

# GRANT APPLICATION CHECK LIST

## MANDATORY:

- Signed letter of resolution from Governing Body
- Exhibit A - Application
- Exhibit B - Budget (Unprotected Excel CPW form)
- N/A  Environmental Forms (not required for Regional Trails Planning grants)
- Maps/Photographs/Graphics (5 page max, pdf, letter sized pages)
- Letters of Support (maximum of 5). No letters from clubs or groups specifically working on the project
- Project can be completed within 2.5 years from receiving grant
- Required MATCH funding is secured, including CASH match funds
- CPW Area Wildlife Manager has been contacted and informed of construction projects by July 1st. Note that ALL projects will be reviewed by CPW for wildlife impacts
- N/A  (Construction only) Project area is owned by public land agency or has easement that designates the area to be open to public outdoor recreation for at least 25 years
- N/A  (Construction Only) Formal Environmental Assessment (EA) or NEPA has been completed with final approval for the project area (federal lands only).

## ADDITIONAL PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS:

- N/A  Youth Corps or youth organization will be used on the project (name of organization)
- N/A  Volunteers will be utilized on the project (name organization)

**THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
OF THE COUNTY OF MONTEZUMA  
STATE OF COLORADO**

At a regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners of Montezuma County, Colorado, duly convened and held the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of July, 2019, with the following persons in attendance:

Commissioners: Keenan G. Ertel, Larry Don Suckla, Jim Candelaria  
Commissioners Absent:  
County Administrator: Shak Powers  
County Attorney: John Baxter  
Clerk and Recorder: Kim Percell

The following proceedings, among others, were taken:

Resolution # 6 - 2019

**A Resolution in support of Montezuma County's grant request to Great Outdoors Colorado, Colorado the Beautiful Grant (CTB) program, for the completion of The Paths to Mesa Verde Trail Project Design Phase 1.**

**WHEREAS**, Montezuma County supports the Great Outdoors Colorado grant application for The Paths to Mesa Verde Design Phase 1. And if the grant is awarded, Montezuma County supports the completion of the project.

**WHEREAS**, Montezuma County has requested **\$193,350** from Great Outdoors Colorado, to complete the Final Design and Bid Set for Phase1 of the Paths to Mesa Verde Trail Project, from the Town of Mancos to the Mesa Verde Entrance.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE MONTEZUMA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS THAT:**

- Section 1:** The Montezuma County Board of County Commissioners strongly supports this CTB grant application, and in partnership with the Town of Mancos, has appropriated all of the required matching funds, in the amount of **\$83,150** for a grant with Great Outdoors Colorado.
- Section 2:** If the CTB grant is awarded, the Montezuma County Board of County Commissioners acknowledges that the objectives of this grant can be completed within 2.5 years from receiving the grant.
- Section 3:** The Montezuma County Board of County Commissioners authorizes the expenditure of funds necessary to meet the terms and obligations of any CTB grant awarded.
- Section 4:** The project site(s) is owned in aggregate by; The Town of Mancos, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Mesa Verde National Park (MVNP) and the Colorado

Department of Transportation (CDOT). The properties will be owned by the same for the next 25 years.

**Section 5:** The Montezuma County Board of County Commissioners recognize that as a recipient of a Great Outdoors Colorado CTB recreational transportation grant, the project site must provide reasonable public transportation access at all times.

**Section 6:** The Montezuma County Board of County Commissioners acknowledge the value in maintaining the Paths to Mesa Verde Trail in a high quality condition. The County will appropriate funds for maintenance in its annual budget, and upon completion of the pathway, the County will coordinate with its partners to ensure adequate long-term maintenance.

**Section 7:** If the grant is awarded, the Montezuma County hereby authorizes the Montezuma County Administrator to sign agreements with the Mancos Town Board, CDOT, BLM, MVNP, and Great Outdoors Colorado for the purposes of grant administration.

**Section 8:** CPW, MVNP, BLM and CDOT have been contacted prior to planning and design. Wildlife and environmental mitigation is ongoing, and will be further refined and coordinated through CPW through the final design.

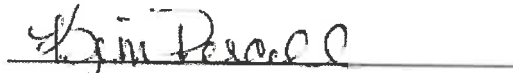
This resolution to be in full force and effect from and after its passage and approval

Commissioners voting yes in favor of the resolution were:



Commissioners voting no against the resolution were:

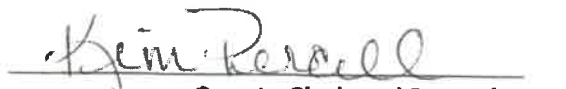
\_\_\_\_\_

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
County Clerk and Recorder  
Montezuma County, Colorado

I certify that the above Resolution is a true and correct copy of same as it appears in the minutes of the Board of County Commissioners of Montezuma County, Colorado and the votes upon same are true and correct.

Dated this 23 day of July, 2019.



