building Strategies		
Immediate Term (6-12 months)	**Near-Term (1-3 years)**	**Mid-Term (3-5 years)**
• Chamber, CVB, and merchants association clarify their respective roles and responsibilities so that each can be most effective and efficient.	• Special district funds member-directed downtown improvements such as events, beautification and maintenance, filling empty storefronts, improved downtown wayfinding signage and lighting.	• Merchants/special district develops a year-round market in downtown that offers local products from throughout the SLV.
• Merchants association works with Rio Grande, CDOT to improve parking availability and management for RVs and trailers.	• Special district creates targeted incentives to attract downtown businesses that members identify as likely to enhance downtown's vitality.	• CVB leads development of a regional event and conference facility that will provide a venue for events that increase occupancy of existing hotels year round
• CVB collaborates with SdCNHA to enhance awareness and marketing of Alamosa/SLV heritage and cultural offerings.	• Chamber continues to host quality events that attract visitors, improve off-season opportunities for local merchants.	
• Chamber provides support and resources to assist businesses and coordinates collaborative marketing for Alamosa businesses.	• Chamber markets Alamosa's quality of life to temporary/potential residents in desirable demographic segments.	
• SBDC provides technical assistance to existing and potential merchants to enhance viability and profitability of individual businesses.	• Downtown Alamosa collaborates with SdCNHA, serves as the geographic center of information about offerings, attractions, events, and services for the entire SLV.	

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Appendix F: Existing Conditions – Historic Resource Inventories and Interpretive Sites within the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area 2
National and State Registers of Historic Places 2
Resources Determined Eligible for Listing on the National Register 2
Centennial Farms 3
Alamosa County – 3
Properties Listed on the National Register of Historic Places and 3
Colorado State Register of Historic Places 3
17 designated; 673 inventoried 3
Conejos County – 6
Properties Listed on the National Register of Historic Places and 6
Colorado State Register of Historic Places 6
13 designated; 1275 inventoried 6
Costilla County – 9
Properties Listed on the National Register of Historic Places and 9
Colorado State Register of Historic Places 9
11 designated; 357 inventoried 9
Interpretive Sites 10
Los Caminos Antiguos Scenic & Historic Byway (Wayside Exhibits) 10
Anchor Sites 11
1. Great Sand Dunes National Park 11
2. Rio Grande Scenic Railroad 11
3. Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad 12
4. Fort Garland Museum 13
5. San Luis Museum and Cultural Center 13
Theme-specific Interpretive Sites 14
1. La Vega and the San Luis People's Ditch 14
2. Sacred Circle Tour (Costilla County) 14
3. Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and Conejos Plaza 15
4. SPMDTU: Sociedad Proteccion Mutua De Trabajadores Unidos 16
5. Pike's Stockade 16
6. Historic Downtown Alamosa Walking Tour 16
7. Alamosa National Wildlife Refuge 17
8. Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge 17
9. Blanca Wildlife Habitat Area (Blanca Wetlands) 18
10. Denver & Rio Grande Railroad Antonito Depot 18
11. Rio Costilla Studio Tour 18
12. Denver & Rio Grande Railroad Locomotive No. 169 19
13. Luther Bean Museum 19
14. San Luis Lakes State Park 19
15. San Luis Valley Museum 20
16. Zapata Falls Recreation Area 20
17. Medano Zapata Ranch 21
Events 21

APPENDIX F: EXISTING CONDITIONS – HISTORIC RESOURCE INVENTORIES AND INTERPRETIVE SITES WITHIN THE SANGRE DE CRISTO NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

History Colorado's Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHP) serves as the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and administers federal and state preservation programs within Colorado, including the National Register of Historic Places, Colorado State Register of Historic Places, Centennial Farms Program, and surveys of historic and archaeological resources. Within the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area, over 2,300 properties and features have been inventoried through historic and archeological research surveys overseen by the OAHP. Access to the inventories of surveyed properties is available through Compass, OAHP's online digital database of cultural resources, and may be obtained in GIS format.

National and State Registers of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archeological resources. Properties listed in the Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service, which is part of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

In Colorado, the National Register includes over 1,300 listings, both individual properties and historic districts containing multiple properties. All properties listed in the National Register are automatically listed in the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties. Properties may also be nominated separately to the Colorado State Register without inclusion in the National Register.

Within the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area there are 38 individually listed properties on the National and State Registers. One of these, Pike's Stockade, is also listed as a National Historic Landmark. A short summary of each listed property, derived from the OAHP, is provided below.

Resources Determined Eligible for Listing on the National Register

In addition to the properties that have already been listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places, 13 additional historic resources and three (unidentified) archeological resources have been officially determined eligible for listing within the last decade but have not yet been listed. In many cases these require additional documentation. Properties deemed officially eligible for listing include:

- Jones Ranch (Centennial Farm), Alamosa
- Splashland Hot Springs Pool, Alamosa
- Alamosa Water Works, Alamosa
- Farmer's Union Canal, Hooper vicinity
- Alamosa Ranger Station, Rio Grande National Forest
- River Springs Work Center, Rio Grande National Forest
- Stunner Phone Line Cabin, Rio Grande National Forest

- Trinchera Irrigation Co., Blanca
- West's Shoe Store, Blanca
- Forest Tango, Blanca
- Blanca Gas Station, Blanca

In addition, 47 other resources have been determined eligible for listing on the National or State Registers during field surveys. In most cases, however, these surveys were conducted more than ten years ago and all would require updated assessments and additional research to verify their eligibility.

Centennial Farms

The Colorado Centennial Farms program designates farms and ranches that have been owned and operated by the same family for 100 years or more. The program was established to honor the significant role that these families have had in settling and shaping the Colorado. Centennial Farms receive a sign to display on their property, and each year, Colorado's newest centennial farm and ranch families are honored during an awards ceremony held in late August at the Colorado State Fair in Pueblo. Since the program's inception in 1986 through 2009, 375 farms and ranches have been recognized under the program with more than 200 receiving Historic Structures Awards for continued use of at least four structures 50 years or older. Designated Centennial Farms, the majority of which were established between 1880 and 1895, are located in 61 of 64 counties. Within the Heritage Area, there are 11 Centennial Farms. Established in 1851, the Ortega Farm in San Luis is Colorado's oldest designated Centennial Farm.

- Maddux Ranch, Alamosa (est. 1874)
- Jones Ranch, Alamosa (est. 1884)
- Paul Peterson Ranch, Conejos (est. 1900)
- Stewart Ranch, Conejos (est. 1863)
- Gonzales Farm, Conejos (est. 1870)
- Valdez Farm, Conejos (est. 1890)
- Salazar Farm and Ranch, Conejos (est. 1888)
- Corpus A. Gallegos Ranches, Costilla (est. 1860)
- Atencio Farm, Costilla (est. 1894)
- A. Prax Ortega Farm, Costilla (est. 1851)
- Rio Culebra Ranch, Costilla (est. 1863)

Alamosa County –

Properties Listed on the National Register of Historic Places and

Colorado State Register of Historic Places

17 designated; 673 inventoried

Alamosa County Courthouse, 702 4th St. Alamosa
National Register 9/29/1995
The U-shaped complex is one of the county's best examples of the Mission style architecture. The largest of several Works Progress Administration projects built in the county during the 1930s, the courthouse construction began in 1936. Using local clay and sand, the WPA workers produced more than 450,000 bricks at a kiln located north of Alamosa. The courthouse continues to house a variety of county offices.

Alamosa Masonic Hall, 514 San Juan
State Register 5/14/1997
The building's elaborate stamped metal upper story represents a period of construction associated with the arrival of the railroad and the resulting ability to import prefabricated architectural elements. Built in 1887, it was one of the first major buildings to be constructed on what would become Alamosa's main street. Street-level retail stores supported the second-story hall both physically and financially.

Alamosa Post Office, 703 4th St., Alamosa
National Register 7/22/2009
The Public Works Administration (PWA) constructed the 1935 Alamosa Post Office as a program of the New Deal legislative agenda set forth by President Roosevelt during the Great Depression. The post office is significant as an excellent example of the Mixed Style - exhibiting elements of Art Deco, Classical Revival, and the locally prevalent Mission Revival.

American National Bank Building, 500 State Ave.
National Register 4/15/1999
Constructed in 1909 during a period of rapid growth in the San Luis Valley, the bank building reflects the optimism associated with an important phase of downtown Alamosa's commercial development. The virtually intact brick building is a good example of an Arcaded Block, a popular commercial building type during the early decades of the 20th century. The building functioned as a bank until 1951, and for many years it housed a flower shop. (2001 photograph.)

Bain's Department Store, 510 Main St. & 509 Hunt Ave., Alamosa
State Register 9/13/1995, Boundary Increase: State Register 9/9/1998.
This Depression-era building opened as the largest department store in the San Luis Valley, offering groceries and clothes as well as household and farm goods. Owner Victor Bain made extensive use of recycled materials to minimize construction costs.

Denver & Rio Grande Railroad Depot (Alamosa County Offices), 610 State St., Alamosa
National Register 2/11/1993.
The depot operated as an important transfer point for passengers, mail, and freight traveling between Denver, Creede, Santa Fe and Durango. Agricultural development in the valley made it essential for coordinating crop shipments. Built in 1908, to replace an 1878 depot destroyed by fire, the west section was added in 1930. Its Spanish tile roof reflects the San Luis Valley's Hispanic heritage. Passenger and freight use decreased in the 1950s, leading to the station's closure. Subsequent interior remodeling occurred to accommodate city offices, but the exterior remains nearly as built. The property is associated with the Railroads in Colorado, 1858-1948 Multiple Property Submission.

Denver & Rio Grande Railroad Locomotive No. 169, Cole Park, Alamosa
State Register 8/9/2000, National Register 3/12/2001.
Built in 1883, this narrow gauge, coal fired, ten-wheeler steam locomotive remained in service for over 50 years. In 1939, it was taken out of storage to represent the D&RGW Railroad at the World's Fair in New York City. The ten-wheel design was considered the best arrangement for passenger locomotives, as the four-wheel lead truck worked best on uneven track. The six larger driver wheels provided increased pulling capacity and speed, making it one of the fastest narrow gauge engines built. In 1941, No. 169 came to rest at Cole Park, a gift to the city from the railroad.

First Baptist Church, 408 State Ave., Alamosa
National Register 5/22/2005
Construction began on the First Baptist Church in 1907. An asymmetrical composition consisting of a variety of forms, textures and materials, the church epitomizes the Queen Anne style. This is the only ornamental concrete block public building in Alamosa. The building also has the distinction of being the oldest standing church in Alamosa. This property is associated with the Ornamental Concrete Block in Colorado Multiple Property Submission.

Husung Hardware, 625 Main St., Alamosa
National Register 1/28/2000
Constructed in 1936 with a terra cotta facade and stylized ornamentation, the two-story brick building possesses the distinctive characteristics of Art Deco, a style not well represented in Alamosa County or in other small towns across Colorado. This well-preserved building is considered one of the best small town expressions of Art Deco in the state.

Mt. Pleasant School, Junction of County Rd. 3S and Rd. 103S, Alamosa vicinity
National Register 5/3/2006
Located about eight miles west of Alamosa, it is the third school at this location. Built in 1911, the Mt. Pleasant School building served as the area's only school until 1965 and the last one-room school in the Alamosa vicinity. As the only public building on the rural landscape, it was not only a center of education, but also a focus of community life, hosting a variety of activities. In its size, scale, window placement, and interior configuration, the building epitomizes the rural schoolhouse. Its clustered windows and hipped roof reflect turn-of-the-century "innovations" in rural school design. This property is associated with Rural School Buildings in Colorado Multiple Property Submission.

Sacred Heart Catholic Church, 727 4th St., Alamosa
State Register 3/13/1996, National Register 7/15/1998
Constructed between 1922 and 1928, the church is an interesting interpretation of the Mission style designed by prominent architect Robert Willison. The interior includes outstanding murals painted by local artist Josef Steinhage that were recognized nationally in Catholic circles.

St. Thomas Episcopal Church, 607 4th St., Alamosa
National Register 3/4/2003
The building, which consists of a 1926 parish hall and a 1930 sanctuary addition, is an example of the Mission Revival style as evidently its smooth stucco walls, curvilinear parapets, and round-arched window openings. It is one of the few religious properties designed by the prolific Denver architectural firm of William E. and Arthur A. Fisher.

Howard Store (Hooper Town Hall), 8681 Main St., Hooper
National Register 2/1/2006
This well-preserved 1891 storefront is a textbook example of a small 19th century commercial building with its recessed central transomed entrance flanked by large display windows above paneled wood kickplates. The building possesses the distinctive characteristics of the False Front Commercial type. Its facade rises to form a parapet wall with a decorated cornice extending above the gabled roof and side walls. Three sides of the building are sheathed in sheet metal siding stamped to resemble rock-faced stone masonry. Manufacturers and retailers promoted this economical means of ornamentation as a durable and fire-resistant material. The building is the town's best preserved example of embossed sheet metal siding and is one of the town's oldest and longest operating general merchandise establishments.

Medano Ranch Headquarters, Approximately 9 miles northeast of Mosca
National Register 2/4/2004
The Medano Ranch Headquarters is an important part of the development of cattle ranching in the San Luis Valley from the open range days of the 1870s through the mechanized operations of the period following World War II. The Medano Ranch is one of the oldest continuously operated properties in the area and its buildings and structures reflect the evolution of ranching as a large-scale enterprise during the late 19th and 20th centuries

Indian Grove, Mosca vicinity
National Register 3/24/2000
Indian Grove, located within Great Sand Dunes National Monument, is a concentration of 72 mature ponderosa pine trees, many of which contain large scars. Archaeologists believe that Ute Indians peeled the bark from these trees, and that the site can provide important information about Ute social history and subsistence strategies. The majority of these culturally modified trees were peeled between 1816 and 1848. Very few definitive Ute sites have been identified in Colorado.

Superintendent's Residence, Great Sand Dunes National Monument. SR. 150, southwest of Mosca
National Register 11/2/1989
Constructed in the Territorial Adobe style, the building features a gabled roof, an Anglo modification of the traditional Hispanic flat roof. It was the largest project undertaken by the WPA during its late 1930s work at Great Sand Dunes. It represents the Rustic Movement, championed by the National Park Service's first director, Stephen T. Mather, who advocated the use of native materials and vernacular building traditions wherever possible.

Trujillo Homestead, Approximately 4 miles north of 6N Lane, Mosca vicinity
National Register 2/4/2004; National Historic Landmark 2/1/2012
The Trujillo Homestead is an important part of Hispanic settlement in the San Luis Valley in the latter half of the 19th century. Pedro Trujillo, a first generation Hispanic-American, established the property in 1879. The homestead is representative of small-scale pioneer cattle enterprises which typified the first ranches established in the area. The homestead is also associated with the pattern of violence and intimidation experienced by early Hispanic ranchers as large Anglo-American cattle operations expanded and consolidated their holdings.

Zapata Ranch Headquarters, 5303 SR 150
National Register 4/5/1993, 5AL.297
Zapata Ranch was one of the first and largest cattle ranches in the area. It also served as a stage coach stop and post office. Some of its buildings date back to the 1870s, and all of the historic ranch buildings are of log construction.

Conejos County –

Properties Listed on the National Register of Historic Places and

Colorado State Register of Historic Places

13 designated; 1275 inventoried

Costilla Crossing Bridge, County Rd., over Rio Grande River
National Register 2/4/1985
Completed in 1892, this pin/rigid connected, eight-panel Thacher through truss is significant for its unusual structural style, patented in 1884 by Edwin Thacher, then Chief Engineer of the Keystone Bridge Company.

Never very popular, only the Wrought Iron Bridge Company manufactured metal versions. It is the oldest vehicular truss in southern Colorado.

Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad San Juan Extension, (Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad), Antonito to Chama, New Mexico, over Cumbres Pass
National Register 1/16/1973, additional documentation and boundary increase 4/24/2007
This nationally significant narrow-gauge railroad segment exists as one of only two operating sections of what was once a state wide network of three foot gauge tracks built and operated by the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad. Completed in 1880, the 64-mile line helped to sustain the ranching and logging activities in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado, supplied the oil industry in and around Chama and Farmington, New Mexico, and formed a link for the transportation of precious metals from the San Juan mining camps to Denver.

Denver & Rio Grande Railroad Antonito Depot, 6128 Front St., Antonito
State Register 8/31/2006
The 1880 Denver & Rio Grande Railroad (D&RG) Antonito Depot is an important and distinctive masonry example of a combination-type depot active in the San Luis Valley. The depot served for over sixty years as the junction point for the branch line to Santa Fe, New Mexico, and the D&RG's San Juan Extension from Alamosa to Durango and Silverton. In addition to providing passenger and express package service, and housing the local office of the Western Union telegraph, the depot also served as the office for railroad freight operations originating or terminating in the Antonito area. The depot was the western-most station on the Rio Grande's San Juan Extension accommodating both standard and narrow gauge trains.

Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad Engine 463, US Hwy. 285 (Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad), Antonito
National Register 5/12/1975
Built in 1903 by the Baldwin Locomotive Works of Philadelphia, Engine No. 463 is one of only two remaining locomotives of the K-27 series originally built for and operated by the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad. The K-27 series was a departure from the design most prevalent on Colorado's narrow gauge lines, resulting in a locomotive with one and one-half times more power. The arrival of this series marked a significant turning point in the operation of the D&RGW's narrow gauge lines that was to remain in effect until the end of Class I narrow gauge steam locomotion in 1968.

Florence & Cripple Creek Railroad Combination Car No. 60, Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Antonito to Cumbres
State Register 6/9/1999, Boundary Change 8/14/2002
Built in 1897 for the Florence & Cripple Creek Railroad, the first railroad to reach the gold mines of the Victor and Cripple mining districts, Combination Car No. 60 operated as a suburban coach until about 1909 when it was converted to a combination baggage and passenger car. One of only two surviving F&CC passenger coaches in the United States, it is the only surviving example of a combination passenger-baggage car from the railroad.

Palace Hotel, 429 Main St., Antonito
National Register 8/19/1994
Expanding railroad service created the need for construction of the Palace Hotel. Due to its location at the junction of the Rio Grande Railroad's line to Chama, Durango and the San Juan Mountains and its branch to Santa Fe, Antonito became an important trade center in the southern San Luis Valley. The Palace Hotel provided overnight accommodations for salesmen, wool merchants, and tourists beginning in 1890.

SPMDTU Concilio Superior, 603 Main St., Antonito
National Register 3/29/2001
As the headquarters for La Sociedad Proteccion Mutua de Trabajadores Unidos since 1925, the building represents an important aspect of Hispano history. Originally created to combat racism against Hispanos in

the San Luis Valley, this fraternal organization later expanded to provide mutual aid, thereby playing an important role in the overall social history of Colorado. Construction of this building popularized the use of steel trusses, introduced changes in massing, and promoted hybridized Southwest vernacular designs subsequently utilized in other Hispano enclaves.

Warshauer Mansion, 515 River St., Antonito
National Register 8/30/1974
This large 1912 brick and stucco home, with a red tile roof, was built for Fred B. Warshauer, a German immigrant who rose to county prominence in the sheep business. Denver architect George F. Harvey drew the plans according to Warshauer's specifications. Unusual for the period, the house boasts a central vacuum cleaning system and a fire control system.

La Jara Depot (La Jara Town Hall), Broadway & Main, La Jara
National Register 5/12/1975
La Jara traces its birth to the arrival of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad in 1880. Located on part of the San Juan Extension between Alamosa and Silverton, the 1911 depot served as a shipping point for area ranchers and farmers. Gradually the automobile and truck replaced the railroad as the primary mode of transportation, and the railroad eventually closed the depot. In 1970, the town acquired the building and transformed it into the town hall

La Capilla De San Antonio De Padua, County Rd. 28, Lasauses
State Register 12/10/1997
Incorporating a wall of the original 1880 church, construction began on this adobe chapel in 1928. The building reflects the importance of churches as centers and symbols of southern Colorado Hispanic communities. It is the only remaining public/community building representing the village of Lasauses.

