

Chaffee Rec Plan Draft Objectives

Goal: Ensure economic benefits of outdoor recreation are sustainable

GOAL: SUSTAIN THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF OUTDOOR RECREATION	OVERALL GRADE
<p>Key Indicators</p> <p>1. Economic benefit trend A</p> <p>2. Recreation job growth trend A-</p> <p>3. Community support for recreation and tourism growth C</p>	B

(1A) An Engaged Business Community Supports Sustainable Recreation

The local business community champions a sustainable recreation industry, helping to:

1. Maintain exceptional experiences (improving trends 25% by 2025), and
2. Improve resident support for outdoor recreation tourism (from 30% to 70% supportive by 2023), by engaging to decrease impacts from increasing and irresponsible use, create a Chaffee recreation ethic and help support management.

Comments:

- Lots of comments for this objective related to making this about steward ship vs economy and getting local biz and Visitors Bureau involved to drive the effort.
- Addressing the related issues is good, but also informing the community about the true economic value of the Rec Tourism industry could be helpful as well.
- What do we mean by additional positive factors? creating additional positive factors for residents taken off because it's covered in 1B and 1C
- Traffic added to list of issues. Maybe the way to measure is to provide the list, and rate changes about feelings on list of issues
- Economic benefits should be a byproduct of recreation not a goal. Businesses want to increase business. The favorable impact of recreation on business should not be an objective. The more recreation business we have the less sustainable recreation is. Additionally, the majority of the jobs in the recreation industry are low paying and seasonal, creating the need for more affordable housing and other forms of public assistance. Many people live here because it's a quiet and peaceful place to live and high levels of tourism and visitation
- detract from that.
- This should be reworded so it is clear that the goal is not to increase tourism/visitation from 30 to 70%. We believe not everyone is happy with the current problems associated with irresponsible tourism, the current high levels of visitation, and many fear or oppose increases in tourism. Recommend that this be reworded so that it is clear that the goal is to increase community support for manageable and sustainable levels of responsible tourism.
- It must be recognized that there are some local businesses that do not benefit from tourism, visitation or outdoor recreation. There are also some businesses for which the current levels of tourism, visitation or outdoor recreation are detrimental (some ranchers, some hunting outfitters that experience conflict with other recreational users).
- A goal should be to decrease both irresponsible recreational use and the negative impacts from that recreational use. We believe the wording should include both. The objective for outdoor experiences considers behavior (use) and impacts. There are many impacts from irresponsible recreational use that are not readily apparent and difficult to measure. For example, the negative impacts resulting from someone who flies a drone in a designated Wilderness area may not be apparent or visible. But this use could harass wildlife and result in wildlife displacement or significant behavioral/physiological reactions that are not recorded. The drone use may result in conflicts with other Wilderness users or displace them to other areas. It may be difficult to record or measure that conflict or displacement. Others viewing irresponsible behavior may not know the behavior is irresponsible, and those others may begin to repeat or imitate the irresponsible behavior. The cumulative impacts of irresponsible use must be considered. Too many times irresponsible recreationists do not believe their personal behavior as an individual is of any consequence. They fail to consider how their impacts may contribute to cumulative damage and destruction. For example, it only takes 5 footsteps to kill some alpine tundra plants. The impact of one hiker stepping on a plant may

not result in a measurable/visible impact. But if 4 other hikers' step on that plant it will die.