  
\_\_\_\_\_  
County Clerk and Recorder  
Montezuma County, Colorado

**Town of Mancos  
Resolution 6 Series 2019**

**A Resolution in support of Montezuma County's grant request to Great Outdoors Colorado, Colorado the Beautiful Grant (CTB) program, for the completion of The Paths to Mesa Verde Trail Project Design Phase 1.**

**WHEREAS**, The Town of Mancos supports the Great Outdoors Colorado grant application for the Paths to Mesa Verde Design Phase 1. And if the grant is awarded, the Town of Mancos supports the completion of the project.

**WHEREAS**, Montezuma County has requested **\$193,350** from Great Outdoors Colorado, to complete the Final Design and Bid Set for Phase 1 of the Paths to Mesa Verde Trail Project, from the Town of Mancos to the Mesa Verde Entrance.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE MANCOS TOWN BOARD THAT:**

- Section 1:** The Mancos Town Board strongly supports this CTB grant application and in partnership with Montezuma County, has appropriated all of the required matching funds, in the amount of **\$83,150**, for a grant with Great Outdoors Colorado.
- Section 2:** If the CTB grant is awarded, the Mancos Town Board acknowledges that the objectives of this grant can be completed within 2.5 years from receiving the grant.
- Section 3:** The Mancos Town Board authorizes the expenditure of funds necessary to meet the terms and obligations of any CTB grant awarded.
- Section 4:** The project site(s) is owned in aggregate by; The Town of Mancos, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Mesa Verde National Park (MVNP) and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT). The properties will be owned by the same for the next 25 years.
- Section 5:** The Mancos Town Board recognize that as a recipient of a Great Outdoors Colorado CTB recreational transportation grant, the project site must provide reasonable public transportation access at all times.
- Section 6:** The Mancos Town Board acknowledge the value in maintaining the Paths to Mesa Verde Trail in a high quality condition and will appropriate funds for maintenance in its annual budget, and coordinate with partners to assure long term maintenance upon completion.

Section 7: If the grant is awarded, the Mancos Town Board hereby authorizes the Mancos Town Administrator to sign agreements with the Montezuma County, CDOT, BLM, MVNP, and Great Outdoors Colorado for the purposes of grant administration.

Section 8: CPW, MVNP, BLM and CDOT have all been contacted prior to planning and design. Wildlife and environmental mitigation is ongoing, and will be further refined through the final design.


This resolution to be in full force and effect from and after its passage and approval

Board Members voting yes in favor of the resolution were:

All

Board Members voting no against the resolution were:


None

  
Mancos Town Clerk  
Mancos, Colorado

I certify that the above Resolution is a true and correct copy of same as it appears in the minutes of the Mancos Town Board, of Montezuma County, Colorado and the votes upon same are true and correct.

Dated this 24th day of July, 2019.

(SEAL)

  
Mancos Town Clerk  
Mancos, Colorado

**COLORADO THE BEAUTIFUL REGIONAL TRAILS PLANNING APPLICATION**

Applicant or Organization Name: Montezuma County

Mailing Address: 109 W Main Rm. 260 Cortez CO. 81321

Applicant Lead Contact Name: Keenan G. Ertel

Title: Commissioner Chair

Telephone: (970) 749-5514

Email: kertel@co.montezuma.co.us

Is this the primary contact for this grant:  YES  NO**PROJECT MANAGER (this person will have day-to-day responsibility for the project)**

Name: James Dietrich

Mailing Address: 109 W. Main Rm. 280 Cortez CO. 81321

Telephone: 970-565-7402

Email: jdietrich@co.montezuma.co.us

Is this the primary contact for this grant:  YES  NO**PRIMARY PARTNER INFORMATION (IF APPLICABLE)**

Name: Town of Mancos

Mailing Address: PO Box 487 Mancos CO 81328

Partner Contact Name: Heather Alvarez

Title: Town Manager

Telephone: (970) 533-7725

Email: halvarez@mancoscolorado.com

Is this the primary contact for this grant:  YES  NO

Project Title: Paths to Mesa Verde Phase 1

Grant Request: \$193,350.00

Required Match: \$ 83,150.00

Total Project Cost: \$ 276,500.00

LAND OWNERSHIP			
1. Provide the name/s of the property owners: Town of Mancos, CDOT, Mesa Verde National Park, BLM			
2. The trail corridor is controlled by: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fee Simple <input type="checkbox"/> Lease <input type="checkbox"/> Easement <input type="checkbox"/> License <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Right-of-Way <input type="checkbox"/> Other:			
USER INFORMATION (Please check all that apply)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hiking	<input type="checkbox"/> Motorcycling	<input type="checkbox"/> Equestrian	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Walking	<input type="checkbox"/> Four-Wheeling	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ADA Access	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Running	<input type="checkbox"/> All-Terrain Vehicle	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Skateboarding	<input type="checkbox"/> Snowmobiling	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In-Line Skating	<input type="checkbox"/> Snowshoeing	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biking	<input type="checkbox"/> X-Country Skiing	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
TRAIL SURFACE			
<input type="checkbox"/> Asphalt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concrete	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
<input type="checkbox"/> Natural	<input type="checkbox"/> Crusher Fines	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
PROJECT LOCATION (For multiple project sites attach a separate list.)			
Nearest Town or City: Mancos			
County: Montezuma			
Latitude & Longitude Coordinates: 37.345 -108.288			
State Senate District #: 6 Don Coram		Refer to <a href="https://leg.colorado.gov/find-my-legislator">https://leg.colorado.gov/find-my-legislator</a>	
State Representative District #: 58 Marc Catlin			
Acreage of new trailhead		Miles of trail grooming	
Miles of new trail construction		Miles of trail being planned	7.5
Miles of trail maintenance		Miles of trail reroute	
Miles of trail reconstruction		Miles of inter-connecting trail	
Miles of trail to be signed		Other	
Miles of trail restoration		Other	