San Rafael Presbyterian Church, County Rd. 9, Mogote
State Register 6/9/1999.
The circa 1895 church, which was lengthened in 1911, is one of the oldest extant adobe churches in Conejos County. The oblique entry and bell tower, with its pyramidal roof and tall spire, create an asymmetrical composition that is quite different from the typical Territorial Adobe church. The building also represents the inroads made by the Presbyterian Church into Hispanic southern Colorado, which was predominately Catholic. It is the only remaining Hispanic-speaking Presbyterian church in Conejos County.

McIntire Ranch, County Rd. V, Sanford vicinity
National Register 3/26/2008
The McIntire Ranch has the potential to yield information important to our understanding about the layout patterns of ranch complexes. The site has a high archaeological potential for addressing gender-related research questions. Comparing economic strategies and consumer behaviors practiced by owner Florence McIntire from around 1880 to 1912 could lead to a better understanding of use patterns on the site prior to and after her divorce. The use patterns may also help to define her role as the owner of the ranch.

Pike's Stockade Site, Colo. Hwy. 136, 4 miles east of Sanford
National Historic Landmark 7/4/1961, National Register 10/15/1966
Located along the north bank of the Conejos River, the site marks the spot where, in 1807, Zebulon Pike raised the American flag over what was then Spanish territory. The site is now owned by the Colorado Historical Society and a replica of the stockade exists near the location of the original structure.

Costilla County –

Properties Listed on the National Register of Historic Places and

Colorado State Register of Historic Places

11 designated; 357 inventoried

San Luis Valley Southern Railway Trestle, County Rd. 12, Blanca vicinity
National Register 1/6/2004
The Costilla Estates Development Company, a business organized to sell lands within the Sangre de Cristo Land Grant, built the 32-mile San Luis Valley Southern Railway. This trestle, an excellent example of timber stringer standard gauge railroad bridge construction, was built in 1910 and carried freight and passenger service until 1939. It is the only remaining SLVS trestle.

Barlow & Sanderson Stagecoach, SR 159, Fort Garland compound
State Register 6/14/1995
This Barlow and Sanderson Stagecoach provided basic transportation throughout the San Luis Valley of Colorado and New Mexico in the late 19th century. The stagecoach is a rare example of an Abbot-Downing mud wagon type built around 1871.

Fort Garland, SR 159, south of US Hwy. 160
National Register 2/26/1970, Boundary Increase: State Register 12/11/1996
Fort Garland is important for its association with the settlement of the San Luis Valley and southern Colorado. Built in 1858, the fort served as a base of military operations until it was abandoned in 1883. Company G of the Ninth Cavalry, a unit of Buffalo Soldiers, operated out of the fort from the spring of 1876 until September 1879. The Buffalo Soldiers were African American troopers who received their nickname from Southern Plains Indians who perceived similarities between the soldiers' curly black hair and the matted fur between the horns of the buffalo. The Buffalo Soldiers saw scant military action through their brief assignment at Fort Garland. In 1876, troops marched to the La Plata region to prevent conflict between Ute Indians and white prospectors. The Colorado Historical Society operates Fort Garland as one of its regional museums.

San Acacio San Luis Southern Railway Depot, North of Colo. Hwy. 142, San Acacio
State Register 12/9/1998
Built in 1910, it is the largest depot constructed by the San Luis Southern Railway, a 32-mile standard gauge railroad built to serve the towns and farms planned by the Costilla Estates Development Company. The two-story depot also served as railway headquarters until 1950, and it is all that is left in San Acacio to represent the railroad and the company that created the town.

Plaza de San Luis de la Culebra Historic District, SR 159, San Luis
National Register 12/22/1978, 5CT.47
Established in 1851, San Luis is the oldest continuously inhabited town in Colorado. The district contains an important collection of buildings that includes the county courthouse, the convent and Church of Most Precious Blood, numerous residences, and the town's commercial core. The district also includes the Vega, a common ground for animal grazing, and the San Luis People's Ditch.

Rito Seco Creek Culvert, SR 142, San Luis
National Register 10/15/2002
Consisting of two 18-foot spans, the steel multiplate arch culvert is faced with local volcanic fieldstone. Constructed in 1936, the culvert remains intact as a good example of one of the smaller bridges built by the Works Progress Administration during the years of the Great Depression.

Salazar House, 603 Main St., San Luis
State Register 5/14/1997, National Register 1/23/1998
Constructed in 1906, the house is an example of an ornamental concrete block residence. Its Queen Anne detailing is an unusual expression for concrete block construction and for Costilla County.

San Luis Bridge, Colo. Hwy. 159, San Luis
National Register 2/4/1985
Completed over Culebra Creek on the western edge of San Luis in 1911, this segmental, reinforced concrete open spandrel arch is one of the earliest unaltered bridges of this type in Colorado.

Sociedad de Nuestro Padre Jesus Nazareno (San Francisco Morada), San Pablo vicinity
State Register 3/8/2000
This circa 1908 building represents an important aspect of Hispano history in southern Colorado. The building reflects the limited religious and governmental support in poor rural areas of predominately Hispanic populations and the aid societies that formed as a result. Los Hermanos Penitentes (a lay religious, fraternal organization) constructed and used the building as a chapel and meeting hall. The organization also served as a cultural force, preserving language, lore, customs, and faith within the isolated communities. The elongated adobe building was constructed following the traditional linear plan of northern New Mexico.

Interpretive Sites

The following sites have been identified as key to telling the story of the Heritage Area.

Los Caminos Antiguos Scenic & Historic Byway (Wayside Exhibits)

This 129-mile National Scenic Byway links the four Cornerstone Communities of Alamosa, Fort Garland, San Luis, and Antonio, as well as the Great Sand Dunes National Park, the San Luis Lakes State Park, the Alamosa National Wildlife Refuge, Zapata Falls, the Medano-Zapata Ranch, the San Juan National Forest, the Conejos River, Culebra Creek, and the Rio Grande. Smaller communities along this route include: Mosca, Blanca, San Acacio, Manassa, Romeo, Conejos, Paisaje, Mogote, La Mesitas, and Fox Creek. There are 22 wayside exhibits along the way that provide interpretation of specific topics and sites.

Location:	The 129-mile route may be picked up along any of the CO Hwys: 17, 142, 150, 159, US 285 and US 160.
Open:	Year-round. Heavy snowfall can temporarily close La Manga and Cumbres passes.
Fee:	Free

http://www.rmpbs.org/byways/lca_summary.html

- The story – Named the "ancient road," the byway interprets the natural and cultural history of the San Luis Valley.
- The waysides – There are 22 waysides placed along the route. Interpretive topics include the Rio Grande, the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad, Conejos Canyon, Adams State College, Spanish Entradas, the Aquifers & Closed Basin, the Alamosa NWR, Dune Formation, Blanca Wetlands, Zapata Falls, Paleo-Indians, Tewa Indians, Blanca Peak, Penitentes, the Alpine Desert, Fort Massachusetts, Fort Garland, Buffalo Soldiers, San Luis—Oldest Town in Colorado, La Vega, Acequias, Stations of the Cross, Lt. Zebulon Pike, Pike's Stockade, King's Turquoise Mine, the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Jack Dempsey, and Our Lady of Guadalupe Church.
- The current visitor experience – The stories are told through interpretive wayside exhibits.
- Visitor services – Varies with each community (see details below).

Anchor Sites

Five sites have been identified as primary or anchor attractions within the Heritage Area. These are sites that currently offer a specific visitor experience which includes interpretation through exhibits or special events and programs. These sites are open to the public and have specified days/hours/months of operation.

1. Great Sand Dunes National Park

Location:	11999 Highway 150; Mosca, Colorado 81146
Open:	The Visitor Center is open daily except winter holidays. Hours are 9am-4:30pm daily, with extended hours in summer (9 am to 6 pm from Memorial Day to Labor Day).
Fee:	$3 per person age 16 and up; Children free

http://www.nps.gov/grsa/

Site characteristics:

- The story – The Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve protects and interprets the Great Sand Dunes and the larger ecosystem, as well as the history and culture of the surrounding region.
- The site – Visitor Center, trails, primitive campgrounds. Visitors are encouraged to hike the dunes and Mosca Creek. Official trailheads (Montville Nature Trail and Mosca Pass Trail) are accessed through the Park one half mile north of Park Headquarters on the east side of the road. Pamphlets for the self-guided Montville Trail are available at the Visitor Center. The Mosca Pass Trail is a 3.5 mile trail that winds through aspen and evergreens to the summit of Mosca Pass in the Sangre de Cristo mountains. It is interpreted as the entrance to the valley for nomadic hunters, Spanish soldiers, homesteaders, and traders carrying goods bound for Plains Indian tribes. A shorter hike is offered via the self-guided Montville Trail, a half-mile loop that parallels Mosca Creek and leads past the remnants of a historic toll station.
- The current visitor experience – The visitor center offers a 20 minute orientation movie and interactive exhibits. Free nature walks, short talks, and evening programs are offered most days spring through fall.
- Visitor services – Gift shop, restrooms at Visitor Center, meals and lodging available at nearby Great Sand Dunes Oasis (camping, restaurant, store, and 2-room motel) and the Great Sand Dunes Lodge (both seasonal).

2. Rio Grande Scenic Railroad

Provides train excursions between La Veta (over La Veta Pass and the Sangre de Cristo Mountains) and Alamosa. From Alamosa, passengers can ride the historic "Chile Line" to Antonito, where they can change to the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad, or they may take trips to Fir, the Great Sand Dunes National Park, or Monte Vista.

Location:	610 State Ave., Alamosa, CO 81101
Open:	Welcome Center open Summer: 8am - 6pm; Winter: 8am - 5pm. Train excursions run Memorial Day weekend through October 15, with charters available year round. The daily train departs Alamosa for La Veta at 9:00 AM and returns at 5:45 PM, with a two-hour stop in La Veta for lunch and shopping. On weekends the train leaves La Veta for Alamosa at 9 AM and returns at 4:45 PM (2 hrs. for lunch and shopping).
Fee:	Welcome Center is free. Train rides: Alamosa-La Veta: Adult: $48; Senior: $43; Child: $33; Dome Car seats: $58; other costs depending upon special promotions.

http://www.riograndescenicrailroad.com

http://www.alamosa.org/travel-tools/colorado-welcome-center-at-alamosa

Site characteristics:

- The Story – Alamosa was established as a railroad town (Denver & Rio Grande Railroad). Narrow gauge rail made it possible to traverse the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. The depot served as the historic Alamosa train depot for the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad.
- The Site – The Rio Grande Scenic Railroad depot is located within the historic Alamosa Train Depot (built in 1908-1909), which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It features the depot's restored architecture and historic railroad memorabilia. The Colorado Welcome Center (Alamosa) also shares the same building. Colorado has 10 Welcome Centers, located in key entrance points across the state. In addition to purchasing tickets for the Rio Grande Scenic Railroad, the Center also offers maps, brochures and information on the whole state of Colorado, and specifically the San Luis Valley.
- The current visitor experience – Rail excursion (narrated).
- Visitor services – Train ticket purchases for a ride on the Rio Grande Scenic Railroad, maps, brochures and information on the whole state of Colorado. The Welcome Center is staffed to answer travel questions. Wi-Fi internet, restrooms, gift shop, snack bar.

3. Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad

Provides train excursions between Antonito (over the San Juan Mountains) to Chama, New Mexico. Trains are coal-fired, steam operated. Several trip options are available.

Location:	5234 B Hwy 285, Antonito, CO 81120; (719) 376-5483
Open:	Operates May through October: Seven days/week. Depending on itinerary, train departs at 10 AM; motorcoach at 8:30 AM; returns late afternoon.
Fee:	Fares range from $65-129 (adult), $32.50-39.50 (child) depending on route and seating. There is a selection of 8 train excursions.

http://www.cumbrestoltec.com

Site characteristics:

- The Story – Interprets the history and geology of the region, with special focus on the ca. 1880 Rio Grande Railroad's San Juan Extension (also known as the "Chile Line"), which served the silver mining district of the San Juan Mountains. Narrow gauge rails.
- The Site – The Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad depot is not historic (the depot, support buildings, and rail yard were built in the 1970s when the new C&TS was created). The historic depot is located further north in the center of town. The rail yard does include historic train locomotives. Engine No. 463 and the rail line itself are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- The current visitor experience – Rail excursion (narrated). Self-guided walking tour of the railyards.
- Visitor services – Train ticket purchases for a ride on the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad, maps, brochures and general visitor information. Restrooms, gift shop, snack bar.

4. Fort Garland Museum

Location: 29477 Highway 159; Fort Garland, CO 81133; 719-379-3512

Open: April–October~Daily, 9 am to 5 pm.

November–March~Thursday–Monday, 10 am to 4 pm.

Fee: Members: Free; Adults: $5.00; Seniors: $4.50; Children (6–16): $3.50; Children (under 6): Free; Group rates available.

http://www.historycolorado.org/museums/fort-garland-museum-and-pikes-stockade-0

Site characteristics:

- The Story – Fort Garland served as a U.S. military outpost between the years of 1858-1883Interpretation covers military history; the contributions of the Buffalo Soldiers (Company G of the Ninth Cavalry) and the command of Kit Carson. Additional interpretative exhibits include: Infantry and Cavalry Barracks, Indo-Hispano culture and a permanent exhibit on preservation efforts at the fort.
- The Site – The 19th century adobe fort was restored between 1945-1950 by the Colorado Historical Society. Five of the original 22 buildings are still standing, and a sixth reconstructed building has been added.
- The current visitor experience – The Fort offers educational programs and guided tours for both children and adults, as well as wayside exhibits. Historical reinactments.
- Visitor services – Restrooms, Gift Shop, Bookstore, Visitor Information, Picnic Area.

5. San Luis Museum and Cultural Center

Location: 401 Church Place; San Luis, CO 81152; (719) 672-3611

Open: Currently closed for renovations. Typically open 7 days/week Summer (Memorial Day - Labor Day), 10 AM - 4 PM; Winter (Labor day - Memorial Day) M-F, 9 AM - 3 PM

Fee: $2.00 per adult; $1.00 Students and Seniors over 65

http://www.museumtrail.org/SanLuisMuseum.asp

Site characteristics:

- The Story – History of San Luis, La Vega, the People's Ditch, the oldest family store in the state, local heritage, Hispano culture and settlement.
- The Site – Located on a plaza in the San Luis de la Culebra Historic District. The building was originally constructed in 1943 by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) as an Institute of Arts and Crafts. It was later used as a high school. Museum houses interpretative exhibits and a diorama of the village. Additionally the Museum has a replica of a Penitente Morada, complete with religious objects and Santos (carved saints), and an extensive collection of local art, including traditional embroidery and murals. Much of the original architecture (vigas and fireplace) is still

intact.
The current visitor experience – Self-guided.

- Visitor services – Gift shop, Carlos Beaubien Theatre (setting of several stage performances, presentations, and concerts). Restrooms, Visitor Information. The Gift Shop offers paintings and other art objects by various local artists.

Theme-specific Interpretive Sites

There are other important sites within the Heritage Area that relate to one or more of the overarching themes. Most do not offer regularly scheduled tours and may have irregular hours. While some have signage telling the history of the site, others currently have no interpretation and offer no information sharing.

Some of the theme-specific interpretive sites has the potential to be further enhanced through the use of interpretive tools (such as interpretive signage, small exhibits, or audio) to help tell the story of the Heritage Area.

1. La Vega and the San Luis People's Ditch

Location: South edge of town on the west side of CO Hwy 159 (Main Street); San Luis, CO 81152; (719) 672-3611

Open: N/A. Lands are not open to the general public and may only be viewed from public roads.
Fee: None

Site characteristics:

- The Story – La Vega is the only Mexican-Era land grant commons in Colorado. Continuing to serve its original purpose of communal grazing, La Vega was designated by a 1863 covenant for villagers living in the Rio Culebra Basin. Allocated for seven villages, the commons extended 18 miles south to the New Mexico border at its inception. Though La Vega has dwindled to 500-acres the commons is maintained and managed by local descendants who use the pasture. The San Luis People's Ditch is an "acequia" (gravity-fed irrigation system). Serving the village of San Luis de la Culebra before Colorado was a Territory, the People's Ditch was initially a shallow hand-dug irrigation channel. Later, oxen pulling a plow widened and extended the ditch. Operating under Water District 24 of Division 3, the People's Ditch holds the first adjudicated water rights in Colorado. The People's Ditch serves 16 "parcientes" (affiliated water users) and irrigates approximately 2100 acres of hay & other row crops. A majority of parcientes are descendants of the original founders of the acequia.
- The Site – Communal pasture land forming the far eastern boundary of the Town of San Luis. The People's Ditch runs through La Vega, under Main St. and northwest of town (four miles long).
- The current visitor experience – Self-interpreted via stone marker and through interpretive materials at the San Luis Museum and Cultural Center
- Visitor services – N/A

2. Sacred Circle Tour (Costilla County)

Location: Various Costilla County communities; 719-672-3685

Open: Church services and public hours vary. Guided tours can be arranged by request.
Fee: None

http://www.sanluispreservation.com/sacred_circle_brochure/

Site characteristics:

- The Story –The "Sacred Circle Tour" has been arranged by the Costilla County Economic Development Council in collaboration with Sangre de Cristo Parish. It features nine historic churches or missions that help interpret the religious and architectural history of Hispano settlers. It also features Capilla de Todos los Santos (ca. 1986) atop San Pedro Mesa and its associated Stations of the Cross (15 bronze sculptures).
- The Site – Nine Historic Churches/Missions:
  - Sts. Peter and Paul, San Pablo
  - San Francisco Mission, San Francisco
  - Immaculate Conception Mission, Chama
  - St. James the Less Mission, Blanca
  - San Isidro Mission, Los Fuertes
  - Holy Family Mission, Fort Garland
  - Sacred Heart Mission, Garcia
  - Sangre de Cristo Parish Church, San Luis
  - San Acacio Mission Church, San Acacio
- The current visitor experience – Self-guided via a brochure. No driving route suggested. Guided tours can be arranged by request. Visitors can also climb the half-mile trail to Capilla de Todos los Santos.
- Visitor services – N/A. Brochure encourages visitors to patronize the shops and restaurants of Costilla County.

3. Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and Conejos Plaza

Location: 6633 County Road 13; Conejos, CO 81129; (719) 376-5985
Open: Open most days; 8 AM - 7 PM in summer
Fee: None

http://www.dioceseofpueblo.com/parishes/City/bcconejos.htm

Site characteristics:

- The Story – Our Lady of Guadalupe Church is the oldest parish in Colorado. Meeting in a temporary space in 1856, the parish designation was granted in 1859. Construction of the original church commenced in 1863 and was completed in 1866. In 1926 an electrical fire destroyed the church, leaving walls and towers. The adobe towers were razed in 1948 and replaced with the contemporary brick entrance. Conejos was once a thriving community, but many businesses relocated to nearby Antonito when the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad established that town in 1880.
- The Site – The church is situated in Historic Conejos Plaza, the original plaza of the historic community of Conejos, Colorado. The plaza also houses the Conejos County Courthouse, which was built in 1981, replacing an earlier structure that burned. Many of the other historic structures around the plaza date back to the earliest settlers of the area (though most are vacant/abandoned).
- The current visitor experience – N/A
- Visitor services – N/A. The Church is surrounded by a fenced green space that contains a picnic table.

4. SPMDTU: Sociedad Proteccion Mutua De Trabajadores Unidos

Location: 601 Main Street; Antonito, CO 81120; (719) 589-5678
Open: Currently undergoing restoration. Individual tour by appointment may be possible.
Fee: None

Site characteristics:

- The Story – The SPMDTU represents the civil rights struggles of Hispano settlers in the San Luis Valley. After the forced annexation of Mexican Territory and U.S. violation of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which protected property rights of Mexicans living in the Southwest, Hispanos faced racial intolerance and land loss. Patterned after New Mexico mutual aid societies that protected the civil rights of members during industrialization of the Southwest, the Sociedad Proteccion Mutua De Trabajadores Unidos (Society for the Mutual Protection of United Workers or SPMDTU) was founded in 1900 in Antonito, Colorado.
- The Site – A large two-story building. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- The current visitor experience – N/A
- Visitor services – N/A.