- We like the community driven recreation ethic, as perhaps this will help educate locals about responsible recreation. There are many aspects of irresponsible recreation that are likely primarily due to use by locals, not visitors. (illegal trail construction, travel off routes, removal of forest products, dogs off leash disturbing wildlife, some large fire rings and some dispersed camping problems). A Leave No Trace study determined that locals were responsible for most damaging use of undesignated routes, as opposed to visitors.
- We recommend the last words be revised to state "helping to support education and management." 'Fund' should be changed to the broader and more inclusive 'support'. as there are ways that businesses can assist that do not involve a monetary contribution. Businesses could contribute in kind services or labor to efforts, as well as funds. Enforcement should be changed to education. It must be understood that enforcement is only one aspect of education. Although enforcement is important, there are many other parts of education that businesses can assist with that do not involve enforcement. Including enforcement as an aspect of education may help gain business support for enforcement when there is reluctance to do so.
- The capacity of Chaffee Co to responsibly accept additional growth in tourism/recreational use is limited. We have likely already exceeded capacity in some areas. Businesses must accept these limits.
- Without substantive incentives for the businesses involved, this is likely to fail.
- Should this be stated as addressing top impacts and building positive factors with the %s as a metric?
- Addressing the related issues is good, but also informing the community about the true economic value of the Rec/Tourism industry could be helpful as well.
- This seems like a big reach for % increase in support, especially over that timeframe. This is demographically driven and longtime residents may never change their perception which depending on turnover of long-time versus new residents, the percent increase may not be achievable.
- Is supporting recreation tourism important because it indicates stewardship awareness has improved? Or because it means they are not worried about the impacts because management has improved?
- Seems like there needs to be a distinction between local residents with business interests favored by tourism and those not benefiting economically i.e. may need to have an objective focused on getting business interests to see the longer view of managed sustainable growth on their business models.
- Better law enforcement that coordinates with city, federal, state, and county would help.
- The way to achieve this will be through synergistic effects, implementing and letting residents know how outdoor rec \$ is supporting them, aside from just supporting ~30% of the economy through mostly service-related industries (low paying). Did those \$ help build trails in town? a rec center in town? bathrooms near town so there's not a bunch of poo near the river?
- Hopefully, this refers to increasing stewardship awareness. I feel like that is more important than just focusing on the economic angle. If stewardship is there, economic stability will follow.
- Can this focus on getting local business and visitors bureaus involved in supporting responsible recreation?
- Consider definition of "enforcement" to include more broadly behavior change, changing perception of what is acceptable.
- I am a Texan and I fully understand your concerns. You must do something now. Yes, we will ruin it without meaning to so take measures. Of course, not all will do what they should—just like wearing masks. But do what you can and set the standards for all. You can't help that you are beautiful and accessible and perfect!
- Consistent and pervasive messaging and education does help. When dog poop bags came out I was pretty shy about picking up poop. But I saw others doing it and got used to it. If our businesses such as the Chamber and SMS and AHRA all educated about "leave no trace" and "pack out your human waste" it will help.
- As I read these comments, it seems to be that maybe highlighting Education as an Objective in and of itself should top the list. I mean Education in its broadest sense from educating the rec users, outfitters, and helping our businesses become educators and Financial supporters. I saw the need for Education thread throughout the Report of the Rec Survey, and I think many of our problems and challenges can be addressed with a countywide coordinated messaging campaign. A coordinated countywide messaging campaign. We did it for COVID with our uniform branding of the "Use Masks" signs which I greatly admire, both at the gateways and downtown. Color coordination is good as it signals the brain to attention in a special way for that message. I know that one mask message doesn't compare to the variety of messages and locations, but we could do a lot of messaging in town, at businesses, at public land agencies and at our visitor outreach offices including CCVB messaging.
- The term "recreational tourism" is too broad. ATV use and fly Fishing are both forms of "recreational tourism", but I would argue - are entirely different in both what they contribute economically and their impact to resources. In order to make meaningful progress, we need to categorize and prioritize. Create economic impact studies for the major categories and let those inform the objectives. Each are different as far as what is needed for education, enforcement, and maintenance.

- *Low impact recreation should be prioritized. Quiet use, human powered recreation is difficult to fault and provides positive economic benefits (outdoor equipment sales, bike shops, fly fishing shops and guiding, restaurants) without many of the downsides of motorized recreation (snow machines, razors, dispersed car/RV camping). I would guess local support for hiking, biking, fishing is already strong.*
- *If economic benefits are desired, look at the impact of different types of recreation- versus the economic benefit from that type of recreation: Realize that recreation resources are limited. You can look at a given area or perimeter. How much of a given type of recreation can that area accommodate, without adverse impacts on resources or negative interactions? We should not promote the types of recreation that have more impact per user and less economic benefit.*
- *If we are keeping this to recreation-related businesses, then a fee of some sort, per user, could be used to support something like the Crested Butte Conservation Corp. Take a look at what they do (two paid crews that spend the summer doing projects (everything from education to trail work to cleaning up/closing dispersed campsites) that mitigate the impact of recreational tourism.*

(1B) Enable Equitable Access

Enable continued access to outdoor recreation for an aging population, maintaining or enhancing experience quality for those over 65 and thus supporting economy and public health. Ensure Chaffee Recreation Plan actions support equitable access.

XXX on other related to minority demographics with a measurable metric?

Comments:

- *I'm 73 and biggest problem may be getting public transportation for locals and dealing with health issues. If you are healthy with a good retirement age is not a problem other than perhaps more restrooms.*
- *What are ways to increase low-cost opportunities while limiting growth? Most options of permits, less free dispersed camping, etc. would be in conflict with that.*
- *Public transportation is a huge barrier for both aging populations and youth! More in-town access to outdoor experiences can also help address this barrier. Some sort of scholarship system to address developed camping fees would also create a channel for education.*
- *Developed campsite fees do not seem to be all that much and not that much of a barrier to folks who have paid for gas, food, supplies to camp.*
- *This challenge suggests to me that we must be innovative and thoughtful in developing a wide variety of solutions and opportunities that will address those diversities.*
- *Perhaps there could be built in exceptions to fee paying for low-income folks and local folks. And/or perhaps folks could reduce their use fees by contributing volunteer hours in stewardship work.*
- *Strategy ideas: take activities to the workplace, incentivize everyone to get outdoors. Set up brainstorm with Chaffee Co Health Coalition and Senior Chapters Group.*
- *SPOT is working on improving connectivity, safety and way-finding in the town and linkages to trails that lead from town. Town is a great place to focus this effort -- as it is already very pleasant for walking around here. And if people stay in town to recreate on town trails, the impacts are less out in the wilder places. Also, people can leave right from their door rather than driving somewhere to recreate. We have an amazing start. For our town, we need to keep what we have, improve it where needed, and strategically add more.*
- *The Chaffee Seniors Council provided these key inputs on 11/25 to Cindy: Consider broadening the objective to include indoor recreation opportunities as well, especially for seniors- consider adding something like "develop a plan to support recreation opportunities that enable residents to age in place by xx date" - A sidewalk circuit training for seniors, indoor recreation facilities, programs that enable seniors to recreate in their homes and a senior center were mentioned as possible strategies to accomplish this sort of objective.- Consider also reframing the "low-cost recreation" part of the objective to something like "develop a baseline for resident recreation use and work to maintain or expand the percentage recreating over the next 10 years". There is very strong support to focus this objective on aging in place, considering the very high percentage of +65 residents and the rate of growth in this population segment.*
- *As an aging senior, I think the broadening this objective per the above Seniors Council input is a good idea. A City-sponsored Rec Center with an indoor walking track and gym was envisioned when I moved here 20 years ago, but there wasn't the community support or money to do it. Now there is no room to build it at Centennial Park where it was originally envisioned but I think the idea of a rec center somewhere in Salida should still be a rec goal and could redirect some use of our in-town and near-to-town outdoor amenities.*
- *Agree with anonymous above. We need better Rec centers in both ends of the county with a preference for BV*

because we have much less infrastructure than Salida

- *Both BV and Salida have amazing trail systems. Both towns are doing okay as far as providing effective and safe access to these trail systems but needs more improvements. SPOT is working with the city of Salida to improve intown connectivity to the trail systems. This needs to be a priority so that people of all ages and regardless of socioeconomic status can have quality hiking, biking, running, dog walking opportunities. Also, fund infrastructure and continuing enhancements to these amenities.*
- *Assuming we are addressing Chaffee county residents' access to recreation, I would second the previous comment. Trails that can be accessed directly from our towns is desirable as it alleviates transportation to and from recreation opportunities. We need a range of trails in our municipalities including concrete and fiat gravel for walkers, as well as more challenging hiking and mountain biking trails. SPOT and SMT have done an excellent job of providing both. We should build on their expertise and continue to expand our close in trail systems.*
- *Instead of looking at trails individually, consider an interconnected network of trails that allow residents and visitors to go from population centers to outlying trails, avoiding traffic on roads.*
- *I think there are plenty of opportunities for low-cost recreation to age in place - it's motivation that is needed to get out and walk, do a senior yoga class via the internet, ride a bike, take a hike. Using tax dollars for a big rec center is not my priority (age 73 and former BV Rec Board President). There is a need for indoor walking space during winter, but people are doing marathons in their apartments by counting steps during COVID.*
- *I agree with comment above. Our county has a plethora of low-cost recreation. Apart from equipment expenses (bike, raft, etc.) isn't it all low cost? There are no financial hurdles to getting out onto city, BLM, and USFS lands. A person just needs to do it. Motivation comes from within, not from the County.*
- *Tell the whole story about all the factors that go into measuring the GDP of outdoor rec.*
- *Comments from Andrea at CCPH: Can we connect this to the senior needs assessment and the Next 50 Initiative? Maybe the headline should be abound promoting or encouraging Active Living as a public health benefit. This could include "sustaining or expanding recreation pathways for older adults"*
- *Strategy ideas: take activities to the workplace, incentivize everyone to get outdoors. Set up brainstorm with Chaffee Co Health Coalition and Senior Chapters Group.*
- *Perhaps a better way to phrase this is to enable participation or to ensure that barriers to recreational participation are minimized.*
- *There are already ample existing opportunities to recreate. One of the simplest, easiest, low cost and most popular is hiking and walking.*
- *The word access is frequently used recreation in reference to designated routes that allow travel into public land, or in reference to the ability for users to travel into areas. There are concerns that this objective could be interpreted as an attempt to create and facilitate additional routes and expanded use in sensitive habitats and/or areas that where additional use cannot be managed. We already have adequate access to public land. Suggest using a word other than access.*
- *The different types/forms of recreation, and the relative impacts of each type/form of recreational use, should be considered. Many local recreational businesses make their money providing complex, high-cost services and equipment for recreation. (Mtn bike, raft/boat, OHV sales, rental and trips).*
- *Concerns that this could result in additional OHV trails/ebike routes and/or OHV access into town, as OHV and ebike groups falsely claim that it is discriminatory to not provide open motorized/ebike recreational access for the old, sick, weak, disabled etc. Federal land management agency policy debunks this, but the claims for additional vehicular access to public lands persist.*
- *It must be recognized that the relative contribution of tourism/recreation to the local economy has been declining. Non-labor income is the primary source of new dollars coming into Chaffee Co. This is primarily coming from new people that have moved here.*

Goal: Maintain healthy forests, waters, wildlife and working lands



(2A) Achieve High Quality-Low Impact Camping

Cultivate High Quality-Low Impact Camping

1. Cut by negative impacts from dispersed camping use in half by 2023.
 - a. Reduce trash, decrease sites with more than 1 gallon trash/human waste from 30% to 5%;
 - b. Decrease the average size of denuded campsites by 20%;
 - c. Reduce the number of inappropriate campsites by closing 90% of illegal and agency-agreed unacceptable campsites (such as those with high impact to agriculture or wildlife) and redirecting campers to more appropriate campsites;
 - d. Decrease human-caused wildfire risk with management action/engineered infrastructure and prevent the increase of campfire-related tree damage near timberline.
 - e. (all to be measured with Campsite Collector data).
2. Reduce dispersed campsite growth from 14% a year to 3% by 2023 and to a stable number and condition of sites by 2030, while allowing appropriate capacity growth through lower impact designated or developed public and private sites.