5. Pike's Stockade

Location: 7 miles N by NE of Sanford, CO; (719) 379-3512
Open: The Stockade is not staffed; gate is open 8 AM to 5 PM from Memorial Day to Labor Day.
Fee: None

http://www.historycolorado.org/museums/fort-garland-museum-and-pikes-stockade-0

Site characteristics:

- The Story – Represents the capture by the Spanish of U.S. Explorer Zebulon Pike, who built a stockade on this site on the banks of the Conejos River in 1807 while exploring in Spanish territory. The journals written during his captivity in Santa Fe and published in the nineteenth century gave an expanding U.S. a hunger for the West.
- The Site – Reconstructed stockade. Listed as a National Historic Landmark.
- The current visitor experience – Self-interpreted through exhibits; interpreted at the Fort Garland Museum.
- Visitor services – Restrooms.

6. Historic Downtown Alamosa Walking Tour

Location: Tour brochures are available at the Alamosa Chamber of Commerce located at US Hwy. 160 W. (Main Street) between Denver and Ross Avenues; Alamosa, CO 81101
Open: 8 AM - 5 PM, M-F. Tour brochures are also available online, at the nearby public library, in downtown stores and restaurants, at the Rio Grande Scenic Railroad depot, and at the Alamosa Welcome Center on Sixth Street.
Fee: None

http://www.alamosa.org/images/alamosa/files/Walking_Tour_Web.pdf

Site characteristics:

- The Story – The history and architecture of Alamosa.
- The Site – The tour includes 25 historic sites, several designated on the National Register of Historic Places.
- The current visitor experience – Self-guided walking tour.
- Visitor services – Restrooms at the Chamber office.

7. Alamosa National Wildlife Refuge

Location: 9383 El Rancho Lane; Alamosa, CO 81101; (719) 589-4021
Open: Sunrise to sunset. The Visitor's Center at the Alamosa NWR is open Monday - Friday from March through October when volunteer staff is available.
Fee: None

http://alamosa.fws.gov/
http://www.fws.gov/alamosa/PDF/Alamosa_NWR_Map.pdf

Site characteristics:

- The Story – Lush wetlands provide year-round habitat for songbirds, water birds, coyotes, deer and other wildlife. Starting in 1962 a series of water works were created in the ANWR to restore some of the wetlands that were common throughout the valley when it was first settled.
- The Site – Rio Grande Nature Trail and Bluff Nature Trail.
- The current visitor experience – Self-guided with some wayside exhibits.
- Visitor services – Restrooms and visitor information at the AWR visitor center.

8. Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge

Location: 6140 County Road 15; Monte Vista, CO 81144; (719) 589-4021
Open: Sunrise to sunset. The Visitor's Center in Monte Vista NWR is volunteer staffed and usually only open in the beginning of March around the time of the Crane Festival. The Visitor's Center at the Alamosa NWR is open Monday - Friday from March through October when volunteer staff is available.
Fee: None

http://alamosa.fws.gov/
http://www.fws.gov/alamosa/PDF/Monte_Vista_NWR_Map.pdf

Site characteristics:

- The Story – Starting in 1952 a series of water works were created at the MVNWR to restore some of the wetlands that were common throughout the Valley when it was first settled. In March and September, twenty thousand migrating Sandhill Cranes use the refuge as a major stopping point. This migration is one of the Valley's greatest spectacles and is celebrated every spring in early March at the Monte Vista Crane Festival.
- The Site – A self-guided driving trail.
- The current visitor experience – Self-guided with some wayside exhibits and wildlife viewing areas.
- Visitor services – Restrooms and visitor information.

9. Blanca Wildlife Habitat Area (Blanca Wetlands)

Location: 11 miles northeast of Alamosa on County Road 2S; Alamosa, CO 81101; (719) 274-8971
Open: Closed February 15 to July 15 for nesting birds.
Fee: None

http://www.alamosa.org/bird-watching

Site characteristics:

- The Story –What appears at first glance to be a salty desert environment with flooded low areas reveals to the more studious observer a plethora of birds, amphibians, mammals, fish, and insects.
- The Site – Wetlands
- The current visitor experience – Self-guided. Wheelchair accessible trails.
- Visitor services – Restrooms and visitor information. Picnic area.

10. Denver & Rio Grande Railroad Antonito Depot

Location: Front Street near Third Avenue, Antonito, CO 81120; (719) 376-2049
Open: Not open to the public; currently undergoing restoration
Fee: N/A

Site characteristics:

- The Story – Listed on the State Register of Historic Properties, the 1880 D&RG Antonito Depot is significant for its native stone masonry. It also played a key role in the establishment of the town of Antonito by the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad. For over sixty years, the depot was the junction point for the "Chili Line" to Santa Fe, New Mexico and the railroad's San Juan Extension connecting Alamosa to Durango and Silverton. As the western-most station accommodating both narrow and standard gauge trains on the San Juan Extension, the depot was an important terminal for freight, passenger, and package services.
- The Site – Not open to the public; currently undergoing restoration.
- The current visitor experience – N/A
- Visitor services – N/A

11. Rio Costilla Studio Tour

Location: Various home, studios, and art galleries in Costilla County.
Open: Annually, two days in September.
Fee: N/A

Site characteristics:

- The Story – Group of twenty-five plus artists and craftspeople living in the watershed of the Rio Costilla. Work includes painting, print-making, photography, bronze sculpture, wood and stone carving, fine and rustic furniture, ceramics, African drums, artisan bread-baking, etc.
- The Site – Artist homes, studios and galleries are open to the public for two days (10AM-5PM) during September.
- The current visitor experience – Open house.
- Visitor services – Varies with each tour.

12. Denver & Rio Grande Railroad Locomotive No. 169

Location: Cole Park, just off US Hwy. 160 at Rio Grande bridge; Alamosa, CO 81101 (719) 589-3681
Open: Year-round/outdoor site.
Fee: N/A

Site characteristics:

- The Story – Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Alamosa's narrow-gauge locomotive 169 was built in April 1883 by Baldwin Locomotive Works in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. After decades of service in the San Luis Valley, the engine was retired in 1938 and later refurbished for display at the 1939 New York World's Fair. A restored coal car and B-1 Business Car (1881) accompany the 169.
- The Site – Outdoor pavilion in Cole Park along the Rio Grande.
- The current visitor experience – Historic locomotive; interpretive outdoor exhibits.
- Visitor services – None.

13. Luther Bean Museum

Location: 208 Edgemont Blvd, Richardson Hall, Rm #256, Adams State College; Alamosa, CO 81102; (719) 587-7151
Open: Summer Hours: Tuesday-Friday 8-4:30pm. Fall/Spring Hours (late Aug-early May): Tuesday-Friday 8-5pm. Closed major holidays and during winter break.
Fee: N/A

http://www.adams.edu/lutherbean

Site characteristics:

- The Story – The museum features an eclectic collection of Southwest and European art, artifacts, and local arts and history, including Native American and Hispano Southwest arts, paintings and bronzes by nationally and regionally known artists, and European decorative arts. Also featured is also a collection of memorabilia of the former Colorado Governor and ASC's founder William H. "Billy" Adams.
- The Site – College building.
- The current visitor experience – Self-guided.
- Visitor services – Restrooms.

14. San Luis Lakes State Park

Location: 8 miles east of Mosca, Colorado on County Road 6N; Mosca, CO 81146 (719) 378-2020
Open: Open May thru October. Wildlife area for both the park and State Wildlife Area is closed from Feb. 15th to July 15th to protect nesting waterfowl.
Fee: Daily vehicle pass for State Park: $6. A $10.25 habitat stamp is required for any State Wildlife Area. Habitat stamps can be purchased on-line (www.wildlife.state.co.us) or wherever hunting/fishing licenses are sold.

http://parks.state.co.us/parks/sanluis/

Site characteristics:

- The Story –The area features a combination of wetlands, ponds and shallow lakes, fed by intermittent water from springs and creeks. The wetlands attract a variety of ducks, geese, cranes and shorebirds.
- The Site – Shrublands of salt grass, greasewood, and rabbitbrush surround Head and San Luis Lakes. The southern one-third of the area is a state park; the northern two-thirds is the State Wildlife Area.
- The current visitor experience – Outdoor interpretive exhibits.
- Visitor services – Restrooms, wildlife viewing, visitor information, bathing beach and picnic area.

15. San Luis Valley Museum

Location: 401 Hunt Avenue; Alamosa, CO 81101; (719) 587-0667
Open: Open 10am - 4pm Tuesday through Saturday year round; Closed Sundays and Mondays.
Fee: Adults $2.00, Students and Children $1.00, and Children under 5 years old Free.

http://www.sanluisvalleymuseum.org/

Site characteristics:

- The Story – The museum contains memorabilia displaying the area's multicultural heritage representing pioneers, Indians and other settlers of the San Luis Valley. Visitors can see historical photographs, a pioneer schoolroom and Trading Post, and American Indian items, including beautiful, colorful clothing made from hides. Oriental art and a Veterans memorabilia are also on display.
- The Site – Museum
- The current visitor experience – Self-guided.
- Visitor services – Restrooms, gift shop, visitor information.

16. Zapata Falls Recreation Area

Location: 3.5 miles east of CO Hwy 150 near the Great Sand Dunes National Park; Mosca, CO 81146; (719) 274-8971
Open: Daylight
Fee: N/A.

http://www.nps.gov/archive/grsa/zapata_falls.htm

Site characteristics:

- The Story – Zapata Falls features a rock face cut by glaciers and scoured by millennia of rushing water that crashes through a 30 ft. cleft in the rock walls.
- The Site – Outdoor site. Day use only. The falls are a half-mile hike from the parking area, where mountain bike and wilderness hiking trails can also be accessed.
- The current visitor experience –Self-guided.
- Visitor services – Recreation area features restrooms, visitor information, picnic area. No camping.

17. Medano Zapata Ranch

Location: Zapata Ranch, 5305 State Highway 150, Mosca, Colorado 81146; (719) 378-2356
Open: Year round.
Fee: $1995 for 7 nights; $1565 for 5 nights; $985 for 3 nights; reduced rates for children 8 years old and under. Customized prices for corporate retreats, family reunions and business meetings.

http://zranch.org/index.cfm

Site characteristics:

- The Story – One of the largest cattle ranches in Colorado, this site represents the history of land ownership and use as it changed from Hispano sheep ranching to Anglo cattle ranching. In the 1860's Mexican families began settling the Zapata Ranch. Shortly after, Anglo cattlemen began to move into the San Luis Valley. Rivalries developed between the sheep ranchers and cattlemen over the acquisition of the land. Over time, with no legal recourse, the Mexican families sold their land to the Dickey family (or as is the case with Teofilo Trujillo, they were forced out). Soon the Dickey Brothers owned 9,000 acres and acquired leases on 90,000 more. Eventually the ranch was purchased in 1878 by William Adee, and by 1879, a store and post office were established at Zapata Ranch in what is now the headquarter buildings.
- The Site – Today the ranch is a 103,000-acre bison and guest ranch owned by the Nature Conservancy and managed through a partnership with the Duke and Janet Phillips Family-- a third-generation ranching family. The site includes the historic Zapata ranch headquarters building and bunkhouse. Both log structures, they have been remodeled to incorporate an indoor dining area and lodging for ranch guests. An old barn has been converted to an education center and meeting room.
- The current visitor experience –Working cattle ranch vacations, interpretive tours, horseback riding, photography workshops, and guided hikes.
- Visitor services – Lodging, dining. An interpretive trail with waysides is also open to the public along State Highway 150.

Events

The following events occur throughout the Heritage Area

- Semillas de la Tierra Chirstmas performance
- Mariachi conference and concert,
- Hilos Culturales summer institute
- ASC Hispanic Heritage Days
- Father's Day Low Rider Car show
- Adobe de Oro Concilio de Artes
- Santa Ana and Santiago Annual Fiestas
- Alamosa Farmers Market
- Monte Vista Crane Festival
- Summerfest on the Rio
- Early Iron Festival Car Show
- Sundays at Six (free summer concert series)
- Alamosa Round-up Rodeo

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APPENDIX G: INTERPRETIVE THEMES (SECTION 5) FROM THE FEASIBILITY STUDY (2005)

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Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area

Feasibility Study

2005

Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area

Feasibility Study

Assistance in Preparation of this Study Provided by:
Shapins Associates
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Contents

Section S: Summary S-1
Section 1: Description 1
1.1 Statement of National Importance 2
1.2 Area Concept and Description 2
1.3 Project Background 3
1.4 Mission Statement 5
Section 2: Structure 7
2.1 Steering Committee Members 8
2.2 Los Caminos Antiguos 11
Section 3: The Study Area 15
3.1 Major Topographic and Geological Features 16
3.2 The Unique Nature of the Geological and Water-related Resources of the San Luis Valley 16
3.3 Flora and Fauna 18
3.4 Natural Resources 19
3.5 Recreational Resources 24
Section 4: History and Resources 29
4.1 Prehistoric Background of the Sangre de Cristo Heritage Area 30
4.2 Use Domain 30
4.3 Land Grants and Placitas 31
4.4 The U.S. Militatary 38
4.5 Railroads 41
4.6 Religious Influences 43
4.7 The History of Education 45
4.8 The Spanish Language in the San Luis Valley 46
Section 5: Interpretive Themes 51
#1 An Alpine Valley's Wind, Water and Sand Dunes 52
#2 Land of the Blue Sky People 54
#3 Interwoven Peoples and Traditions 55
#4 Hispano Culture, Folklore, Religion and Language 58
Section 6: Comparison of Alternative Actions 61
1. Business as Usual - No Action Taken 62
2. Development as a Local Heritage Area 64
3. Develop the Area as a National Heritage Area 65
Section 7: Process and Criteria for Designation as a NHA 69
Appendices 99
Appendix A: Acknowledgements 100
Appendix B: Resolutions and Letters of Support 103
Appendix C: State and National Register Properties 112

section 5

Interpretive Themes

Cultural Event - courtesy of the Colorado Historical Society

5

INTERPRETIVE THEMES

The unique stories of people and place that the proposed Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area (SDCNHA) has to tell the rest of the nation are encompassed by four major themes. These heritage themes capture the essence of the San Luis Valley and reflect events and movements that have been important to the history of the United States. The themes were initially developed by members of the Sangre de Cristo NHA Steering Committee and later refined by committee members and others at a workshop held in March 2005. These themes were selected because they are widespread in the Sangre de Cristo region. There are widespread, well preserved and accessible cultural and natural resources throughout the proposed SDCNHA that represent each selected theme. In this section, each theme is described, its uniqueness is summarized and the outstanding resources that reflect the theme are highlighted.

valley truly unique are its hidden waters. Below the valley are two aquifers that contain an enormous quantity of water - two billion acre-feet. Despite its desert title, the valley contains 230,000 acres of wetlands which represent the most extensive wetland system in the Southern Rocky Mountains. The aquifers feed ponds, artesian wells, springs and lakes within the proposed SDCNHA which are akin to desert oases. This water replenishes the people, landscape, habitats and wildlife of the SDCNHA. Home to globally unique plant and animal species and a migration stopover for many birds, the wetlands and riparian corridors within the proposed SDCNHA teem with wildlife.

The sand dunes of the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve are another natural wonder of the proposed SDCNHA resulting as a consequence of the presence of water in the desert valley. Dunes are shaped and sustained by the dynamic interaction of sand, wind and water. Water flowing from

SANGRE DE CRISTO THEMES

1. An Alpine Valley's Wind, Water and Sand Dance

2. Land of the Blue Sky People

3. Interwoven Peoples and Traditions

4. Hispano Culture, Folklore, Religion and Language

#1. AN ALPINE VALLEY'S WIND, WATER AND SAND DANCE

Located in the heart of the San Luis Valley, the proposed SDCNHA showcases the delicate interplay of wind, water and sand that have shaped the Valley's unique landforms and contributed to its biological diversity.

The San Luis Valley is the highest and largest alpine desert valley on the North American continent. Roughly the size of New Hampshire, the valley is the highest elevation in the United States to receive such little precipitation. What makes the desert

the mountain slopes and water percolating from the valley's aquifer all contribute to the maintenance of Great Sand Dunes. Cresting at 750 feet above the valley floor, these are the highest dunes on the continent.

Among the remarkable natural resources of the proposed SDCNHA are the vast mountains and the waters that flow from them. Flanking the east side of the proposed SDCNHA, the Sangre de Cristo Mountains rise abruptly from the valley floor well over 14,000 feet. The San Juan Mountains form the western perimeter and gradually rise from the valley to the Continental Divide.

The San Juan and Sangre de Cristo mountain ranges are both part of the southern Rocky Mountains. The Sangre de Cristos contain a number of peaks over 14,000 feet, Mt Blanca, located within the study area is the highest at 14,345 feet. The Sangre de Cristos are divided between the Sangre de Cristos themselves in the northern part of the range and the Culebra Range to the south. The convergence and natural diversity of alpine tundra, tall forests of evergreen and aspen, massive desert dunes, spacious grasslands, and verdant montane wetlands in the Sangre de Cristo Range is unique to the North American landscape. Just miles from its headwaters in the San Juan Mountains, the mighty Rio Grande traverses through the SDCNHA as it works its way across the state line and into New Mexico.

The incredible natural resources of the proposed SDCNHA draw a number of visitors. The region is becoming increasingly popular for recreation including hiking, camping, rock climbing, mountain biking, horseback riding, ice climbing, snowmobiling, and backcountry skiing. Given its location in the Rocky Mountain Flyway and its abundance of public lands, the area is especially well-suited for bird watching and other forms of wildlife observation. For many visitors, the geographic isolation of the valley and abundance of public lands provides a coveted place for exploration, adventure and solitude.

Distinctiveness of theme

The abundance of water in the Sangre de Cristo NHA distinguishes the area from other alpine valleys in the Rocky Mountains and the Desert Southwest. No other National Heritage Area has explored the role of water in shaping an alpine desert valley's natural wonders and biological diversity. The proposed SDCNHA is a distinctive natural setting where residents and visitors can experience an alpine desert valley with wetlands and stream corridors that are green with life, a stunning mountain backdrop featuring 14,000 foot peaks, and the tallest sand dunes on the continent.

Related Resources

Resources that express this theme are outstanding both in quality and quantity. The amount of public land ensures that the natural resources are accessible and highly visible. Natural resources that reveal the "hidden waters" of the Valley include wetlands, playas and artesian wells. The lush stream sides of willow and cottonwoods along the Rio Grande, Conejos River and other clear mountain streams also showcase the habitat virtues of water in a desert valley. Finally, the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve is a feature of the SDCNHA that represents the culmination of the Valley's wind, water and sand dance. Other outstanding resources and events associated with this natural heritage theme include the following:

Federal Lands:

- 1 National Park (NPS): Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve
- 3 National Wildlife Refuges (USFWS): Baca NWR, Monte Vista NWR, Alamosa NWR Every spring, the Monte Vista NWR hosts a Crane Festival which draws thousands to observe and celebrate the sandhill crane migration.
- 1 National Forest (USFS): Rio Grande National Forest
- 2 National Forest Wilderness Areas (USFS): Sangre de Cristo Wilderness, San Juan Wilderness
- 1 Proposed National Natural Landmark (NPS): the Rio Grande
- BLM Land: Blanca Wetlands Complex, Blanca Special Recreation Management Area (SMRA), Rio Grande SRMA

State Lands:

- 15 State Wildlife Areas (SWA): Higel SWA, Playa Blanca SWA, San Luis Lakes SWA, Conejos County Ponds SWA, Conejos River SWA (fishing easement), Hot Creek SWA, La Jara Reservoir SWA, La Jara SWA, Poso SWA, Sego Springs SWA, Terrace Reservoir SWA, Trujillo Meadows SWA, Mountain Home Reservoir SWA, Sanchez Reservoir SWA, Smith Reservoir SWA
- San Luis Lakes State Park

The Nature Conservancy:

In 1999, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) purchased the 97,000 acre Baca Ranch, a historic ranch that dates from an 1824

Mexican land grant. The acquisition thwarted a plan to export water from the valley to Front Range communities to the east. The Nature Conservancy currently hosts a number of environmental education and natural history programs and workshops at the Medano-Zapata Ranch.