Comments:

- I like this moves an F to an A.
- Reducing the growth and rate of growth seems acceptable; however, any reduction would have a negative impact on residents. As a resident, dispersed camping is a huge incentive to living in the area. I would rather not camp than "camp" at a public/private developed or designated campground.
- I like this. There will always be out there spaces that will be free of fees and not developed. I think redesigning and restructuring the super easily accessible camping areas seems like a good approach to start.
- What are the metrics for "halving dispersed campsite impacts"? Are we talking about halving the number of sites with trash and human waste or number of sites? Also seems 2023 is a pretty aggressive timeline.
- How would decreasing dispersed sites balance with an increasing number of visitors? People need a place to stay when they come to visit
- Perhaps clarify camping typologies - dispersed "not formal", dispersed "formal", developed public, developed private, etc
- Agree with Lisa from forest service in that development of more developed campsites is key to providing quality camping experiences and helping address the overflow dispersed camping issues near the few developed campsites we have in the area.
- Not only do we need to consider %increase in campsite as a key indicator/Metrics, we need to look at how the agencies benchmark impacts on the ground, using critical criteria, for assessing condition. Condition/impact should be key driver in determining grade. Quality verses quantity can produce two entirely different results. In some areas capacity of increases in good. Other areas are already strained, highly impacted, and generating great concern for adverse environmental impacts and increased fire risk
- Need countywide map that shows capacity of # of site represents a reasonable carrying capacity for dispersed camping opportunities. Showing areas that would be considered maxed out and areas that can support more growth
- FS campsites need more information about the local area and how to behave and suggestions for what to do.
- I wonder if dispersed camping for residents (2nd comment) means more backcountry camping? In which case, dispersed

makes sense. Mitigating on the ground impacts is really the goal, not decreasing number of campers.

- I think carrying capacity of particular areas would be important to measure. Providing more campsites in developed campground areas where the capacity is higher could help alleviate pressure on dispersed camping areas. Hardening more popular dispersed camping areas could also help keep people out of areas that have a lower capacity for use. A big component for reducing damage to sensitive areas is going to have to be some sort of enforcement/signage/education effort.*
- In relation to 'camping' capacity: Much effort at the present involves limiting camping capacity. Now is the time to enhance camping capacity.*
- Is a good plan to close a dispersed site if it is overused from an environmental point of view. However, a plan must be implemented to appropriately direct campers to a new site.*
- Note we need to define what is "unacceptable" and that is different by areas (eg. Wilderness, Ruby Mtn CG etc.*
- Consider the impacts of different types of dispersed camping users and how that can be used to minimize impact. RV vs. Truck/car vs. Backpacking*
- Most of the adverse camping impacts visible and recorded by volunteers were in dispersed motorized campsites. This involves people driving and parking their cars/trucks/campers off designated roads to camp. Soil compaction, trash left, vegetation loss, and even size of campfire/fire ring are all more likely to increase when facilitated by vehicle access. So the type of dispersed camping, and what aspects of it needs to be managed, matters.*
- Great idea to have in-town camping. Next to the Forest Service would be a great place. Also encourage RV parks to add more tent sites. Definitely need to discourage an increase in dispersed camping on public lands.*
- This may require imposing a hard limit/capacity on certain areas (CR 371, FS 272, etc)*
- It's been said above, but I think the solution is to provide more camping opportunities. We can't stop people from coming here, but if we provide camping opportunities the need for dispersed camping would decrease. People don't leave if they can't find camping, they just camp somewhere stupid or inappropriate. Unfortunately, we need BLM and USFS to do more than just agree in theory - they need to get it done! Our County is what, 70% public land? there is only so much the County can actually do on this one without real, genuine contribution from the land agencies. How do we get this?*

(2B) Sustain Diverse Wildlife

Stabilize and enhance wildlife populations improving the grade from C to A by 2025 by working holistically with agencies, landowners, Forest Health Council and community to reduce recreation-related impacts on wildlife and to protect/enhance habitat.

(Note: includes diverse wildlife and imperiled plants/insects)

Comments:

- Grading wildlife populations as a C does not adequately address declining populations. A "C" grade is interpreted as average or satisfactory, and assigning a C grade to wildlife population declines is interpreted to mean that those declines are satisfactory. Wildlife populations in decline deserve a "D" grade as unsatisfactory.*
- We recommend expanding this to include diverse plant and wildlife populations. There are numerous documented vulnerable, imperiled and critically imperiled plants and plant communities in Chaffee County that need to be protected and preserved.*
- Change wording so that habitat must be preserved, protected and restored, not just enhanced. Habitat enhancement often involves human intervention which frequently only focuses on modifications that primarily benefit only certain species. —*
- The USFS has had a public NEPA process open for comment during the past 4 years that will have significant impacts on wildlife throughout the county. It is disappointing that there has been little local involvement from Chaffee Co residents interested in wildlife in this process. Also, that there are so few comments on wildlife from this group. — ANONYMOUS*
- If many populations of wildlife are in decline in the county, and recreational use is contributing to those declines, drastic changes need to occur to existing levels and locations of recreational use in order to reverse that decline. Balance between recreation and wildlife currently does not exist if wildlife populations are in decline. A continuation of the current existing levels and locations of recreational use will not reverse the decline. Limiting, restricting and/or eliminating some current recreational opportunities will be necessary just to maintain current population levels. Even suggesting such actions is met with opposition by recreationists and businesses.*
- It is good that diverse wildlife populations are being considered and this should be retained. Diverse should include and consider all species equally for their inherent intrinsic value. Applying a relative anthropocentric economic value to species does not promote diversity.*
- What does it mean to stabilize wildlife populations (big and small)? Stabilize all populations, regardless of size? Stabilize all*

wildlife, large and small in size. Why not just state stabilize all wildlife populations?

- Whenever it is necessary to close or reduce the size of a campsite, develop a strategy to advise campers of suitable alternatives.
- Before closing a campsite, try to have a suitable alternative site already available.
- Build a camping plan that embraces the idea of new and designated campsites at suitable locations presently untrammled by persons and also not within or close to wildlife areas or corridors.
- I don't think many tourists would make any effort to educate themselves. If a few dozen game cameras could be distributed along with a few hundred signs saying they are present it would make some people think before they toss trash, break new trails, cross fences, etc.
- Many of the adverse impacts of dispersed camping result not from the camping itself but from people improperly/illegally using motor vehicles to access dispersed camp sites. The RIMS data collection effort was flawed in that it did not consider or collect information on how and where motor vehicles were being driven to access dispersed camp sites. The vast majority of camp sites that were inventoried by RIMS were not illegal. Was is illegal is unauthorized use of motor vehicles off designated routes to camp. • Goals for dispersed camping must include better educating people about how and where they can use a motorized vehicle in order to dispersed motorized camp. Another goal must be to close and limit the most egregious unauthorized/illegal routes used for motorized dispersed camping. • A goal should be to transition from open dispersed motorized camping to designated dispersed motorized camping as quickly as possible. • A problem with educating people about proper dispersed camping use is that the land management agency regulations that apply to this use vary tremendously and are not consistent (by area, by agency) within the county. Land management agencies are reluctant to enforce their own dispersed camping regulations. • The land management agencies have mismanaged dispersed camping for so long that it will take a massive effort to begin to address this issue. Also, the agencies want to do additional NEPA planning to modify their existing motorized camping restrictions in some areas. Lacking a decision from those TBD plans, the agencies are reluctant to take any action. • Without a massive education effort, increased patrols and monitoring, a huge increase in enforcement and funding/ people to close new sites that develop, it will be difficult if not impossible to decrease dispersed campsite growth rate (interpreting growth to mean number of new sites that develop). Lacking the above, unless new designated campground and campsite opportunities are provided, and/or visitation to the county is restricted, unregulated growth of dispersed campsites will continue. There is very little direction in current USFS and BLM plans that limit the creation and use of new dispersed campsites. The primary action that will decrease the proliferation of new dispersed campsites is a new agency regulation (order) that limits dispersed camping to designated sites, and proper education/implementation of this regulation. • It was obvious from the Feb 2020 RIB meeting that almost all participating groups are not interested in investing resources (vol labor, funding, effort) in better managing dispersed camping. The agencies do not have the time/funding/staff to address this. So who is going to work on it? • There are not many outside sources of funding available that can be used to address dispersed motorized camping. • 2019 SCORP findings showed that most people in CO tent camp. It is easier to responsibly accommodate this majority use with regulated dispersed camping than it is to accommodate RV camping.
- While the survey reflected that respondents prioritize protecting wildlife and everyone including myself like wildlife and populations should be stabilized; it is important to have this component well thought out and not take it too far. From experience, individuals lean on "protecting wildlife" to shut the door behind them. For example, "that development can't go on the private vacant land behind me, because it might impact wildlife corridors, (ignore my 2,500sf house and 6' privacy fence)"
- Minimal Seasonal Road Closures where necessary acceptable, don't overdo it. This component effects residents far more than tourist as year-round residents still like to explore public lands in the off season (even more so since there are less people)
- Make rules equitable across the board. if you favor one user group (e.g., locals) it's a difficult message to deliver and enforce to the group that is impacted (e.g., non-residents). closures should be based on science.
- All types of Recreation users need to be educated about wildlife. Wildlife should not be an afterthought and many times but not always should take priority. Boreal Toads with thousands of hikers to 14ters. Currently no management that I see.
- Management of wildlife has to be comprehensive and wholistic, and not single out specific user groups or residents/non-residents.
- Many of the people concerned with wildfires are not considering the impacts that fuel treatments to protect their private property.
- It is important to think about ecosystems, not just game animals. Indicator species and keystone species are not always game animals. Also, numbers of people in an area, proximity of development, and noise level all affect wildlife. Less tolerant species may be affected before game animals. That said, winter closures, breeding and calving season closures are still very important.
- Aldo Leopold said: A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.
- Balancing wildlife needs within a rural and urban recreation settings are difficult at best. These are recreation areas managed for higher concentrations of people. Just like wilderness areas are managed for lower concentrations of people.
- How do we best meet objective 2B with the increasing demand to get outdoors and recreate, especially during times like Covid 19.