#2. LAND OF THE BLUE SKY PEOPLE

Interwoven with the proposed SDCNHA's natural environment is a very long and rich human history. Prehistoric occupation of the proposed SDCNHA began at the end of the last Ice Age over 11,000 years ago. The Utes, the oldest continuous residents of what is now Colorado, arrived in the Sangre de Cristo region as early as 1300 A.D. and their occupation of the valley spans the late prehistoric and early historic time periods. For prehistoric and Native American cultures, the SDCNHA served as a seasonal hunting ground attractive because of its water resources and abundant wildlife. Drawn to the areas water and wildlife, Paleoindian hunters as well as later Archaic hunter gathers and the Utes congregated in the SDCNHA's wetland areas. Archeological finds including projectile points, pottery shards and grinding stones suggest that families camped in these areas seasonally.

Around 11,200 years before present (yBP), the earliest known inhabitants, the nomadic hunters and gatherers of the Clovis Complex, were drawn to the Sangre de Cristo region's abundance of big game animals such as bison and mammoth. Another group of nomadic hunters, the Folsom Complex, were also focused on hunting bison in the Sangre de Cristo region and persisted in the Valley for about 700 years until about 10, 200 yBP ending with the extinction of the *Bison antiquus*. Distinct and crafted fluted Folsom projectile points have been found in prehistoric campsites within the study area. Archeological artifacts reveal prehistoric cultures occupying the valley at various times. Archeological evidence of subsistence patterns of the people of the Archaic Tradition (7,500 – 1,500 yBP) also reveals close ties to the Valley's natural resources. These people survived by hunting big game species, smaller animals and gathering plants.

Following the Archaic Tradition, the proposed SDCNHA became an important hunting ground for a number of tribes. By 1400 AD, Native American tribes from throughout the region were utilizing the San Luis Valley to some degree. Apache and Navajo came from the north, Pueblo (Tiwa and Tewa) people from the south; Comanche, Kiowa, Cheyenne and Arapaho traversed the eastern plains; and the Ute people came from the west. From the 1600s to the mid-1800s, it was the Ute Indians that laid claim to the valley in search of game and plants. The crystalline mountain panorama and startling clarity of the sky in the Valley and elsewhere in Colorado, so impressed visiting plains tribesman that they called the Ute the "Blue Sky People".

Similar to the prehistoric cultures, neither the Utes nor other tribes established permanent settlements in the valley. For the Native American tribes, the Sangre de Cristo region was valued as a seasonal hunting ground where bands of tribes would migrate once the snow melted off the high mountain passes. Native peoples also came to the Valley in search of turquoise, a prized mineral. One of the Valley's two known prehistoric turquoise mines, the King Mine, is located in the proposed SDCNHA and may be the oldest turquoise mine worked by prehistoric people of North America.

Apart from its abundance of fowl and game, the landscape of the SDCNHA carries special significance for various Native American tribes. Select landscape features in the SDCNHA have long been revered as sacred. For example, the Tewa Pueblo tell stories about the first human beings emerging from the underworld through a hole, a *sipapu*, in a lake near the Sand Dunes. Mount Blanca, or Sierra Blanca, a landmark within the SDCNHA figures in several Indian legends. For the Navajo, Mount Blanca or *Sisnaajini* is the sacred mountain of the east that marks the boundary of their world.

Distinctiveness of theme

Human habitation of the San Luis Valley stretches back into distant time and provides a unique opportunity to interpret the nomadic patterns of ancient and native peoples. At the end of the Ice Age when large portions of the

continent were still covered in ice, a corridor of land along the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains enabled nomadic hunters from the north to enter the plains. From this point on, the proposed SDCNHA served prehistoric and Native American cultures as a seasonal hunting ground where fowl, game and edible and medicinal plants were bountiful.

Related Resources
A variety of site types associated with prehistoric cultures are found in the area including evidence of prehistoric campsites, animal kill sites, rock enclosures, and stone quarry sites. Numerous cliffs and outcrops around the proposed SDCNHA bear pictographs and petroglyphs recorded by prehistoric and historic native peoples.

Other outstanding archeological resources are associated with this cultural heritage theme including the following:

- A concentration (100 trees) of peeled Ponderosa trees along Medano Creek in Great Sands National Park and Preserve that date from 1815-1846. The inner Ponderosa bark was a food staple for the Ute peoples and was used for is medicinal properties
- The historic Medano-Zapata Ranch, managed by The Nature Conservancy, encompasses land that was a Stone Age bison kill site and later a pre-historic Native American camp.
- Linger Folsom site, a bison kill site and Zapata Folsom site, a temporary camp site most-likely associated with the bison kill event. Also, Stewart's Cattle Guard site, a short-term bison kill and processing site.
- *Sacred Landscapes*: Mt Blanca, San Luis Lakes (believed to be the location of the Tewa Pueblo's sipapu)
- *Rio Grande Rock Art*: Concentrations of petroglyphs and pictographs are clearly visible along the Rio Grande corridor within the proposed SDCNHA.

#3. INTERWOVEN PEOPLES AND TRADITIONS
The proposed SDCNHA is steeped in history - a history of settlement, survival and persistence and claims some notable "firsts". The *first* permanent non-Native American settlements in what is now Colorado occurred within in the proposed SDCNHA, in 1851 in the town of San Luis. In the same year, a group of Hispanos filed Colorado's *first* recorded water right, the San Luis People's Ditch. More important than these early achievements, however, is the role of the Sangre de Cristo region as a historic crossroad - a place where different peoples have converged for thousands of years. The proposed SDCNHA represents a profound historical, religious and cultural convergence that remains visible in the landscape and can be experienced through the area's development patterns, art, food, lodging and events. Here the traditions of Hispanos, Native American, Mormon, Amish, Japanese-American, and Anglos have intermingled and persisted.

Historically, mountain passes served as the gateway to the San Luis Valley. Utes, explorers, Midwestern homesteaders, Japanese Americans, and railroads all arrived in the valley via openings in the Sangre de Cristo and San Juan mountain ranges. Each of the newcomers regardless of the era of their arrival left a story that can be interpreted through the landscape.

While traveling through the proposed SDCNHA, a visitor will be struck by the authenticity of the region's cultural landscape. Visitors can experience numerous historic Hispano communities such as San Luis, the oldest continuously occupied town in Colorado, with its plaza, vegas, adobe structures, fine churches, local artifacts, authentic restaurants and B &B's. On the same trip visitors can see the historic Mormon towns of Manassa and Sanford that illustrate the tightly gridded streets and clustered homes of the early settlers and pass through the numerous railroad towns that sprung up during the 1920s. Fertile agricultural fields, if interpreted, could help one understand why Japanese-Americans moved into the area to operate highly productive truck farms. Throughout the proposed SDCNHA, visitors see vast expanses of rangeland and get a sense for what western cattle ranches are like.

Other groups that have helped settle the area include the Dutch, whose descendents

live in the Waverly District located southwest of Alamosa. Dutch Colonial Revival Architecture is found throughout the proposed area. Displaced farmers from eastern Colorado who were relocated by the government during the Great Depression also settled in the area. Due, in part, to the excellent quality of the agricultural land, the acceptance of diversity and the remoteness of the area numerous Amish families have recently moved to the Valley. These new arrivals attest to the persistent attractiveness of the lands and quality of life within the proposed SDCNHA and add yet another layer to the diverse mix of people and traditions.

Land Grants & Early Settlement Patterns

Large Mexican land grants laid the foundation for the settlement of the proposed SDCNHA. Land grants made by the Mexican governments in 1843 and 1844 were intended as incentives to encourage permanent settlement and increase the population and productivity of the what is today considered the Southwest. The land grants were noteworthy in size. For example, the Sangre de Cristo grant (represented today by the boundary of Costilla County) was nearly one million acres and was the largest privately held parcel of land ever to exist in Colorado. U.S. Geologic Survey maps of the area still reveal the boundary of the Sangre de Cristo and the Baca grants – the Sangre de Cristo grant has been broken down into private land parcels while the Baca Grant has recently been acquired by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and was transferred to the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the National Park Service (NPS) and the US Forest Service (USFS) to form the Baca National Wildlife Refuge (Baca NWR). This action forming the Baca NWR, created the Great Sand Dunes National Park and made additions to the Rio Grande National Forest.

Early settlement patterns were rooted in Spanish agricultural traditions and were shaped in response to the Valley's geographical features and encounters with Native American tribes. Indian raids were a constant threat and settlers clustered together in small villages around a traditional plaza rather than homesteading alone on their land. In keeping with Spanish traditions, land grant settlers laid fields out in long, narrow strips from 55 to 1000 feet long in fertile valley bottoms for cultivation. A combination of privately and publicly owned land characterized these early settlements. Settlers typically constructed their homes around a central plaza and reserved the most prominent lots for churches and government buildings. Individual plots usually filled the irrigatable land leaving pastures, hillsides, and watering places to be held in common for livestock, gathering, timber harvesting and other uses.

Irrigation was always a priority for the settlers, and the construction of irrigation ditches, or *acequias* to irrigate wheat, beans, corn and vegetable gardens followed settlement. The plazas and irrigation ditches that characterize these early settlements are still evident on the landscape today.

It was not until the U.S. government took control of the region in 1846 from Mexico and provided additional protection from Native Americans that typical homesteading where ranchers lived on their ranch holdings took place. Ranching and farming initiated through these large land grants remains a mainstay of the rural economy and the open expanses of agricultural land continue to characterize the valley landscape.

Railroads & Mines

Railroads and mines were integral economic activities in the late nineteenth century after the United States government acquired control of the San Luis Valley from Mexico. Following the 1859 discovery of gold in Colorado development of the San Luis Valley escalated. Precious metals, gold and silver found in isolated pockets in the Sangre de Cristo and San Juan Mountains attracted prospectors. With the miners came railroads, farms and cattle ranches. By 1878, the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad had descended into the valley to Alamosa from La Veta Pass. Subsequent railroad lines linked Alamosa to Española, New Mexico and Antonito to Chama, New Mexico. As a result of the railroad that continued to build lines through the end of the nineteenth century, towns such Antonito grew and flourished.

From Antonito, the "Chili Line" once

provided a link to Taos and Española to the south while other lines connected the area to Alamosa and points further north and east. Here the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, has vintage steam-powered locomotives and wooden passenger cars that wind through spectacular scenery as it traverses the San Juan Mountains on route to Chama, New Mexico. Visitors can ride for 64 miles along the same narrow gauge route that the Rio Grande Railroad used to serve the silver mines of Southwest Colorado. At Cumbres Pass, the Los Caminos Antiquos Scenic and Historic Byway and the railroad rise over 10,000 feet and provide exhilarating views through the mountains, meadows and woodlands that have remained virtually unchanged for over 120 years.

19th Century U.S. Military Forts

Before any permanent settlements were established in the San Luis Valley, Mexico ceded all of the Southwest to the United States as a result of the Mexican War of 1846. The Utes did not recognize the United States newly acquired control of the Valley and disrupted early settlements. The government recognized that if the fledgling Mexican settlements were to survive, a military presence was essential. The military built two permanent forts in the proposed SDCNHA, Fort Massachusetts (1852) and Fort Garland (1858). Fort Massachusetts was quickly rendered ineffective and was abandoned, today only ruins remain at its site. The forts consolidated and solidified the new government's expansionist ideas. Unlike Spain and Mexico, the U.S. was intent on realizing its "Manifest Destiny" and would use a military presence to ensure that its newly acquired land was settled properly.

The forts are further evidence of the blending of cultures as the U.S. military fort construction reflects the adobe vernacular architecture of the Hispano settlers. Residents of the Culebra River Villages were hired to construct Fort Garland and instruct the soldiers on adobe construction and maintenance. Fort Garland opened in 1858 and was occupied by the military for 25 years, closing in 1883. Kit Carson, commanded the fort for a period, and helped shape peace with Chief Ouray and the Utes. Fort Garland is also noteworthy because one of the two African American military regiments, the 9th Calvary, was stationed at Fort Garland in 1875-76.

Uniqueness

The degree to which historic settlement patterns remain visible in the landscape of the San Luis Valley is unique among National Heritage Areas. Additionally, old ways of working the land are still employed in the proposed SDCNHA and continue to be passed down through generations of farmers and ranchers as evidenced by the ubiquitous presence of irrigation ditches. Despite the advent of the pivot, a modern-day irrigation device, acequias and flood irrigation remains the operational standard in the Sangre de Cristo region.

Related Resources

The mix of cultural traditions remains visible and easily accessible in the proposed SDCNHA. In fact, *Los Caminos Antiguos Scenic and Historic Byway*, a 129-mile stretch of Colorado highway links many of the key cultural resources in the proposed SDCNHA. An interpreted drive through the area will bring to life the different settlement eras. Some notable places that evoke the layered history and traditions of the proposed SDCNHA include:

- Antonito, home to the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad Depot. The Cumbres & Toltec Railroad was built in the 1880s as and extension of the Rio Grande Railroad that served the silver mines of southwestern Colorado. Today, visitors can ride in the original rail cars, powered by the steam-powered locomotives, on a 64-mile scenic tour to Chama, New Mexico. The train weaves its way through the San Juan Mountains, crossing the state border 11 times along its route.
- Centennial ranches (i.e. Gonzales Farm and Rio Culebra Ranch). Medano-Zapata Ranch, managed by The Nature Conservancy is a historic ranch and very valuable water rights that date from the 1824 Mexican land grant.
- Early Hispano settlements such as San Luis, Antonito, People's Ditch (acequia)
- Historic Mormon settlements such as

Manassa and Sanford
- Military structures such as Pike's Stockade and Fort Garland

#4. HISPANO CULTURE
A cradle of Colorado history lying at the intersection of the Hispano Southwest and the Anglo Rocky Mountain West, the proposed SDCNHA is culturally unique among National Heritage Areas. Today the San Luis Valley exists as a recognizable subcategory of western culture. Valley settlers have clung to traditions much longer than other Coloradoans and, as a result, the San Luis Valley has endured as an alternative to the Rocky Mountain culture. The flavor and character of Hispano culture thrives in the SDCNHA. Main streets lined with murals, historic adobe churches and delicious tamales all represent the unique Hispano stamp of the San Luis Valley. The proposed SDCNHAs art, language, architecture, folklore and traditions remain evocative of the region's early Spanish colonists and Mexican settlers.

The greater endurance of traditional values and practices in the Sangre de Cristo region may be attributed to the geographic isolation of the valley. The resiliency of the area residents and their willingness to adapt, but not fully assimilate to modern ways also lends the area a special character. Residents of the proposed SDCNHA and their ancestors have clung steadfastly to their traditional culture and continue to resist the influences of newcomers. Time-honored Hispano traditions and lifestyles that have been passed on through the generations remain integral to modern day living in the region.

Religion
From the earliest days of settlement, religion was a central facet of life in the San Luis Valley. Churches and murals throughout the area attest to the strong faith of the settlers as well as the modern-day adherence to sacred traditions. Among the historic churches is, Our Lady of Guadalupe located just south of Conejos. John Lamy, the first bishop of Santa Fe, oversaw its construction in the 1850s making it the oldest parish in Colorado.

The story of *Los Hermanos Penitentes* (commonly known as the *Penitentes*) is rooted in Hispano traditions and remains a part of the area's landscape today. This religious and fraternal order arrived in the New World from Spain at the time of the conquistadors and eventually sent brothers into the San Luis Valley because of the region's remote location and lack of Catholic priests. The brotherhood has played a role in nearly every Hispanic community in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado since 1850. In addition to substituting for resident clergy and undertaking spiritual matters, the brothers also took responsibility for the charitable and economic needs among their communities. The brothers' meeting places, *Moradas*, traditional simple adobe structures are found within the study area and some are still in use.

Music, Art, Architecture
Hispano influences can also be found in the area's music, arts, and architecture. Hispano music is a mixture of Spanish classical sounds melded with native instruments and rhythms to create a Indo-Hispano music. More traditional Mexican Mariachi bands are also found in the proposed SDCNHA. Along with music comes dancing and Spanish Colonial folk dances are well preserved and still practiced in the area.

Local festivals and events are a deep expression of the area's Hispano traditions that take place throughout the year in this area. Ceremonies, pilgrimages and festivals such as the Santa Ana and Santiago Festival are more than 150 years old and are still active today. Like the festivals, much of the art in the area is based on religious traditions. For example, artisans in the proposed SDCNHA still create religious icons such as Santero carvings and ¾ size bronze "the Stations of the Cross" statues.

Other art traditions include weaving, a craft that arose during the heyday of sheep ranching in the Valley. Weavings from the proposed SDCNHA are nationally famous and include Eppie Archuleta's traditional Rio Grande Weaving style.

Finally, the area's historic towns showcase the traditional adobe style of architecture.

Churches and civic buildings built in this style are evidence of the influence of Hispano traditions and sit in contrast to the rail road towns like Alamosa that contain mostly brick buildings.

San Luis, Colorado's oldest continuously inhabited community was established by Hispano settlers in 1851 and stands as an excellent demonstration of Hispano culture. The town's architecture, food, layout and religious structures all reflect the traditions of the early settlers.

Language

The Spanish language of the area's first colonialists remains the dominant language in the proposed SDCNHA. Remarkably, the geographic isolation of the San Luis Valley has ensured that pure Castilian Spanish of Spain's royal court is still spoken in certain remote villages of the Sangre de Cristo region. More common, however, is a Spanish dialect that reveals the slow mixing of culture overtime as Castilian and Mexican Spanish and, in some cases, English have all blended.

Uniqueness of theme

The residents of the proposed SDCNHA, many of them descendents of the original settlers, proudly share many Hispano traditions including recipes for distinctive dishes, traditional farming techniques and religious celebrations. The Sangre de Cristo region is an attractive destination for heritage tourists in search of an opportunity to experience authentic Hispano culture. Despite changes in political jurisdiction – from Spanish, to Mexican to United States control, the roots of the earliest settlers are still in tact.

Related Resources

The clarity and pervasiveness of Hispano culture in the proposed SDCNHA can not be overstated. The area's Hispano heritage is accessible and readily apparent to the visitor entering the Sangre de Cristo region. While the flavor of Hispano culture is palpable in communities throughout the proposed SDCNHA, two towns in particular are noteworthy for their rich cultural heritage – San Luis and Antonito. These historic Hispano towns and their surrounding villages contain moradas, historic *placitas* (plazas), historic churches, artwork, authentic cuisine and regularly host festivals and religious celebrations.

Suitability of the Themes

SDCNHA reveals a number of stories and interpretive themes that are not currently interpreted by other national heritage areas. Together, these themes represent a unique aspect of American heritage worthy of recognition, preservation, interpretation, celebration and use. The interpretive themes of the proposed SDCNHA possess the qualities of good storytelling; they are engaging and understandable without qualifications or special terminology. The stories are tangible; their characters are reflective of the abundant natural and cultural resources found in the landscape. The themes also lend themselves to expansion. Within each theme are numerous sub-themes that overtime can be called upon to more profoundly convey the stories of the Sangre de Cristo region.

Relation to the NPS Thematic Framework

The Sangre de Cristo NHA themes fit within the Thematic Framework adopted by the National Park Service in 1994 for interpreting the role of historic sites in American history. Of the eight major historic themes that the NPS identified to represent the diverse aspects of our nation's history, the proposed SDCNHA's heritage resources fit mainly in the following NPS categories:

1. Peopling Places
2. Expressing Cultural Values
3. Developing the American Economy
4. Transforming the Environment

The San Luis Valley is undeniably unique, and the proposed SDCNHA possesses qualities that distinguish it from Colorado and the Rocky Mountain West. The proposed National Heritage Area and its interpretive themes capture an aspect of our country's story that has not yet been interpreted and celebrated by other national heritage areas.