- *Balancing the effects on wildlife needs to be done in a very strategic and holistic approach. Recognizing that wildlife and flora benefit people and recreationist, but not at the expense of minimizing recreation for the benefit of wildlife or maximizing recreation at the expense of wildlife.*
- *This objective needs to cover the impacts to wildlife by domestic dogs and placement of trails. Wildlife corridors need to be kept intact.*
- *Education, enforcement and seasonal closures could go a long way to protecting wildlife while allowing for enhanced recreation opportunities. The urban deer population indicates that at least some species are adapted to humans. The science is still out on whether trail users significantly disrupt wildlife. It is ironic that the department of wildlife wants to purposefully eradicate mountain lions and bears to encourage hunted species while opposing new trails and human access. Deciding on the 'correct' population of deer/elk seems based on fee collection rather than carrying capacity.*
- *This goal needs different wording; do you mean Stability Plan or what?*
- *DOW gets its funding from selling the right to kill the animals it manages. Conflict of interest? Yes. Hence getting rid of mountain lions and seasonal closures of roads and trails that are within spitting distance of residences. They need lots of animals so that they can keep funding their jobs.*
- *For safer wildlife corridors reduce privacy fencing and is it possible to replace some barbed wire fences with smooth wire?*
- *It has been my observation over the last 40 years that conservationists use wildlife as a tool to restrict public access. No one in the conservationist groups wants it known that wildlife reductions are the result of numerous conditions. This includes predation, drought, plague, and in this case, lead filing at over 3,000 fps. That means that human use is only 1 factor. Yet the actions of groups such as this one will suffocate the liberty of the activity in the path of least resistance. Expect this leftist group to severely reduce trail access and dispersed camping through their advising of the federal land managers. Consider this a "taking." Too bad! I must remind you that the federal lands are owned by the people, not a few leftist individuals in Chaffe County who want to restrict the use of federal lands. With that said, I suggest you do not follow the path of severe restriction, lest you make it so difficult for the land managers to limit activity. I have seen the similar restrictions in other states. These actions only encourage the public to violate the restriction, both day and night.*

(2C) Retain Rural Landscapes

Decrease the financial/emotional impact of recreation users to agricultural operations. Flip annual \$75,000 cost to agricultural operators to a net positive, level off negative interaction trend and create a supportive community framework to manage incidents by 2024.

Comments:

- *If a specific dollar figure is going to be used, it needs to be supported by more specific documented evidence including methods, and the year in which that figure was calculated, so that future conditions can be similarly evaluated for comparison.*
- *What more specifically is a supportive community framework to manage incidents?*
- *How are the emotional impacts being evaluated, measured and tracked? Emotional impacts are also significant with regards to other aspects of recreation, including dispersed camping, conflict, forest fuel treatments, wildlife, etc. etc. Will the plan also consider emotional impacts in these other components and how?*
- *It may be too optimistic to create revenue for ranchers from recreation. The concept of charging people to camp on private lands is interesting, but managing people is hard and problematic.*
- *Not everyone agrees with the long-term environmental sustainability of encouraging/supporting beef production and high levels of beef consumption.*
- *Track actual \$ impact to ag to show efforts to decrease financial impact are working.*
- *Provide resources (\$\$) for large landowners to mitigate recreation impacts*
- *Fund additional land enforcement to address vandalism/trespass/damage*
- *Create coordinated signs/messaging that working ranches can use to explain how illegal rec and vandalism impacts their operation, property, and way of life — ANONYMOUS Look at HIPA Camp model — CINDYLWILLIAMS67 Education education*
- *While I agree a study must be the first step and the ag community must be more proactive in educating the public.*
- *I'd like to know what damage is really done to ag lands. If reducing recreation on grazing lands is one of their goals, that's a bit ironic, since overgrazing often causes much more damage on such lands. Some ranches in other areas have increased their income by offering such things as fishing, hiking or mt. biking for a fee when it doesn't harm their livestock. Not sure about the Hip Camp model, Cindy, as Dennis Schoger has tried to do that and cut down many willows in their riparian area.*
- *This is an area where County can act immediately to resolve small but specific issues that are thorn in the side of Ag. As an example, County could provide parking in areas such as CR220/Hwy50 where recreation-based parking is upsetting Ag owners. There is some low hanging fruit in this objective that would go a long way towards resolving negative impacts to Ag.*

Goal: Retain exceptional multi-use experiences



(3A) Sustain Exceptional Outdoor Experiences

Increase the number of users who say experiences as improving vs. diminishing 25% by 2025:

1. Continue to enhance in and near-town and river assets,
2. Address survey-confirmed diminishing factors (poor user behaviors, natural resource damage, evidence of trash and human waste, and UTV impacts), and
3. Expand critical per-visitor recreation facilities, such as restrooms, waste receptacles, trail connectors, parking and town parks/assets, 25% by 2023. (Critical are those that respond to a negative impact caused by recreation).

Comments:

- The objective should include decreasing conflict between recreationists. It must be recognized that most recreational conflict is asymmetrical, and only certain recreationists experience and/or are aware of the conflict. It takes active management to preserve the desired recreational experiences of certain recreationists. The agency multiple use concept often facilitates conflict.
- The RIB focus on dispersed camping failed to consider the concerns related to recreational conflict on routes and in areas
- If one of the desired recreational experiences in the survey was solitude, that will be impossible to improve with continued tourism and recreational growth unless capacity limits are implemented. (permit to use) Land management agencies (USFS) already have capacity restrictions in place from the 1984 forest plan (Persons At One Time) but those are not understood, monitored or implemented.
- Improving desired recreational experiences for many will result in a corresponding decline in wildlife populations. The addition of any additional trails use or rec facilities will not benefit wildlife.
- Existing recreational use is already resulting in wildlife population declines of the species that have been closely monitored (the populations of most species have not been monitored).
- No one wants the problems associated with OHV use and unmanaged dispersed camping to be enhanced near towns.
- A good way to enhance desired recreational experiences and to reduce conflict without additional impacts to wildlife and nat resources is to restrict use of multiple use routes only to certain user groups during certain days.
- Needs to be much more education (including enforcement and education of the public about that enforcement) of existing recreation regulations. CPW does a great job of educating the public about the value of wildlife by publicizing wildlife enforcement actions. There must be additional enforcement and public education of that enforcement (media releases to papers, etc.) for recreation restrictions. Coop patrol and enforcement agreements with area law enforcement (sheriff) need to be developed, funded and implemented There is already an existing statute in CO that county sheriffs can enforce federal travel regulations on fed land. The regular presence of enforcement contributes significantly with compliance.
- There should be more of a focus on the quality of recreation experiences instead of focus on the quality of recreationists. But many businesses would disagree. And some businesses have concerns with an increased quantity of recreationists (some raft companies want more regulation of private rafting).
- Concern of increased user numbers, while the County/CCVB spends ~\$750,000 advertising to get more people to come?
- We should be spending our current resources on education and improving facilities before marketing our region to new user groups.
- ^^^ Yes
- I agree with the above comments. Let's re-allocate some of the marketing money toward managing the use we have

now and the expected growth.

- agreed
- Note: This could be further broken down by zones from primitive to towns
- received by email: Just read the results of your survey. I know that several of us recommended that a fee be assessed on businesses that rent ATVs/Side x Sides, 4-wheel drive vehicles and bike (motorized and non-motorized) that use and many times degrade roads and trails. The money would be used to help maintain the roads/trails that they degrade. We are NOT in support of paying more so than out of town visitors can enjoy Chaffee County. We are already paying an increased sales tax In case someone forgot.
- When so much of the earth is suffering due to fossil fuel use, (wildfires, carbon emissions, millions and millions of acres under asphalt, water waste from carwashes, wildlife fatalities on the road, oil spills and noise to name a few) isn't it sort of awful to be encouraging the use of fossil-fuel burning vehicle use in the last undamaged and quiet places?
- Note on "Crowding" - in the survey data the concern about crowding is most often referenced with increased people with poor behaviors...and the crowding is a very relative term generally compared to how it "used to be" in Chaffee. Since we cannot stop growth, the focus perhaps should be correcting the poor behaviors.
- I agree with the first five comments above.
- A lot of \$ is needed to accomplish this objective. FS and BLM should have enough \$ to deal with these factors but they don't. We need to get support of our politicians to get more funding for these agencies.
- Agree that continuing top positives (near town assets/amenity improvements) are a key to addressing growth. Walking or riding your bike to a local trailhead and using a legal sustainable trail is about as low impact and high personal health value as you can get. Promote and support this! I do not believe that this type outdoor recreation has suffered from "diminishing experiences and will not as long as attention remained focused on supporting this type outdoor recreation.
- Agree that money should be diverted from advertising our County to mitigating impacts of that very successful effort. This may require some creativity to get around legal requirements for where the money is spent but this effort is needed.
- Growth in trail access and other recreational opportunities should not be near townships. These opportunities already exist. There should be a strong emphasis on development of dispersed development. Concentrated opportunities reduce the quality of the user experience and can damage the recourses.

(3B) Management Resources Keep Pace with Growth

Increase per-visitor funding and human resource recreation management capacity, tapping all sources to overcome 5-year declines and keep pace with growth:

1. Increase per-user funds for federal- and state-managed lands 50% by 2023 and 100% by 2025.
2. Increase per-user funds for municipal and urban recreation management 25% by 2023.
3. Establish \$100,000 annual commitment for recreation management by 2023 from the visitors
4. bureau, business community and county government.
5. Increase volunteer impact four-fold by 2024. Double the number of volunteers by 2023.

Develop an empowerment measure in 2021 and then double empowerment by 2022.

Comments:

- We do not see how per visitor funding is going to keep pace with growth. How is this currently measured? Per user funding varies depending on the user group. How the funds are applied will need to vary by user group. For example, it takes relatively more per user funding to properly manage a high intensity/impact use like OHV recreation than the funding required to properly manage a rec use such as bird watching. But it requires less funding per user, but significant amounts of overall funding, to properly manage the volume of use climbing 14ers. Are the costs/benefits for various recreational users/uses going to be considered or evaluated?
- We believe these goals are impossible to achieve based on how we are interpreting them. Consider the overall total USFS Salida District budget for one year. There is a great deal of overlap in management included within that budget (for example funding for wildlife must also consider recreation, range, fire and timber, etc.). That budget is incredibly large, and we do not see how it can be increased by 50% within 2 years. Another concern is that even if outside sources of funding are made secured, the agencies and only the agencies can make the final decision to accept and use the funds.