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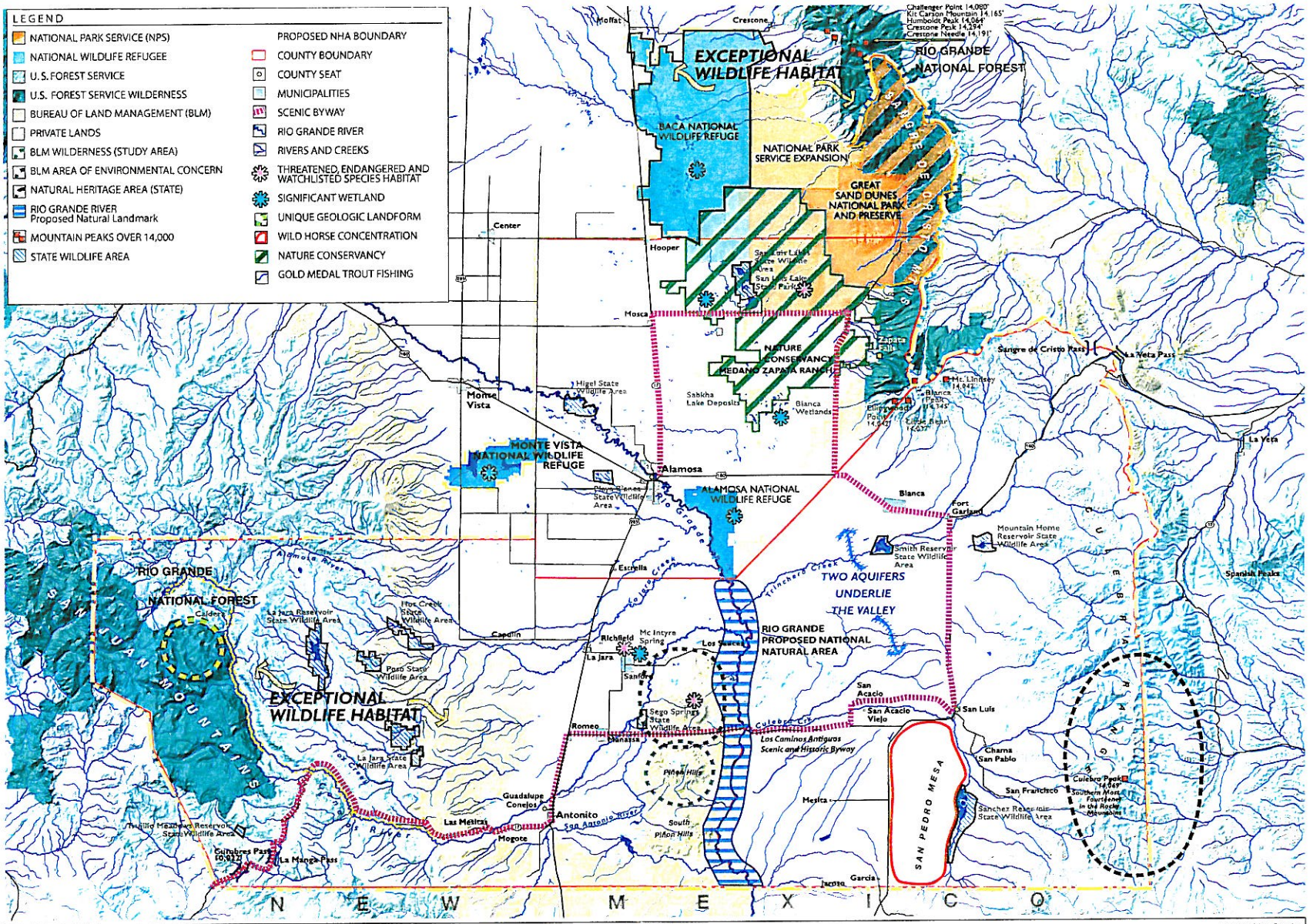
Trimble, S. 2001. *Great Sand Dunes: The shape of the wind.* Southwest Parks and Monuments Association, p.32

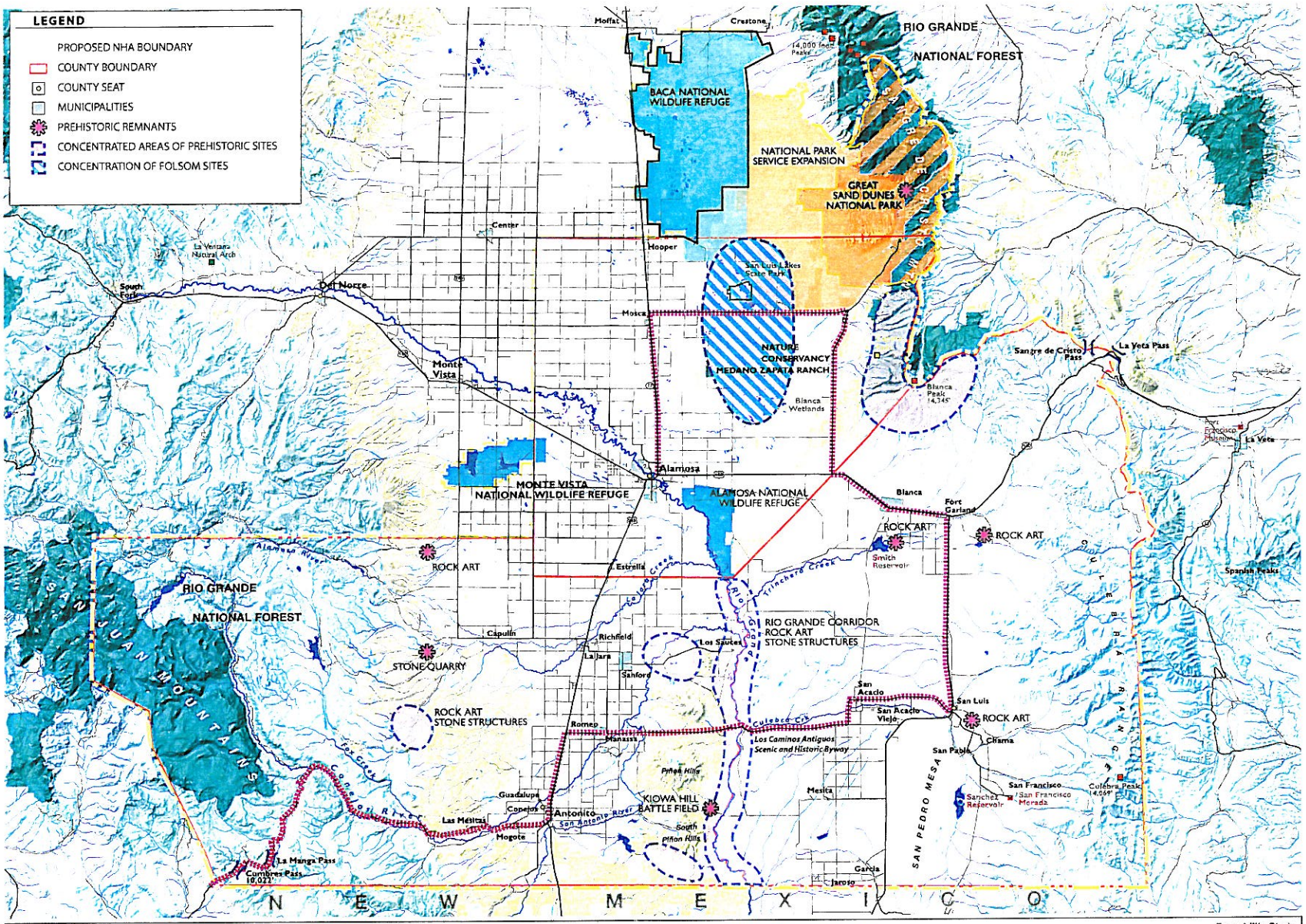


NATURAL RESOURCES - Proposed Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area

Feasability Study
November 2005

Our Traditions Live On
The Counties of Alamosa, Conejos and Costilla

SHAPINS ASSOCIATES
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS BOULDER, COLORADO

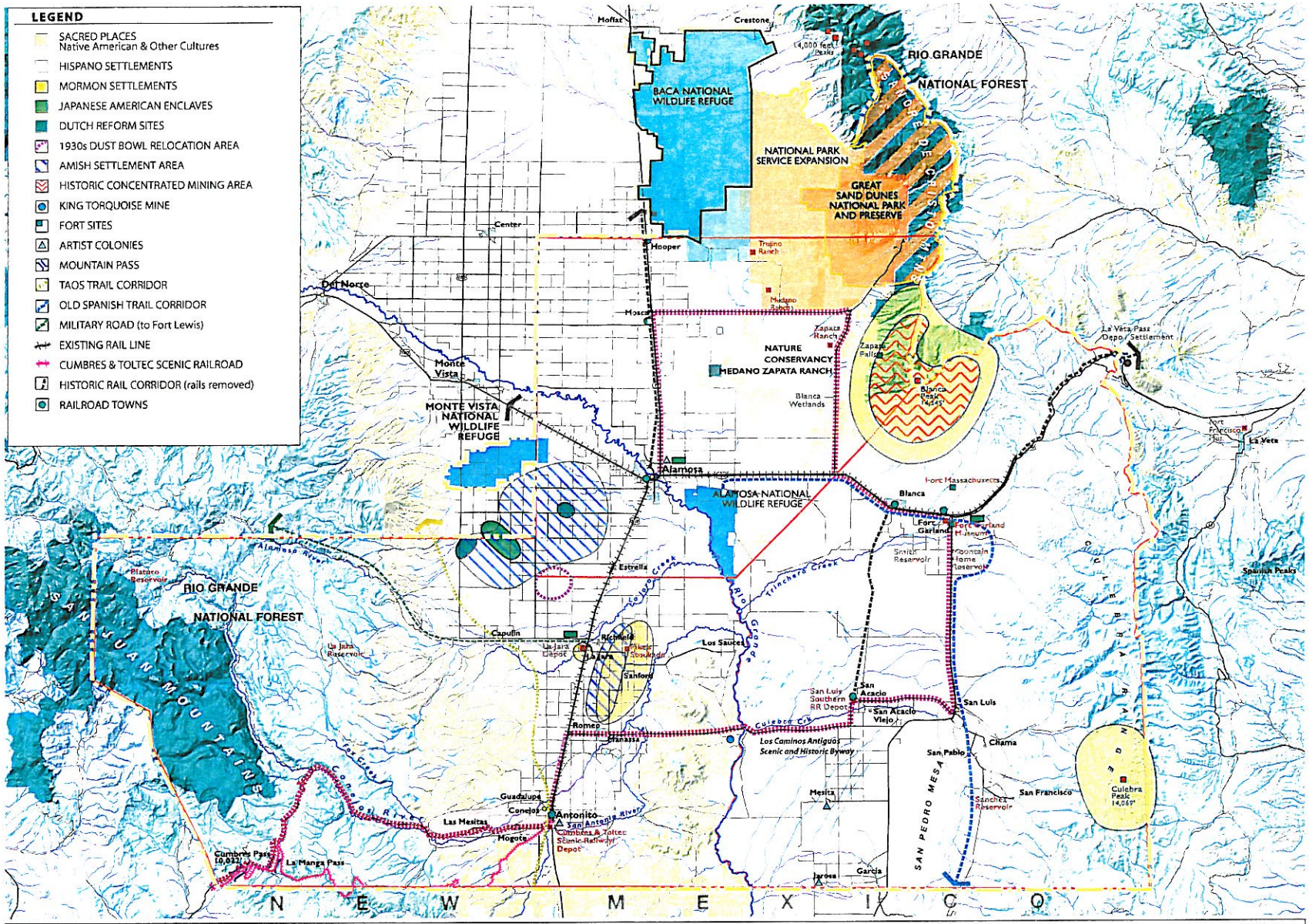


LAND OF THE BLUE SKY PEOPLE - Proposed Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area

Feasibility Study
November 2005

Our Traditions Live On
The Counties of Alamosa, Conejos and Costilla

SHAPINS ASSOCIATES
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS BOULDER, COLORADO

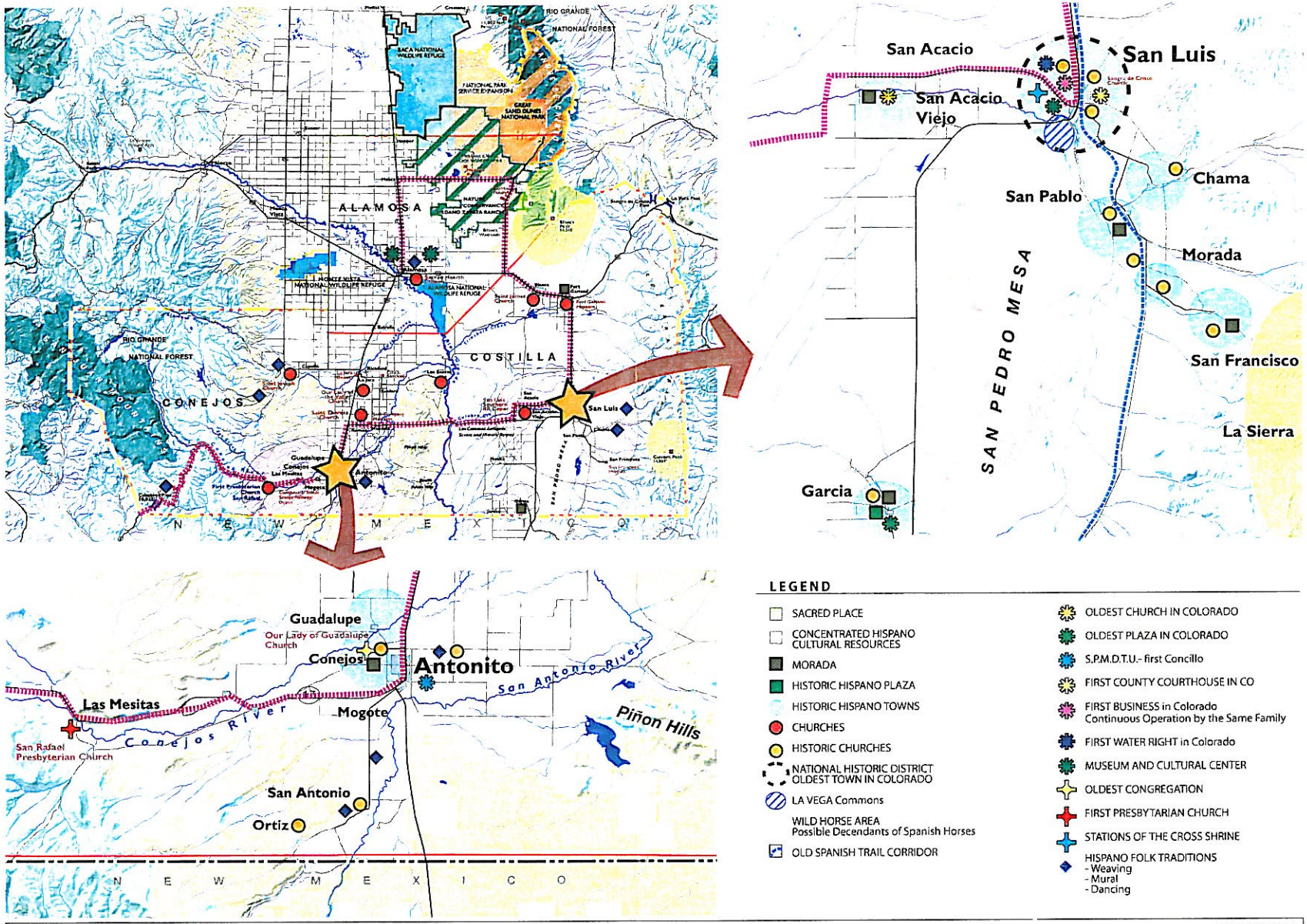


AMALGAMATION OF CULTURES - Proposed Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area

Our Traditions Live On
The Counties of Alamosa, Conejos and Costilla

Feasibility Study
November 2005

SHAPINS ASSOCIATES
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS & REGIONAL PLANNERS



LEGEND

- SACRED PLACE
- CONCENTRATED HISPANO CULTURAL RESOURCES
- MORADA
- HISTORIC HISPANO PLAZA
- HISTORIC HISPANO TOWNS
- CHURCHES
- HISTORIC CHURCHES
- NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICT OLDEST TOWN IN COLORADO
- LA VEGA Commons
- WILD HORSE AREA Possible Decendants of Spanish Horses
- OLD SPANISH TRAIL CORRIDOR
- OLDEST CHURCH IN COLORADO
- OLDEST PLAZA IN COLORADO
- S.P.M.D.T.U.- first Concillo
- FIRST COUNTY COURTHOUSE IN CO
- FIRST BUSINESS in Colorado Continuous Operation by the Same Family
- FIRST WATER RIGHT in Colorado
- MUSEUM AND CULTURAL CENTER
- OLDEST CONGREGATION
- FIRST PRESBYTARIAN CHURCH
- STATIONS OF THE CROSS SHRINE
- HISPANO FOLK TRADITIONS
  - Weaving
  - Mural
  - Dancing

HISPANO CULTURE - Proposed Sangre de Cristo National heritage Area

Our Traditions Live On

The Counties of Alamosa, Conejos and Costilla

Feasability Study
November 2005

North

MILES 0 1 2 3 4 5 10

SHAPINS ASSOCIATES
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS BOULDER COLORADO

APPENDIX H: Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area Sample Implementation Guide for Annual Work Planning

The following is an illustration of a three-year implementation guide for annual work planning and is intended to assist the Board of Directors and staff in considering priorities, phasing, and short-term objectives for the many strategic objectives and actions described in the management plan. This illustration assumes that the following are top priorities:

- Encouraging communities to undertake **historic preservation and community revitalization planning** and projects that will **save important historic resources** and provide the economic impetus for community improvements.
- Undertaking a wide variety of **heritage area-wide interpretive initiatives** to achieve greater visibility and enhanced interpretive presentations for residents and visitors. These initiatives will focus on interpreting communities and the natural landscape. Community interpretation through oral history is a possibility (and described in Chapter 6), but not an early focus given the large number of high-priority activities identified in the plan.
- **Connecting local culture and interpretive attractions with the local school system** (seven districts), to ensure that the next generation is prepared to become stewards of the magnificent legacy of the National Heritage Area.
- Emphasizing **interpretation of the natural landscape**, to include enhancing and expanding (1) public access to that landscape on public lands and through community-based recreational initiatives, and (2) available information about recreational opportunities on public lands. The heritage area's focus, however, is on interpretive presentation and visitor information.
- **Ensuring that the visitor is warmly welcomed and has a great experience**, whether encountering businesses, attractions, public services, event participants, or simply someone on the street or at a shop.
- **Marketing the heritage area** in parallel to development of interpretive presentation, focusing first on residents and audiences at existing attractions and events, then on nearby "drive markets," and later seeking a wider audience through national and international recognition. Many interpretive activities are considered to be partly marketing in nature, such as the heritage area's website.
- **Seeking visibility.** Achieving **wider recognition of the national importance of the unique heritage of the southern San Luis Valley** must be a focus of all of the heritage area's communications, whether with residents or visitors, through marketing and interpretation, or through simple, standard ways of reaching out to the public. While marketing may be designed to increase the number of visitors to the San Luis Valley, this point is a wider one, that the National Heritage Area should be understood by one and all to be a special place worthy of exploration and stewardship.
- Creating a Partner Development Program that acknowledges that many of the activities that the National Heritage Area can and will undertake will **build the capabilities of stakeholders who can help to implement this plan**, and ensuring (1) that this approach is deliberately reinforced as programs are designed that achieve one or more strategic objectives, and (2) that partners understand this relationship and its multiple benefits. Grants should be understood to be a part of this program, but not the only part. Partners are stakeholders in the San Luis Valley with the ability to influence the implementation of the plan, and include local governments, community groups, interpretive attractions (local, state, and federal), and many specialized organizations supporting the arts, education, history, recreation, and conservation.

- **Building relationships** with a wide variety of actors that can assist in the implementation of this plan. Specifically mentioned here are local governments, local economic development agencies, organizations and agencies supporting historic preservation, educational institutions, and elected officials.

Chapters 4 & 9 • Phased Implementation – Historic Preservation and Community Revitalization

All Strategic Objectives for Historic Preservation

- Connect with federal and state initiatives
- Continue to inventory and study historic resources
- Provide regional leadership in developing public appreciation, advocacy, technical information, and training to encourage local action
- Provide technical assistance and financial support

All Strategic Objectives for Community Revitalization

- Establish a community revitalization program for communities to develop individual plans and programs
- Encourage communities to use community interpretation and heritage tourism as central components of their community revitalization plans
- Establish a quality assurance program to recognize the efforts of participating visitor service providers and interpretive sites
- Create a San Luis Valley/Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area brand for local products representative of local character and culture
- Encourage local entrepreneurs

CONCEPT: Develop programs in support of the Community Revitalization Program, in tandem with an emphasis on historic preservation, recognizing where elements of the Partner Development Program overlap and working to reinforce these. Emphasize the importance of historic preservation, interpretation, and heritage tourism in Community Revitalization Plans for Cornerstone and Valley Communities. For smaller communities especially (aiming for Heritage Community status), consider projects to support community memory and pride in heritage, with guidance from Chapter 6. Community Revitalization Plans are described in Chapter 9, sidebar on p. 9-xx.

Activity – Chapters 4 & 9	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Community Revitalization Program	• Work with the four proposed Cornerstone Communities on prototype Community Revitalization Plans customized to their interests and capabilities based on strategies, programs, and actions outlined in the management plan • Identify implementation projects for National Heritage Area support in accordance with heritage area goals, principles, and processes, focusing on interpretation and heritage tourism	• Refine process for developing Community Revitalization Plans • Choose four additional communities of varying sizes and with varying goals as demonstration communities to continue developing examples. Consider including a community to the north of Alamosa as a fifth entrance community (Meet with other communities to begin dialogue about projects and goals • Work with partnering organizations to identify and obtain resources, including	• Continue developing Community Revitalization Plans • Create a Community Revitalization Grant Program to support participating communities in the development and implementation of Community Revitalization Plans (Both are Partner Development Programs)

Activity – Chapters 4 & 9	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Community Revitalization Program, cont'd	• Encourage towns with historic commercial areas to plan governmental investment and programs for encouraging private investment and improving the visitor experience (All are Partner Development Programs)	funding and technical assistance, that can be used to help develop, support, and implement approved Community Revitalization Plans (All are Partner Development Programs)	
Community entry signs		Create a system of community entry signs to support the National Heritage Area's community designation program	Continue
Technical assistance to communities for planning	Provide technical assistance to communities for planning initiatives and particular projects where appropriate, as possible and needed outside the focus on Community Revitalization Plans (Partner Development Program)	Continue	Continue
Planning tools for communities	Assess needs for planning tools as Community Revitalization Plans are prepared	• Create a program to assist communities in developing planning tools to guide good decision-making in preserving historic resources and community character (Partner Development Program) • Encourage communities to consider and adopt planning processes and techniques that strengthen communities and enhance community character	Continue
Community preservation and cultural resource plans		Encourage and assist counties and local communities with preparation and implementation of preservation and cultural resource plans (Partner Development Program)	Continue
Local economic development agencies	Build relationships and explore ways to identify place-based development strategies for older commercial areas of mutual interest (Partner Development Program)	• Obtain planning resources, training, and assistance for communities (Partner Development Program) • Develop a training program in tax and funding strategies for historic preservation and rehabilitation options for property owners, real estate and commercial business salespeople, real estate advisors, and others who can influence commercial development in older buildings	Continue

Activity – Chapters 4 & 9	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Nonprofit, statewide, and national organizations	Build relationships and explore ways to obtain planning resources, training, and assistance for local communities (Partner Development Program)	Look for and seize opportunities to encourage partners and outside organizations to develop cooperative programs, including use of National Heritage Area grants (Partner Development Program)	Evaluate existing efforts and ensure that a range of resources are available to partners, including National Heritage Area workshops as needed (Partner Development Program)
Bricks-and-mortar preservation and rehabilitation projects	• Encourage, facilitate, and support partners • Help coordinate, seek funding for, and organize technical assistance for the planning and implementation of projects by partners and the private sector (Activities that are part of both Community Revitalization and Partner Development programs)	Continue	Continue

Chapter 5 • Phased Implementation – Conservation & Recreation

All Strategic Objectives for Conservation and Recreation

- Forge close ties and partnerships with federal, state, and regional land stewardship entities
- Build public awareness through interpretation
- Build visibility of existing opportunities and encourage public access
- Encourage public access through recreation-related business development
- Support planning and development of local and regional recreational trail networks
- Support watershed restoration efforts
- Monitor Solar Energy Zones Development Initiatives

CONCEPT: Focus on building relationships and supporting the efforts of public agencies and nonprofit organizations to preserve natural and water resources and provide public access, focusing as appropriate and planned with partners on public information, public access, interpretation, and recreational trails at both the local and the larger regional levels. Provide a forum for tracking conservation needs, especially for solar energy.

Activity – Chapter 5	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Interpretation of the natural landscape	• In partnership with local, state, and federal agencies and focusing on public lands, begin planning for a comprehensive program for enhanced interpretation of the National Heritage Area's natural landscape • Consider desirability of a public lands visitor center and/or other advanced ways to inform visitors about access to public lands and available recreational programs	• Continue planning • Select demonstration projects and initiate work on some projects • Begin early implementation of actions identified in planning; possibilities include landscape guides and exhibits, site interpretation, driving tours and themed itineraries, digital content, and other activities as appropriate. (Consider recommendations in the	With partners, seek funding and begin full implementation as funding becomes available (Partner Development Program)

Activity – Chapter 5	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Interpretation of the natural landscape, cont'd		management plan for working with guides and outdoor entrepreneurs)	
Visitor information	Work with partners to develop and maintain a comprehensive map and listing of publicly accessible lands and recreational sites and amenities. Ensure that this information is available in print form and electronically via the heritage area's website	Continue	Continue
Local recreational trails	• Enable a more extensive trail and interpretive network on the Alamosa Ranch • Support implementation of the Costilla County open space and trails plan developed with the NPS (Both are Partner Development Programs)	Work with county and local governments to encourage communities to undertake trail plans and develop trail projects, particularly where they can promote heritage tourism and environmental education goals. Incorporate as appropriate into Community Revitalization Plans (Partner Development Program)	Continue
Regional public access to trails, fishing, and boat access	Support San Luis Valley Great Outdoors in updating the "Great San Luis Valley Trails and Recreation Master Plan" of 1996 to expand public access along Rio Grande rivers for trails, fishing, and boat access	• Select demonstration projects and initiate work on some projects • Begin early implementation of actions identified in planning (Both are Partner Development Programs)	With partners, seek funding and begin full implementation as funding becomes available
Public outreach and marketing	• Promote existing and planned trail projects and planning studies through heritage area media outlets • Work with partners to advertise special trail events and educational programs (Both are Partner Development Programs)	Continue	Continue
Solar energy development on public lands	Monitor Solar Energy Zones Development Initiatives in consultation with partners	Continue	Continue

Chapter 6 • Phased Implementation – Conserving Community & Traditions

All Strategic Objectives for Conserving Community & Traditions

- Promote heritage pride and community memory
- Engage communities through arts, folk music and dance, cultural programs and events, and enrolling volunteers
- Engage educational institutions
- Undertake programs for youth education and leadership development
- Engage agriculture's cultural ties and possibilities

CONCEPT: Focus program development specifically on enhancing public schools' recognition and use of local culture and sites as educational resources and enlisting the assistance and resources of higher education institutions in caring for community culture.

Activity – Chapter 6	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Local school districts	• Build relationships and explore how to identify ways in which the seven local school districts can plan and develop programs that use local resources as a basis for education to meet state standards (Partner Development Program) • Build relationships with various groups related to public schools (districts, superintendents, teachers, parent-teacher groups, students and student groups, and other service organizations involved in the schools) • Undertake planning as appropriate, using it to continue to build relationships and explore ideas; identify projects to connect education and local culture	As appropriate, establish an advisory committee or working group to steer the planning and development of National Heritage Area programs	Evaluate existing efforts and ensure that a range of resources are available to partners
Projects to connect education and local culture		Help establish a scholastic honors program or special prizes to encourage high school students to undertake special projects in research, interpretation, conservation, the arts, local government, and other subjects	(NOTE: the Junior Ranger program listed with Chapters 7 & 8 should be considered one of these)
Higher education	Build relationships and explore opportunities for collaboration with Adams State University and Trinidad State Junior College; document possibilities as appropriate (Partner Development Program)	Support higher educational institutions' initial projects (possibilities are listed for Year Three, but not limited to these) (Partner Development Program)	• Recruit student applicants for partners' intern and apprentice programs • Develop a comprehensive program of research into and preservation of cultural traditions • Encourage higher education institutions (and others in the museum field) to offer training in

Activity – Chapter 6	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Higher education, cont'd			accessioning, cataloging, and conservation standards to staff and volunteers of museums and other cultural sites
Oral history		Support existing oral history programs and other partner programs in documenting the history and the stories of the Valley's many cultures (Partner Development Program)	• Investigate existing oral history projects and training programs designed to explore personal heritage • Use successful programs and techniques as the basis for establishing standards and procedures for collecting individual "Community Memory" contributions (Note: From Year One, anticipate the possibility of this project in discussions with communities about Community Revitalization Plans (smaller communities may wish to focus their planning on community-building and preservation of traditions instead of public interpretation or efforts focused on tourism and commerce)
Publicity for cultural events	• Coordinate the publicizing of cultural events and programs in the many media vehicles managed by heritage area partners, including the heritage area's website, newsletters, and press releases • Explore and employ ways to reach residents who do not have access to a computer	Continue	Continue
Recognition program			• Create a program to recognize volunteers and their contributions to the National Heritage Area and its partners • Create a recognition program to celebrate educational programming and teachers who incorporate local culture and resources into their courses

Chapters 7 & 8 • Phased Implementation – Heritage Tourism & Interpretation

All Strategic Objectives for Interpretation

- Create a coordinated heritage area-wide interpretive presentation of landscapes and sites
- Enable participating communities to tell their own stories in individual ways
- Support interpretive partners' development
- Enable experiences of the natural landscape (ideas for this objective in this work plan appear under Chapter 5)

All Strategic Objectives for Heritage Tourism & Marketing

- Develop a single, heritage area-wide graphic identity and messaging campaign
- Leverage connections to the National Park Service and Great Sand Dunes National Park
- Encourage a welcoming culture of hospitality
- Fully inform visitors
- Reach out to those who can help spread the word (public relations and targeted marketing)
- Support festivals and events

CONCEPT: Beginning with residents and existing visitors, the interpretive program should seek to broaden its audience over time. Similarly, heritage tourism activities should include efforts to reach markets to build audiences, also beginning with residents and existing visitors. Once a base level of efforts in both interpretation and tourism is in place, additional activities can be added gradually to significantly expand and enhance the heritage area's presentation and marketing and improve the visitor experience as a whole. The heritage area and partners should implement a phased plan to develop a **base level of coordinated interpretive presentation over a three year period**. Beginning with residents and existing visitors, the interpretive program should seek to broaden its audience over time. Once a base level experience is in place, additional interpretation can be added gradually to significantly expand and enhance the heritage area presentation.

Activity – Chapters 7 & 8	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Graphic identity and messaging strategy	Finalize graphic identity and messaging strategy	• Complete Style Guide • Create brochure design templates using graphic identity and messaging strategy	Monitor partners' use of graphic identity and messaging guidelines in the Style Guide
Seasonal Visitor Guide	Launch yearly seasonal Visitor Guide as a Create a yearly seasonal guide in an inexpensive fold-out, newspaper format on high quality paper similar to Great Sand Dunes guide. (See Chapter 8 recommendations.) Include interpretive content including introduction of interpretive themes, identification of touring route, and identification of visitor-ready interpretive sites and self-guided exhibits	Revise and update the yearly seasonal Visitor with additional interpretive content as appropriate. (See Ch8 recommendations.)	Revise, update, and expand the yearly seasonal Visitor Guide into a more permanent format with updated and additional interpretive content as appropriate. (See Ch8 recommendations.)
Los Caminos Antiguos	Design and install additional exhibits along Los Caminos Antiguos.	Continue 2012-awarded project	Continue to enhance the Byway (Complete installation of exhibits along Los Caminos Antiguos if not already completed by spring 2014)

Activity – Chapters 7 & 8	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Interpretive sites	Begin to coordinate interpretation, presentation, calendars, and publicity at existing interpretive sites		
Cornerstone Communities	(See also Chapters 4 & 9)	Install orientation kiosks, publish community brochures, and undertake interpretive/ revitalization planning	Install additional interpretive exhibits and programming in Cornerstone Communities
Other communities		Begin to engage additional communities in interpretive opportunities and planning	Begin to interpret other interested communities through brochures, web content, and onsite exhibits.
Natural resource interpretation	(See also actions in Chapter 5)	• Begin implementing interpretive opportunities associated with SLV Great Outdoors Initiative • Undertake planning and fundraising with state and federal agencies for a back country trails interpretive and recreational initiative	Begin implementing maps, information, and exhibits for back-country trails.
Other publications in "family of publications"		• Work with partners to create family of heritage area publications using brochure design templates • Prepare a heritage area-wide interpretive map as the centerpiece of the heritage area family of interpretive publications	• Work with partners to create family of heritage area publications using brochure design templates • Work on distribution and dissemination strategies for heritage area brochures and publications
Itineraries		Identify a first set of themed itineraries for development	Develop and promote first set of themed itineraries
Passport	Create Passport stamp/program	Continue to support and expand the passport program	Continue
Website		Begin enhancing the website with downloadable maps and interpretive content, incorporating identity and messaging strategy	Continue to develop website interpretive content.
Publicity for events		Establish a web-based annual calendar of events at communities and at individual attractions	Continue to support and expand the calendar of events on the web; consider expansion to other outreach
Digital world		• Launch social media presence using graphic identity and messaging strategy • Register attractions and visitor services as listed destinations for GPS navigation systems	Expand social media outreach
Public relations and marketing	PR and marketing outreach to residents and current visitors at heritage area attractions	PR and marketing outreach extends to include targeted domestic drive markets	• PR and marketing outreach extends to targeted domestic (fly/drive) and international audiences • Partner on coop advertisements

Activity – Chapters 7 & 8	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Public relations and marketing, cont'd			in targeted domestic and international markets • Offer a familiarization ("fam") tour for travel writers
Junior Ranger program			Launch Junior Ranger program for local schools' use as well as visitors
Hospitality training		Launch hospitality training	Continue to offer hospitality training programs and refresher courses
National Heritage Area entrance signs	Pursue CDOT entrance sign in Costilla County to be installed in a prominent location after La Veta Pass	Install other entrance signs at major gateways to the heritage area	Continue
Festivals		Promote festivals and encourage development of additional supporting festivals and events	Support development of signature event(s) for the heritage area
Visitor research and statistics	Develop cooperative protocol with partners and begin collection of baseline information	Monitor visitor research data and tourism statistics to identify change over time	Continue

Chapter 10 • Phased Implementation – Management & Implementation

Strategic Objectives for Management and Implementation

- Organize for leadership
- Cultivate partnerships
- Seek visibility
- Develop resources and raise funds
- Evaluate and celebrate progress

CONCEPT: Managing the National Heritage Area is a large management challenge, but management concerns are a simple few: achieve excellence in leadership (a management goal), enable partners to develop their capacity to implement the aspects of the management plan as they choose, cultivate partnerships among the wide variety of actors able to help with implementation, both inside and beyond the San Luis Valley, plan communicates and public outreach carefully and effectively, and raise the necessary funds to pay for it all. Note that actions for the Board of Directors as compiled in the management plan are not included here; all are important and are to be considered by the Board as it grows its own capacity to lead the National Heritage Area

Activity – Chapter 10	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Partnership Development Program	• Establish a partnership assistance program that recognizes the many ways that the National Heritage Area can support the growth and development of partners' capacity and programs • Reserve a portion of annual federal heritage area funding for small monetary grants that will build partners' capacity • Develop and implement a process and annual schedule for the identification and selection of partner projects to receive support in the form of grants or other heritage area benefits that should be documented as part of the heritage area's record to be evaluated in relation to Congressional requirements		
Recognition program			Create an awards program to recognize partner achievements
Cultivate partnerships	• Hold regular gatherings of partners to review progress on the management plan, at least twice yearly to fulfill requirements of the National Heritage Area legislation (also a communications activity) • Regularly brief local, state, tribal, and federal officials whose responsibilities can include support for the National	Continue	Continue

Activity – Chapter 10	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Cultivate partnerships, cont'd	Heritage Area (Note: specific groups to target are mentioned in relevant sections of this guidance document)		
Public outreach & communications	• Create a communications plan within the annual work plan, coordinating with communications associated with interpretation, heritage tourism marketing, and resource development • Carry out the communications plan	Update and carry out the communications plan, evaluating recent experience Public an annual report	Continue
Resource development & fundraising	• Develop a long-range resource development plan • Develop a short-range or strategic plan within the annual work plan, coordinated with the communications plan and setting measurable objectives tied to financial planning • Develop a "case statement" that makes the arguments in general that are likely to appeal to donors, to provide a basis for appeals tailored to prospects • Develop a donor database and begin gathering information about prospects, using a software system designed to support long term growth of the database for the purpose of raising both cash and in-kind donations	Evaluate recent experience and update the long-range plan, maintaining a longer time horizon than the annual work plan	Continue

APPENDIX I: LISTING OF STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Page	Strategic Objective/Action **Chapter 4 • Historic Preservation**
4-12	**Strategic Objectives for Historic Preservation** • Connect with federal and state initiatives • Continue to inventory and study historic resources • Provide regional leadership in developing public appreciation, advocacy, technical information, and training to encourage local action • Provide technical assistance and financial support
	Connect with Federal and State Initiatives
4-13	Stay informed about federal initiatives being undertaken in and around the San Luis Valley relating to the heritage area's mission and goals. Provide information to local communities and residents and facilitate communication where appropriate.
4-14	Work with federal agencies to relate separate initiatives associated with heritage area interests and to make them available and relevant to local communities and residents.
4-14	Actively seek ways for federal agencies to undertake projects and provide technical assistance and support for heritage area and community goals.
4-15	Actively participate in the American Latino Heritage Initiative. Construct appropriate heritage area projects to be consistent with its goals and to align with its criteria for support.
4-15	Coordinate with, support, and assist the National Park Service in realizing recommendations included in its San Luis Valley and Central Sangre de Cristo Mountains Reconnaissance Survey Report (Working Draft).
4-16	Collaborate with the Old Spanish Trail Association, National Park Service, and Bureau of Land Management in the study, interpretation, and preservation of the Northern Branch of the Old Spanish Trail in the San Luis Valley.
4-16	Encourage completion and implementation of the comprehensive management plan for the Old Spanish National Historic Trail.
4-16	Maintain an ongoing dialogue and collaborate with the Rio Grande National Heritage Area on projects and initiatives of mutual interest.
	Inventory and Study Resources
4-16	Establish a group of qualified research advisors to provide guidance to heritage area research activities and initiatives.
4-16	Establish a research network open to individuals interested in the National Heritage Area's history through which research information and initiatives can be shared and coordinated.
4-17	Assemble a bibliography of research studies, publications, and information that can be accessed through the heritage area's website with links to digitally available studies and information on where other studies can be found.
4-17	Working with research advisors, establish a research program for the National Heritage Area, identifying research topics, gaps in existing knowledge, research questions, and guidance for research studies that would most benefit the heritage area and its communities.
4-17	Seek programmatic and funding support for research initiatives on the National Heritage Area's history.