- *It is easy to get volunteers to work on things that will enhance or expand their personal recreational use. It is extremely difficult to achieve balance with volunteers, as volunteers are reluctant to assist with route/area closures, rehabilitation, actions that protect wildlife, actions that limit human use. We are concerned that the impact of volunteers will be skewed in favor of recreation and to the detriment of wildlife and resource protection. Thus, no balance.*
- *Who provides the largest source of funding for federal land management? Despite ads and claims, it is not specific user groups such as hunters or anglers. Almost all funding for federal land management comes via congressional allocations to the agencies of federal income tax dollars. Any local funding contribution will be miniscule, and a 50% increase is unrealistic.*
- *Not sure how municipal and urban recreation was included in this mix. It seems like that should be a separate program that has little to do with ranching, wildlife, public land use, natural resources. Is the idea to have people swim in the pool instead of riding their mtn bike or similar on public lands? Urban and municipal recreation needs to be better defined. In reality, the primary form of all urban/municipal recreation involves TV watching, and/or internet/phone use. Will funding be sought for better management of those types of recreation?*
- *Funds expended by the Chambers and CCVB to attract more visitors/recreation are adding to the concerns with rec management and growth. While it's great that responsible recreation guidelines are to be included in county tourism literature, this will not offset the impacts of additional visitation and growth.*
- *The matching funds part of Common Ground Grants restricts what can be funded and accomplished. The outside sources of funding available that can be applied to certain forms of recreation management are very limited. — ANONYMOUS*
- *A centralized identified location for people coming back from the mountains (camping/hiking/fishing/etc.) to use to dispose of trash would help. Trouble is the bigger the trash can, the more people abuse it.*
- *Funding management agencies, education efforts, signage and enforcement are super important. I like this objective. How to do it is the question. Staff funding for agencies from the national level, state and county contributions, Common Ground funding for staff and on the ground work, user fees, donations--it all counts.*
- *A most useful place to 'spend' money would be for patrollers and/or empowered volunteers.*
- *Definitely much more funding (#4) is going to be needed in order to manage use and keep quality and health.*
- *Chaffee Visitors Bureau funding should be changed to provide more \$'s needed in #4.*
- *Under nr.4 include 'cities' since city activities cause an increase in public lands usage.*
- *Fees for camping, trail head parking, etc. may be required to raise the needed funds. These fees should have a rational nexus to the extent of impact, dispersed camping especially if providing fire rings, bathrooms, etc. should be charged while low impact uses (hiking, biking,) should not be expected to subsidize and locals should not subsidize out of county visitors. We don't have good information on positive local economic impact comes from differing uses. A dispersed camper who brings food and drink from their home doesn't contribute anything to the local economy while a Flyfisher who hires a guide and eats at a local restaurant contributes a lot.*
- *It is clear that we are "shooting ourselves in the foot" by spending Chaffee Visitors Bureau funding on attracting MORE visitors. Instead, divert those funds to educate visitors, enforce rules, and restoration and maintenance of damaged sites. Provide grants to land managers to use as needed, beyond agency funding. There has been a large group of users who are new to public land use. They need education on LNT, and the care of public lands. The Chaffee Visitors Bureau should add education to all visitor contacts.*
- *Agree with comment above that #4 should include "cities".*
- *This objective needs to a priority. Not much can get resolved without money.*
- *Can second-home owners be taxed (or fee) differently than primary homeowners? Our property taxes are very low, and when homes sit empty the county loses out on tax proceeds that would come from someone being in that home.*
- *Adding new rec facilities for new visitors is impossible and unsustainable with population growth and an increase in visitation.*
- *The recreation facilities need to expand not just for visitors. There is a yearly growth by residents and visitors alike that is going to happen. You either work to address or fall behind.*
- *I assume facilities refers to parking, rest rooms, dog trash bags and trash receptacles.*
- *Facilities also means infrastructure like ball fields, basketball courts, skate parks, etc.*
- *Maps at all the hotels that show how easy it is to walk! And educate the hotel owners and everyone else about this. It's so easy to walk for errands and for recreation, and to get to fun places like pool, dog park, river, and restaurants. I don't think visitors have any idea how easy it is--they can just leave their car parked and can go from fishing to ice-cream shop to long and scenic hikes, right from the door.*
- *Restrooms come at a cost, more facilities likely means more fees which may be counter to the feedback on free/dispersed sites.*
- *I think a critical next step is for all knowledgeable parties from all of our recreation management organizations need to get together and identify all of the county's rec sites that have the highest use and most negative human impact. so I am pleased to see that assessment is a next step to be completed by June 2021. This will greatly help in directing corrective measures to the highest and best use because there will never be enough resources to do it all. I think this assessment would be best done by convening all of the outdoor rec participants, rather than trying to do a survey. These folks are well aware of the problem areas.*

- *Objective 3C name should change to focus on mostly urban activities as in goals 2 & 3 urban recreation capacity. Permanent restroom facilities are expensive. Cities need to quantify what % of state, county tax \$'s are used for city recreation. There is only so much \$ we can get from the Great Outdoors Colorado piggy bank.*
- *Define or clarify what is meant by "needed all-lands recreation assets."*
- *We need to decide what kind of recreation we want to expand. Do we want to expand opportunities for hikers, mountain bikers, fishers or for motorized/dispersed camping? We shouldn't weight all recreation the same. If we want more hikers and bikers, we need to expand our non-motorized trail system. We can lower impact on our public lands by reigning in some uses and keep our economy strong by encouraging others.*
- *Strongly agree with above! Not all recreation is the same and impacts vary. This should definitely be taken into account.*
- *Conservation certainly has its place and I think Envision will ultimately end up achieving that goal (for better or worse in some places), but we cannot stop people from coming here. Providing increased recreational capacity (particularly more trails) in areas where that makes sense is absolutely necessary.*
- *Instead of the trend of having all trails multi-use which increases users, create some trail.*
- *There already is a density of local trails in proximity to Salida and Buena Vista. Compressing even more trails into those areas will impact wildlife. Better to build access for trails that take visitors/locals away from those municipalities and thereby dispersing the impact to wildlife and the general environment. This approach will give the visitor and residents an enhanced experience as well. Those opportunities can incorporate multiple use. Given the members of the committee, my guess is that density and single use for hiking cross country will predominate. This is contrary to the mandate that both the USFS and the BLM has as a mandate.*