Page	Strategic Objective/Action
	Chapter 4 • Historic Preservation
4-17	Encourage, facilitate, coordinate, and support research initiatives being undertaken by researchers on the National Heritage Area's history. Consult with federal and state agencies on research being undertaken or that could be undertaken on the federal and state levels. Consult with local researchers on initiatives they would be interested in undertaking. Provide guidance and support for research in accordance with priorities established in the heritage area's research program.
4-18	Organize the creation of a comprehensive heritage area-wide historic resource inventory using the San Luis Valley GIS database and co-ordinate with OAHP's statewide historic resource database.
4-18	Develop ongoing community program of preparing cultural landscape reports, context studies, historic district assessments, and nominations to the National and State Registers for historic resources within the heritage area.
	Provide Regional Preservation Leadership
4-18	Serve as a regional connection to state and national preservation organizations on behalf of local communities and organizations within the National Heritage Area.
4-19	Encourage and assist local communities and organizations in identifying and organizing programmatic assistance available at the state and national levels.
4-19	Develop working relationships with community leaders regarding planning and review processes that impact historic resources.
4-19	Work with local heritage area partners who are able to attend community planning meetings and participate in the planning process.
4-19	Maintain an ongoing awareness of historic preservation-related projects and issues that are coming before community leaders.
4-19	Seek funding and programmatic assistance from nonprofit, statewide, and national organizations to provide planning resources, training, and assistance to local communities directly or through the National Heritage Area.
4-19	Create a program to assist communities in developing planning tools that will provide guidance for good decision-making with respect to historic preservation and community character.
4-19	Provide technical assistance to communities for planning initiatives and particular projects where appropriate.
4-19	Coordinate preservation programming with OAHP's State Preservation Plan.
4-21	Encourage communities to consider and adopt planning processes and techniques that strengthen communities and enhance community character.
4-21	Encourage and assist counties and local communities with preparation and implementation of preservation and cultural resource plans.
4-21	Explore national models of incentive-based programs that promote and facilitate historic preservation and strengthening of community character.
4-21	Encourage and support a network of preservation advocates within local communities.
4-21	Heritage area board and staff will be active as preservation advocates under policies and positions determined by the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area's Board of Directors.
	Provide Technical Assistance and Financial Support for Projects
4-22	Work with partners to actively encourage, facilitate, and support bricks-and-mortar preservation and rehabilitation projects that revitalize communities and are consistent with preservation standards and guidelines.
4-22	Help coordinate, seek funding for, and organize technical assistance for the planning and implementation of preservation and rehabilitation projects by partners and the private sector.
4-22	Consider creating a grant program for emergency stabilization of threatened buildings, a small-scale matching grant program for façade and other building improvements, and over the longer term a revolving loan program to promote building rehabilitation.

Page	Strategic Objective/Action **Chapter 4 • Historic Preservation**
4-22	Organize workshops and training programs for local contractors and craftsmen to train them in preservation concepts, construction, and materials conservation techniques.

Page	Strategic Objective/Action **Chapter 5 • Conservation & Recreation**
5-2	**Strategic Objectives for Conservation & Recreation** • Forge close ties and partnerships with federal, state, and regional land stewardship entities • Build public awareness through interpretation • Build visibility of existing opportunities and encourage public access • Encourage public access through recreation-related business development • Support planning and development of local and regional recreational trail networks • Support watershed restoration efforts • Monitor Solar Energy Zones Development Initiatives
	Connect with Federal and State Initiatives
5-6	Collaborate closely with conservation and land stewardship organizations throughout the National Heritage Area. Be informed and involved with their conservation and stewardship initiatives and partner with them to provide support where possible.
5-6	Work with conservation and land stewardship partners to promote public awareness of stewardship and conservation through interpretive and educational programs outlined in Chapters 6 and 7.
5-6	Coordinate with federal and state agencies managing public lands and the Adams State College outdoor recreation program on recreational opportunities and programming within the heritage area. Serve as a supporting resource on developing opportunities, enhancing facilities, and implementing best practices.
5-6	Coordinate the heritage area's programs with the U.S. Department of the Interior's America's Great Outdoors initiatives as they emerge in the San Luis Valley and the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. The "San Luis Valley Great Outdoors" initiative is the Valley's local interpretation of the President's America's Great Outdoors Initiative.
	Build Public Awareness through Interpretation
5-9	As outlined in Chapter 7, undertake a comprehensive program for enhanced interpretation of the National Heritage Area's natural landscape in partnership with state and federal agencies featuring publicly owned lands. (This is expected to include the development of a multi-media approach involving landscape guides and exhibits, site interpretation, driving tours and themed itineraries, and digital content.)
5-9	Work with conservation and land stewardship organizations in helping them realize the significance of historic and cultural features associated with the properties they are preserving. Assist with and help facilitate appropriate treatments and/or presentations of historic and cultural resources on conserved properties.
	Build Visibility of Existing Opportunities and Encourage Public Access
5-11	Work with federal and state public agencies, local governments, and other nonprofits to help establish improved information about access to public lands to inform visitors of available recreational resources and programs throughout the heritage area.
5-12	Assess the feasibility of establishing a well-appointed orientation center focusing on public lands, natural resources and the cultural landscape, environmental education, and recreational opportunities in the San Luis Valley.
5-12	Work with partners to develop and maintain a comprehensive map and listing of publicly accessible lands and recreational sites and amenities. Ensure that this information is available in print form and electronically via the heritage area's website.

Page	Strategic Objective/Action **Chapter 5 • Conservation & Recreation**
5-12	Develop a corps of local guides who can lead visitors on backcountry hikes and other outings of varying lengths and degrees of difficulty. Consider permitting requirements each agency may have different requirements depending compensation for guide services, participation fees, risk and duty of care, public advertising, and other special resource considerations.
5-12	Work with partners to develop a local guide training program, with particular focus on recruiting young people.
5-12	Promote existing recreational opportunities and events, including a listing of guides, local outfitters, campgrounds, and other small recreation-related businesses.
	Encourage Public Access through Recreation-related Business Development
5-13	Encourage partners to offer small-business development training, workshops, and/or conferences to local residents interested in eco-tourism and recreation-related entrepreneurship.
5-13	Promote recreational and eco-tourism opportunities through heritage area marketing materials and promotional literature.
5-13	Seek collaborative opportunities with eco-tourism initiatives offered by organizations, clubs, and private providers.
	Support Planning and Development of Local and Regional Recreational Trail Networks
5-14	Support development of local recreational trail initiatives, including a more extensive trail and interpretive network on the Alamosa Ranch and the implementation of the Costilla County trails plan currently under development.
5-14	Work with county and local governments to encourage communities to undertake trail plans, particularly where they can promote heritage tourism and environmental education goals.
5-14	Support the regional efforts of the SLVGO as they work to update the "Great San Luis Valley Trails and Recreation Master Plan" of 1996 to expand public access along the river for trails, fishing, and boat access.
5-15	Support efforts to create a corridor of conservation easements on private lands along the Rio Grande, as may be possible.
5-15	Promote existing and planned trail projects through heritage area media outlets. Work with partners to advertise special trail events and educational programs, as well as trail planning studies.
	Support Watershed Restoration Efforts
5-17	Work with federal and state public agencies, local governments, and nonprofit organizations to promote the goals and objectives of the Rio Grande Watershed Restoration Strategic Plan.
5-17	Work with partners to promote education programs and demonstration projects that are designed to teach local residents and visitors about the critical role that water plays in sustaining the culture and economy of the heritage area.
5-17	Ensure that interpretive projects convey the importance and intricacy of the Rio Grande Basin's hydrologic system.
5-17	Promote the vision of the Rio Grande corridor as a regional recreational resource.
5-17	Work with partner agencies and organizations, as well as tourism-related businesses, to promote and enhance awareness of existing water-oriented recreation opportunities (fishing, boating, swimming, birding, etc.).
5-17	In accordance with recommendations found in 5.7, above, work with partners to help develop small eco-tourism business development opportunities that focus on water and river-oriented recreation.

Page	Strategic Objective/Action **Chapter 5 • Conservation & Recreation**
	Monitor Solar Energy Zone Development Initiatives
5-20	Monitor the status of energy development, to include future transmission lines and substations, and their potential impacts on the National Heritage Area's cultural landscape. Be prepared to comment knowledgeably about development, impacts, and mitigation.

Page	Strategic Objective/Action **Chapter 6 • Conserving Community & Traditions**
6-2	**Strategic Objectives for Conserving Community & Traditions** • Promote heritage pride and community memory • Engage communities through arts, folk music and dance, cultural programs and events, and enrolling volunteers • Engage educational institutions • Undertake programs for youth education and leadership development • Engage agriculture's cultural ties and possibilities
	Promote Heritage Pride and Community Memory
6-5	Support existing oral history programs and other partner programs in documenting the history and the stories of the Valley's many cultures.
6-5	Investigate existing oral history projects and training programs designed to explore personal heritage. Use successful programs and techniques as the basis for establishing standards and procedures for collecting individual "Community Memory" contributions.
6-5	Create and train a "Community Memory Corps of Volunteers" responsible for accessioning, cataloging, and conserving individual contributions (to include digital collections and web-based media).
6-5	Encourage and support the development of at least one central repository for documents, objects, and oral histories.
6-5	Work with the new Heritage Center in San Luis or other repository to design an interpretive program for presenting these collections to the public (to include web-based media that can be featured at other heritage area museums).
	Engage Communities
6-9	Coordinate the publicizing of cultural events and programs in the many media vehicles managed by heritage area partners, including the heritage area's website, newsletters, and press releases. Explore and employ ways to reach residents who do not have access to a computer, especially through churches, where multiple generations can be reached through church newsletters, announcements, events, etc.
6-9	Work with heritage area and cultural program providers on effective, collaborative research into the needs and interests of local audiences.
6-9	Involve the arts and cultural programming community in bringing engaging and relevant interpretation to visitor audiences.
6-9	Partner with local trades organizations or artists' guilds in creating training or promote existing apprentice programs in preservation and conservation trades and skills.
6-10	Work with partners to develop a list of their volunteer needs and assist in creating volunteer position descriptions.
6-10	Establish methods by which volunteer positions can be tracked and effectively advertised to residents (such as sponsoring information sessions or open houses and posting to the heritage area's website).
6-10	Create a program to recognize volunteers and their contributions to the National Heritage Area and its partners.

Page	Strategic Objective/Action **Chapter 6 • Conserving Community & Traditions**
6-10	Encourage museums and cultural centers to promote published books, journals, and articles that are written by local authors. Feature a link to these resources on the heritage area website.
	Engage Higher Education Programs
6-10	Work with Adams State University and Trinidad State Junior College to recruit student applicants for partners' intern and apprentice programs.
6-10	Collaborate with Adams State University and Trinidad State Junior College in developing a comprehensive program of research into and preservation of cultural traditions.
6-10	Partner with Adams State University and other institutions of higher learning to offer training in accessioning, cataloging, and conservation standards to staff and volunteers of museums and other cultural sites.
	Youth Education and Leadership Development
6-14	Establish an advisory committee or working group of educators, including teachers, superintendents, and other partners (site and park-based educators), to identify ways in which the seven local school districts can plan and develop programs that use local resources as a basis for education to meet state standards.
6-14	Widely promote curricula and lesson plans that have already been developed, such as "Ties that Bind."
6-14	Work with partners on creating interactive and engaging opportunities for children, teenagers, and young adults that use local resources (historic sites, environmental resources, community programs, etc.) to meet curriculum requirements; widely promote these opportunities through heritage area publications, website links, etc.
6-14	Identify specific needs for teacher and administrator training (workshops, webinars, continuing education classes, etc.).
6-14	Work to enable educators to utilize heritage area sites effectively for student education.
6-14	Encourage sites to work collaboratively to meet teachers' and students' needs.
6-14	Develop an educational section of the heritage area website that promotes developed heritage area curriculum materials, lesson plans, games, and/or activities for use by students, teachers, and parents.
6-14	Help establish a scholastic honors program or special prizes to encourage high school students to undertake special projects in research, interpretation, conservation, the arts, local government, and other subjects.
6-14	Create a recognition program to celebrate educational programming and teachers who incorporate local culture and resources into their courses.
6-17	Recruit partners and establish an advisory committee of youth leadership development organizations to develop a Junior Ambassador program. Identify roles and responsibilities among partners.
6-17	Implement the program beginning with demonstration/phased efforts.
6-17	Work with partners, teachers, and school administrators to promote the program through school newsletters, churches, partner and heritage area publications, and website links.
	Local Foods and Agriculture
6-20	Establish a sustainable agriculture advisory committee consisting of representatives from the San Luis Valley Local Food Coalition, the Rio Culebra Cooperative, local farmers, school teachers and administrative officials, state officials, and other local, state, and national food advocacy organizations to identify opportunities for integrating sustainable agriculture education into the school curriculum, both formally and informally.
6-20	Work with partners to encourage the development of a Farm to School Pilot Program within the National Heritage Area.
6-20	Support partner initiatives to establish sustainable agriculture demonstration gardens, community gardens, schoolyard gardens, community kitchens, and educational programs. Promote these sites and programs through heritage area publications, website links, etc.

Page	Strategic Objective/Action **Chapter 6 • Conserving Community & Traditions**
6-20	Work with partners to help develop structured sustainable agriculture internship and apprenticeship programs.
6-20	Develop standards for a heritage area recognition program for sustainable agricultural producers, retailers, and restaurants that serve foods produced within the heritage area.
6-20	Together with partners, develop a well-coordinated marketing program to promote the range and availability of foods produced within the heritage area.

Page	Strategic Objective/Action **Chapter 7 • Heritage Area Interpretation**
7-2	**Strategic Objectives for Interpretation** • Create a coordinated heritage area-wide interpretive presentation of landscapes and sites • Enable participating communities to tell their own stories in individual ways • Support interpretive partners' development • Enable experiences of the natural landscape
	Heritage Area-wide Presentation
7-12	Create a heritage area-wide interpretive presence that establishes the interpretive context for residents and visitors. Incorporate appropriate elements over time as opportunities, resources, and partnerships suggest.
7-12	Use the heritage area website as a medium for interpretation. Build the website's interpretive content over time covering key themes and stories in increasing detail and coordinating with participating communities and sites.
7-12	Create a coordinated family of publications interpreting the National Heritage Area and partnering communities and sites. Build the family of publications over time.
7-14	Publish a guide to the San Luis Valley landscape describing the unique landscape areas within the National Heritage Area, including landforms, geology, plant communities, and wildlife.
7-14	Develop a family of signage types and graphic formats to be used heritage area-wide, including entrance signs, wayfinding signs, kiosks, waysides, identification signs, and others as appropriate.
7-15	Install outdoor orientation kiosks in the four Cornerstone Communities to welcome visitors, provide information, introduce the heritage area's primary themes, and orient visitors to driving tours, sites, and communities.
7-16	Collaborate with Los Caminos Antiguos to complete implementation of the byway's interpretive plan and to add additional interpretation presenting the valley's natural, cultural, and agricultural landscapes.
7-16	Designate additional driving routes as branches to Los Caminos Antiguos to provide linkages to communities and sites not directly on the byway and to complete a circular connection.
7-16	Develop themed itineraries and driving tours for special subjects and audiences with special interests.
	Community Presentations
7-18	Implement a system of community interpretation as a central component of the National Heritage Area interpretive presentation. Each community is encouraged and supported in development of its interpretive presentation and visitor experience in accordance with its interests and capabilities.
7-19	Communities wishing to participate in the National Heritage Area's interpretive program should prepare interpretive plans in accordance with heritage area guidelines and with heritage area assistance.
7-19	Install introductory exhibits in each participating community relating the community to heritage area-wide interpretation.
7-20	Local interpretive sites and attractions within and close to communities should participate in the development of community interpretive plans and in their implementation.

Page	Strategic Objective/Action
	Chapter 7 • Heritage Area Interpretation
7-20	Each community participating in the National Heritage Area's interpretive presentation should create a network of outdoor interpretive exhibits presenting the community's history and significance.
7-20	Use historic buildings and landscape features within the community to tell the community's stories.
7-20	Use artwork as a key component of community interpretation.
7-21	Include interpretive publications as a component of community interpretive presentations.
7-21	Use walking tours as a component of community interpretive presentations.
7-21	Develop a heritage area-wide network of living history and cultural presentations that may be offered in communities and sites during festivals and events.
7-21	Include festivals and events as a component of community interpretive presentations.
7-21	Feature local arts and crafts in the interpretive presentation of heritage area communities.
	Support for Interpretive Sites
7-22	Incorporate the National Heritage Area's interpretive sites and attractions into community interpretive plans and heritage area-wide interpretive presentations.
7-22	Encourage interpretive sites to work collaboratively for mutual support and assistance.
7-22	Existing interpretive sites should prepare brief self-assessments that describe existing conditions and programming and outline how the site wishes to participate in the National Heritage Area program.
7-22	Execute a cooperative agreement in which the site affirms its interest in working in collaboration with other National Heritage Area partners in a heritage area-wide interpretive presentation and will abide by heritage area principles.
7-23	Install introductory exhibits at participating sites introducing the National Heritage Area, setting the context for site interpretation relative to heritage area themes, and drawing connections to other interpretive sites.
7-23	Provide support to sites in planning and implementing interpretive enhancements that support the heritage area experience in accordance with the availability of resources and heritage area priorities.
7-23	Partnering sites within the National Heritage Area will work together to plan and implement cooperative programming and interpretive initiatives.
7-23	Organize workshops for participating sites to facilitate communication and offer educational and technical training.
7-23	Provide technical assistance to participating sites in accordance with interests, needs, and the availability of resources.
7-24	Support sites as they plan and seek funding for implementation of site improvements that support interpretation and visitor experience.
7-24	Facilitate coordination between interpretive sites and communities in programming such as festivals and events.
	Experiencing our Natural Landscapes
7-24	Undertake a comprehensive program for enhanced interpretation of the National Heritage Area's natural landscape in partnership with state and federal agencies featuring publicly owned lands.
7-24	Coordinate interpretation of the heritage area landscape in close cooperation with the San Luis Valley Great Outdoors initiative.
7-25	Introduce interpretation of the natural landscape through heritage area-wide interpretation to set the context for the interpretation of cultural themes and stories as outlined in the section above on heritage area-wide interpretation.
7-25	Feature detailed interpretation of the natural landscape and the National Heritage Area's unique ecosystems at natural resource sites such as the national park, wildlife areas, and wildlife refuges.

Page	Strategic Objective/Action
	Chapter 7 • Heritage Area Interpretation
7-25	Create driving tours and subject-specific itineraries in the valley and adjacent mountains tailored to the interests of nature and recreational enthusiasts.
7-25	Create an enhanced recreational and interpretive experience using the many trail systems on publicly owned lands especially in the mountains east and west of the valley.
7-25	Develop interpretive materials to encourage and support the recreational use of public trails including detailed maps, trailhead exhibits, and trail guides.
7-26	Use the National Heritage Area website and social media to provide information on recreational opportunities within the heritage area.
7-26	Collaborate with private sector in providing high quality back country experiences for visitors and groups.

Page	Strategic Objective/Action
	Chapter 8 • Heritage Tourism & Marketing
8-5	**Strategic Objectives for Heritage Tourism & Marketing** • Develop a single, heritage area-wide graphic identity and messaging campaign • Leverage connections to the National Park Service and Great Sand Dunes National Park • Encourage a welcoming culture of hospitality • Fully inform visitors • Reach out to those who can help spread the word (public relations and targeted marketing) • Support festivals and events
	Target Audiences
8-6	Collaborate with tourism partners on visitor research to create a better understanding of existing and potential visitors to the heritage area and to track trends and changes over time.
	Heritage Area-wide Graphic Identity and Messaging Campaign
8-8	Develop a single graphic identity and messaging plan for the National Heritage Area.
8-8	Develop a Graphic Identity and Messaging Strategy Style Guide to ensure consistent and correct use of the graphic identity and messaging strategy across the National Heritage Area.
8-8	Monitor the use of the graphic identity and messaging to ensure compliance with the Style Guide.
	Leverage Connections to the National Park Service and Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve
8-9	Develop a Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area passport stamp. Encourage active participation in the National Park Service's Passport program at multiple sites within the heritage area.
8-9	Develop a Sangre de Cristo Junior Ranger workbook. Offer ongoing opportunities for youth to participate in a Junior Ranger Program for the heritage area.
8-10	Develop and disseminate a Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area Visitor Guide for the heritage area on an annual basis.
	Encourage a Welcoming Culture of Hospitality
8-11	Create a heritage area-wide hospitality training program for the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area.
8-11	Continue to offer heritage-area hospitality training and refresher courses on an ongoing basis.
	Fully Inform Visitors
8-12	Designate heritage area welcome centers.

Page	Strategic Objective/Action **Chapter 8 • Heritage Tourism & Marketing**
8-12	Install entrance signs at major gateways to the heritage area.
8-12	Install wayfinding signage.
8-12	Work to ensure that attractions and visitor services in the heritage area are registered as listed destinations on GPS navigation systems.
8-13	Produce a tear-off map for the heritage area.
8-14	Create brochure design templates for communities, individual attractions, itineraries, and topics of interest related to the heritage area's interpretive themes that reflect the graphic identity and messaging strategy for the heritage area.
8-14	Collaborate with communities and individual attractions to develop brochures using the established heritage area brochure design templates.
8-14	Implement distribution and dissemination strategies for the heritage area's print publications in key locations.
8-15	Enhance and maintain a user-friendly website for the heritage area that includes accurate and current information for visitors and heritage area partners.
8-16	Include links to other related websites on the heritage area's website, and encourage other appropriate websites to link to the heritage area's website.
8-17	Create a social media presence for the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area. Monitor the return on investment with different kinds of social media and continue to monitor the latest trends in this field.
	Public Relations and Targeted Marketing
8-17	Develop a public awareness campaign.
8-17	Develop a Sangre de Cristo press kit.
8-18	Develop and implement a comprehensive public relations and marketing campaign, working initially on outreach to local residents and current visitors at heritage area attractions.
8-18	Refine and revise the comprehensive public relations and marketing campaign, expanding the marketing reach to include travelers passing through the region and targeted drive markets within the region.
8-18	Refine and revise the comprehensive public relations and marketing campaign, expanding the marketing reach more broadly to include targeted domestic and international travelers.
8-18	Create and market tour package for the heritage area.
	Festivals and Events
8-19	Promote and support festivals and events in the heritage area, especially those with the potential to draw heritage travelers and provide a meaningful experience connected to the interpretive themes of the heritage area.

Page	Strategic Objective/Action **Chapter 9 • Community Revitalization**
9-5	**Strategic Objectives for Community Revitalization** • Establish a community revitalization program for communities to develop individual plans and programs • Encourage communities to use community interpretation and heritage tourism as central components of their community revitalization plans • Establish a quality assurance program to recognize the efforts of participating visitor service providers and interpretive sites • Create a San Luis Valley/Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area brand for local products representative of local character and culture • Encourage local entrepreneurs

Page	Strategic Objective/Action **Chapter 9 • Community Revitalization**
	Community Revitalization Program
9-9	Establish a Community Revitalization Program through which participating heritage area communities are encouraged to develop revitalization plans customized to their own interests and capabilities based on strategies, programs, and actions outlined in the management plan.
9-9	Provide guidelines and assistance to interested communities in the development and implementation of Community Revitalization Plans in accordance with heritage area goals, principles, and processes.
9-9	Work with local economic development agencies to participate in and support the revitalization process and to identify place-based development strategies for older commercial areas.
9-9	Work with partnering organizations to identify and obtain resources, including funding and technical assistance, that can be used to help develop, support, and implement approved Community Revitalization Plans.
9-9	Create a Community Revitalization Grant Program to support participating communities in the development and implementation of Community Revitalization Plans.
	Community Interpretation and Heritage Tourism
9-10	Encourage participating communities to consider interpretation and heritage tourism as central components of their Community Revitalization Plans.
9-10	Encourage towns with historic commercial areas to plan governmental investment and programs for encouraging private investment and improving the visitor experience.
9-10	Create a system of community entry signs to support the National Heritage Area's community designation program.
	Establishing a Quality Assurance Program
9-10	Establish a quality assurance program with standards, guidance, and training in order to give local businesses seeking visitors as customers the opportunity to participate in special heritage area-wide promotions and marketing.
9-11	Design a program to enable participants in the quality assurance program to display approved heritage area branding.
9-11	Establish an awards program and other programs to provide benefits to businesses participating in the quality assurance program.
9-11	Offer hospitality training, complete with certificates, to businesses based in the National Heritage Area (whether or not they choose to move forward into the quality assurance program). Encourage such partners as the Colorado Scenic Byways Program to offer or sponsor hospitality training.
	Create a Regional Brand for Local Products
9-11	Work with San Luis Valley-based and Colorado state partners to create a regional brand for local products. Promote the heritage area as part of the experience of visiting the San Luis Valley as a source of high-quality products.
	Encourage Local Entrepreneurs
9-12	Work with local economic development agencies to develop strategies to attract and support local businesses providing services and products that visitors interested in heritage, recreation, local foods, and the arts will enjoy.
9-12	Work with local economic development agencies to develop strategies to target reuse of older buildings for heritage tourism-related businesses.

Page	Strategic Objective/Action Chapter 10 • Management & Implementation
10-2	**Strategic Objectives for Management & Implementation** • Organize for leadership • Cultivate partnerships • Seek visibility • Develop resources and raise funds • Evaluate and celebrate progress
	Organize for Leadership
10-6	For meetings of the Board of Directors, organize a standing agenda around the topics of the management plan and resource development in order to maintain focus on achieving the heritage area's mission, vision, and goals.
10-6	Undertake annual board training focusing on important issues where education and discussion will benefit the development of a sound corporate culture.
10-6	Reserve at least one round of committee and board meetings each year to evaluate progress on the management plan and the board's involvement in communications and resource development, and to establish near-term strategies that guide staff proposals for annual work plans and the budget.
10-7	Establish program committees charged with providing ongoing leadership and detailed review in implementing key programs and projects and addressing critical long-term topics of the management plan. Expect these committees to provide summary reporting in Board of Directors meetings regarding progress toward the goals of the management plan.
10-7	Ask partner representatives to serve on program committees and other kinds of working groups as needed.
10-9	Organize standing committees around critical organizational functions; be flexible as to committee assignments, membership, and responsibilities. In establishing each committee, provide a specific, written job description.
10-9	Arrange Board of Directors meeting schedules to support directors' spending time to support committees as well as to attend Board meetings.
10-10	Undertake an evaluation of current representation on the board of directors and develop plans for expanding diversity and skill sets to support management plan implementation and resource development.
10-10	Develop job descriptions for directors.
10-10	Develop a code of ethics or conflict of interest statement.
10-10	Set basic standards of excellence and let partners, funders, and the public know such standards are part of the Board of Directors' expectations for doing business.
10-10	Include nonprofit management topics in training workshops for the Board of Directors.
10-12	Establish a three-year plan for the addition of staffing resources.
10-12	Establish regular personnel and hiring/ contracting procedures, including plans for staff training.
10-13	Establish a computerized financial management system that generates sufficient financial data for planning, resource development (fundraising) and administration, and reports to funders and the public.
10-13	Establish regular financial procedures to support the Board of Directors' fiduciary responsibilities, including an annual budget and regular reviews of progress in meeting the budget.
10-14	Establish an operations manual documenting all Board of Directors policies and procedures and compiling key organizational records.
10-16	Establish an annual work plan in accord with an annual budget and tied to the annual task agreement required under NPS procedures for annual NHA grants.
10-16	Undertake periodic strategic planning to support annual work planning.

Page	Strategic Objective/Action Chapter 10 • Management & Implementation
	Cultivate Partnerships
10-17	Facilitate ongoing collaboration among partners to promote plans for resource protection, restoration, construction, interpretation, community revitalization, and other partner programs that support the long-range goals of this management plan.
10-18	Request interpretive services from the National Park Service.
10-18	Seek "details" of personnel from the National Park Service to assist with short-term projects.
10-19	Maintain a memorandum of understanding or cooperative agreement with the NPS for assistance with Board of Directors operations.
10-19	Maintain NPS liaison role (as provided during management planning).
10-19	Address the need for greater interpretation of the valley's natural resources, encouraging collaboration among not only federal land-managing agencies and the Board of Directors but also with a variety of organizations, including state agencies, nonprofit organizations, and educational institutions.
10-19	Build relationships with agencies at the federal level whose work affects the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area or which can provide services and funding.
10-19	Provide routine briefings to members of the Colorado Congressional delegation.
10-19	Engage in diplomatic relations with tribal nations and consult on projects of mutual benefit.
10-19	Provide routine briefings to the Governor and seek help with coordination of state agencies' contributions to implementation of the management plan.
10-19	Provide routine briefings to elected officials representing heritage area jurisdictions in the state legislature.
10-19	Build relationships with agencies at the state level whose work affects the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area or which can provide services and funding.
10-20	Provide routine briefings to local government officials and involve them in the National Heritage Area's community designation program.
10-20	Build relationships with various groups related to public schools (districts, superintendents, teachers, parent-teacher groups, students and student groups, and other service organizations involved in the schools)
10-20	Build relationships with institutions of higher learning in or serving the National Heritage Area that can provide services and funding.
10-21	Establish a partnership assistance program that recognizes the many ways that the National Heritage Area can support the growth and development of partners' capacity and programs.
10-21	Reserve a portion of annual federal heritage area funding for small monetary grants that will build partners' capacity. Develop and implement a process and annual schedule for the identification and selection of partner projects to receive support in the form of grants or other heritage area benefits that should be documented as part of the heritage area's record to be evaluated in relation to Congressional requirements.
	Seek Visibility
10-22	Create a communications plan within the annual work plan, coordinating with communications associated with interpretation, heritage tourism marketing, and resource development.
10-23	Hold regular gatherings of partners to review progress on the management plan, at least twice yearly to fulfill requirements of the National Heritage Area legislation.
10-23	Create an awards program to recognize partner achievements.

Page	Strategic Objective/Action Chapter 10 • Management & Implementation
	Develop Resources
10-28	Develop a resource development plan and an accompanying short-range plan that can be coordinated with the annual work plan. Make each plan as specific as possible, with financial targets by category of source (see Table 10-2 for categories) and other measurable objectives; update each on a regular basis to maintain a time horizon beyond the annual work plan of at least three years. (The following actions are logical and expected elements of resource development planning and action.)
10-28	Coordinate all resource development activities with the annual work plan, especially the communications plan, in order to integrate resource development into all aspects of programs and operations.
10-28	[Repeated] Undertake an evaluation of current representation on the board of directors and develop plans for expanding diversity and skill sets to support management plan implementation and resource development.
10-28	Develop a "case statement" that makes the arguments in general that are likely to appeal to donors. This brief document provides a basis for a message and an appeal that are to be crafted especially for each prospect.
10-29	Continuously research prospects and match them with directors, staff, and friends; vice versa, identify prospects through existing relationships assessed by directors, staff, and friends for potential support.
10-29	Continue to build and nurture relationships with local, state, and federal officials and their staff.
10-29	Build and nurture relationships with local and state corporations whose interests intersect with those of the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area and its programs.
10-29	Build and nurture relationships with local and state foundations whose interests intersect with those of the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area and its programs. Consider informal or formal working groups with non-board advisors for long-term cooperation on building such relationships, as appropriate
10-29	Make resource development a regular part of the agenda of the Board of Directors' board of directors, with a generous amount of time devoted to this topic.
10-29	Develop a donor database and begin gathering information about prospects, using a software system designed to support long term growth of the database for the purpose of fundraising.
10-29	Include volunteers in the donor database. Thank contributors of in-kind services and donated materials in the National Heritage Area as diligently as those who donate cash.
	Evaluate and Celebrate Progress
10-31	Establish measurable objectives at the time each program is designed and inaugurated, for annual documentation and review.
10-31	Maintain excellent record-keeping to support annual and long-term evaluation.
10-31	Conduct annual or periodic evaluations of the work of the Board of Directors and the efforts of partners in achieving the vision for the National Heritage Area.
10-31	[Repeated] Reserve at least one round of committee and board meetings each year to evaluate progress on the management plan and the Board's involvement, with particular focus on communications and resource development.

APPENDIX J: The Potential for Sustained Local Funding

Introduction

One of the options examined for the development of long-range support by local governments in the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area is the idea of a modest new tax to support National Heritage Area projects, such as a sales tax or a property tax. (Table 10-2 in Chapter 10 of the management plan lists all options studied during the management planning process.) Possibilities among the counties vary, and it is likely each county would arrive at a different choice. Any of the options outlined below would likely take some years to bring to fruition. It should be noted that all of the taxing options outlined below would require city and county approval and a vote of those anticipated to pay into the new additional tax. While considering any of the options outlined below, the following factors must be kept in mind when deciding which – if any – of the suggested approaches below are realistic to achieve the goals of the National Heritage Area:

- The overall difficult economic realities and conservative fiscal orientation in the San Luis Valley;
- Existing revenue burdens, such as lodging and/or marketing taxes;
- Disparities between the revenue streams and collection potential among the counties;
- The ability of any multi-county mechanism to be adoptable/implementable in the San Luis Valley counties not currently in the National Heritage Area boundary (since typically the six counties work together on multi-county initiatives such as a collaborative local 911 fee);
- Colorado law requires a vote to implement any tax increase; and
- Extensive education, communication, and campaign strategies would need to be employed to promote and successfully pass any kind of tax increase; given limited staff and board capacity and many other operational demands, opportunity costs could be high.

Additionally, any decision regarding the most appropriate source(s) of funding should be based upon:

- Approximate annual funding goals
- Determining which funding mechanism is most appropriate to meet project goals of the National Heritage Area.

Financial forecasting employed during the management planning process, going on the assumption of high overmatch using pass-through matches by partners, suggests that it may not be necessary to pursue this option in order to match the federal National Heritage Area funds at the minimum level. This is the least ambitious course, since such a strategy does not make a great deal of cash available as part of the match to be used for operations and programs. Therefore, discussion of this option is provided in this appendix because a more ambitious determination to accelerate and increase the absolute value of National Heritage Area spending needed to implement this plan completely in just ten years would require such local public support. Table J.2 indicates potential revenues that could be raised through a sales tax increase; Table J.3, through a property tax increase.

Funding Contribution by County

If this option is pursued, an important principle is that county contributions to the National Heritage Area would need to be made in a fair and equitable way. The contribution amount should be determined by a formula based on elements such as:

- Population;
- Primary visitor attraction numbers;
- Visitor-generated revenues;
- Revenue generation from other counties' residents;
- Absolute minimum amount; and
- Others as appropriate.

Table J.1 2007-2010 Sales Tax Revenues by County

County	Rate	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	Average
Alamosa[1]	2.0%	$1,788,864	$1,812,402	$1,815,501	$1,961,421	$1,844,547
Conejos[2]	0.0%	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Costilla[3]	1.0%	$99,727	$99,486	$107,154	$ 102,824	$102,298

Source: State of Colorado assessor's office, 2011

Table J.2 Sales Tax Generation Potential - Estimates by County

County	0.1%	0.3%	0.5%	1.0%
Alamosa[4]	$61,485	$184,455	$307,425	$614,850
Conejos[5]	$33,081	$99,243	$165,405	$330,810
Costilla	$10,230	$30,689	$51,149	$102,298
Total	**$104,796**	**$314,387**	**$523,979**	**$1,047,958**

Source: Progressive Urban Management Associates (PUMA) and Heritage Strategies, LLC for the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area Board of Directors, 2011

[1] Alamosa County has a sales tax sharing agreement; the county receives only 40% of sales tax collected. Number shown reflects only the County share. FY2010 number reflects a windfall of around $140,000.

[2] Conejos County currently has no county sales tax.

[3] In Costilla County, sales tax is shared amongst the county and the towns of San Luis and Blanca. The amount shown is total collections, of which the County receives 75%.

[4] Alamosa estimates based on average county revenue 2007-2010. Costilla County based on state sales tax revenues in Costilla County 2007-2010.

[5] This number has not been verified and may include collections that would not be attributed to the County should a sales tax be adopted. It may be best considered as an order-of-magnitude estimate. Because Conejos County has not yet been able to provide data, it was derived from U.S. Census Bureau data indicating total retail sales in Conejos County of $33,081,000 in 2007. The data can be accessed at: http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/08/08021.html

Table J.3 Property Tax Generation Potential - Estimates by County

County	2010 Assessed Valuation	0.1 Mill	0.25 Mill	0.5 Mill	1.0 Mill
Alamosa	$142,955,492	$14,296	$35,739	$71,478	$142,955
Conejos	$54,640,652	$5,464	$13,660	$27,320	$54,641
Costilla	$128,427,551	$12,843	$32,107	$64,214	$128,428
Total	**$326,023,695**	**$32,603**	**$81,506**	**$163,012**	**$326,024**

Source: Progressive Urban Management Associates (PUMA) and Heritage Strategies, LLC for the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area Board of Directors, 2011

Use and Distribution of Funds among Counties

If this option is pursued, to insure that each contributing county would benefit from participation to a degree commensurate with its contribution, the Board of Directors would commit to spending a pre-determined minimum percentage share of total project funds in each county. In addition, projects in any of the counties would be eligible to compete for the remaining funds. As an example, the amount to be spent on National Heritage Area projects in each county might be 30 percent in Alamosa, 15 percent in Conejos, and 15 percent in Costilla. An organizational entity that encompasses all funders and counties could be established to select projects to be funded, or the SdCNHA Board of Directors could be such an entity, depending on whether and how local legislation establishing the funds is allowed to relate to a nonprofit. The remaining 40 percent would be in a competitive pool. Decisions about the projects selected for this portion would be decided by the organizational entity that oversees funding distribution.[6]

Actual percentages guaranteed to each county should take into account a range of factors:

- The share contributed (and, as such, population, revenues, and other factors in that formula);
- Potential for visitor attraction (as distinguished from current attraction);
- Need; and
- Others as appropriate.

Criteria for the selection of projects to consider include:

- How does the project fit with the overall purposes and planning of the National Heritage Area?
- What is the demonstrated capacity of local partners to manage the project?
- Would this funding leverage additional funds?
- Does the project offer a unique or time-sensitive opportunity?

[6] A model for that could be adapted this funding structure is the regional Scientific and Cultural Facilities District structure used in metropolitan Denver area. Many diverse governments contribute a fixed percentage (0.1%) of sales tax to the fund. The distribution of funds is determined in three tiers. A fixed percentage supports large, primary visitor attractions that bring visitors to the area. Another percentage is distributed by the SCFD board to medium-scale facilities based on criteria, and a third tier is distributed to local Boards who award the funds via competitive grants to qualified facilities in their respective county. [This answers a comment above. You could perhaps move the footnote, or make this a full-fledge paragraph.]

Recommended Organizational Structure

If a new funding mechanism is to be created, it is critical to develop an organizational structure that provides a unified vision for National Heritage Area funding, promotes a cooperative decision-making process and defines the roles and responsibilities for all the funding partners. One option is to establish a separate organization, perhaps named the National Heritage Area Authority, as a distinct entity separate from the Board of Directors with members that would include representation from counties involved and the National Heritage Area, with representatives of the latter perhaps included as advisory, non-voting members. Colorado law requires participants in an authority to be governmental entities. It is possible the National Heritage Area could participate via separate contract if appropriate and desirable. The authority can be expanded to include additional entities if appropriate – i.e., if the National Heritage Area grows to encompass other counties or additional significant funders.

An authority is perhaps the most appropriate organizational structure to oversee multi-county funding for several reasons, including these:

- An authority provides the legal and organizational structure that brings together a number of entities with the common goal of funding projects in the National Heritage Area.
- An authority has a small voting membership representing all funders, encouraging swift and equitable decision making.
- There is constitutional and statutory authority to create an authority (the constitutional section is Colo. Const. Art. XIV, Sec. 18(2)(a) and (b), and the statute is 29-1-203, C.R.S.). Whatever the authority undertakes would be 'lawfully authorized to each' of the contracting agencies.
- The authority provides the structure for a formal arrangement that specifies:
    - What this group intends to do;
    - How the joint project is going to be managed, such as who is represented and how their voting interests are calculated;
    - Who is paying for what; and
    - How the group breaks up and what happens to any assets when it does.
- An agreement forming the authority would provide the outline of how the authority would be run, thus the authority has structure and legitimacy.
- The authority has open meetings, open records, a budget process, an audit process, standards for investment of public funds, etc., as indicated in the statutes. The authority has procedures that the governmental participants are familiar with because they use many of the same procedures in their own operations.
- As a governmental entity, an authority can apply for grants. Private entities, even nonprofit ones, sometimes do not qualify for certain types of governmental assistance, generally associated with economic development.
- The authority is a separate legal entity, and therefore can have its own insurance. In the event the authority commits torts, unless unusual circumstances exist, the member governments would not be liable for those torts.

- The board of the authority can concentrate their attention on the functions of the authority, which may make it easier for the member governments because authority issues would be handled in authority meetings, not in meetings of the governing bodies of the participating governments. An authority allows for specialization.

If the legal parameters of the Authority structure are too limiting, the same provisions could be outlined in a contract that forms the funding entity and includes both governmental and non-governmental entities.

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