Applicant Authorized Signature: *Shubala L. Louren* Date: 7/30/19  
 (From Applicant Organization)

Land Agency Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (From project location land agency, if different from applicant)

**Project Summary:** Planning and engineering for 7.5 miles of barrier free concrete pathway connecting the Mancos community with the entrance to Mesa Verde National Park.

**Detailed Project Description:** The Paths to Mesa Verde (PTMV) pathway system is a multi-jurisdictional, two phase project, to develop a 16 mile, non-motorized, barrier free, pathway linking two of Montezuma County’s largest communities with recreational resources on nearby public lands.

**WHO:** Montezuma County is acting as the lead agency in the PTMV project. Montezuma County strives to enhance the health, education, safety, economic wellbeing, and overall quality of life for our citizens and our visitors. The County embraces innovation, diversity, collaboration, and public involvement in meeting the community’s needs. Because over 73% of the County is in federal ownership, the County also recognizes its stewardship role in conserving public lands. The County strives to collaborate with federal land managers to protect sensitive resources, while keeping public lands accessible to everyone. Managing public transportation routes is already a primary function of the Montezuma County, as well as our partners. The County currently manages over 517 miles of public roads, many of which lead to public lands. Montezuma County will have staff dedicated to this project and has an excellent record in managing both federal and state grants, including grants for transportation planning.

**WHAT:** The partners in the PTMV are all public service providers. All of the partners recognize that we share a common challenge, and goal, in ensuring healthy, safe, barrier free, recreational access to public lands for everyone. The PTMV Phase 1 will finalize the current engineering plans from the 30% level to the 100% level for 7.5 miles of 10’ wide concrete pathway and associated infrastructure, including retaining walls, drainage structures, railing and wayfinding signage. Phase 1 will also satisfy NEPA and FWHA Environmental Clearances, coordinate with federal agencies to create the final Environmental Assessment Documents and coordinate with the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) and CPW on Section 404 Wetland permitting. The project will culminate by coordinating with CDOT for final ROW & Easements Plans, Final Design, Final Concurrence, and then Final Bid Set for construction, as per CDOT specifications, rules, and standards.

**WHERE:** The PTMV Phase 1 is located completely within Montezuma County. It will extend westward 7.5 miles from Boyle Park, located on the east side of the Town of Mancos, through the central Mancos Business District, directly in front of the Mancos Public Schools, and then westward along the Highway 160 CDOT ROW through rural landscape, crossing a small section of BLM Tres Rios Field Office Lands, and on to the Mesa Verde National Park Entrance and Museum. 100% of the proposed trail route lies within CDOT ROW, Town of Mancos ROW, CDOT ROW on BLM Lands and Mesa Verde National Park property.

**DEFINITIONS**

PTMV	Paths to Mesa Verde	TAP	Transportation Alternatives Program
CPW	Colorado Parks and Wildlife	SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
BLM	Bureau of Land Management		
BLM SRMA	Bureau of Land Management Special Recreation Management Area		
MVNP	Mesa Verde National Park		
CDOT	Colorado Department of Transportation		
FWHA	Federal Highways Administration		
PEL	Planning and Environment Linkage Study		
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act		
ROW	Right of Way		
ACOE	Army Corps of Engineers		
FOR	Final Office Review		
FACWet	Functional Assessment of Colorado Wetlands		





**1. COMMUNITY NEED & BENEFIT; Overview;** The concept for The Paths to Mesa Verde Project was conceived nearly 20 years ago at the prompting of local citizens who were focused on establishing non-motorized recreational access to nearby public lands. Montezuma County is fortunate to have over 14,000 acres of Bureau of Land Management Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMA) centrally located in the County. Yet access to those resources remain difficult for most, and out of reach for some Montezuma County Residents simply because it requires a motor vehicle to access and enjoy their public lands.

Conceptually The Paths to Mesa Verde is intended to get people out of their vehicles by linking Montezuma County’s communities to a growing network of recreational trails, located primarily on nearby BLM lands, and to promote multi-modal access to Montezuma County’s most famous tourism destination, and the State’s only World Heritage Site, Mesa Verde National Park.

“I never could resist the call of the trail”  
Buffalo Bill

In 2014 local community organizers set up an initial “Meeting of Interest” between jurisdictional stakeholders to evaluate the public benefit to pursuing a pathway between Cortez and Mancos, which would include Mesa Verde National Park as the common point in-between. The initial meeting of stakeholders was followed by a series of public meetings, supported by an online survey, to gauge broader public interest. Survey results and public meetings indicated that there was strong countywide support for the development of a non-motorized, main arterial pathway to link communities with recreational trails spurring off onto public lands.

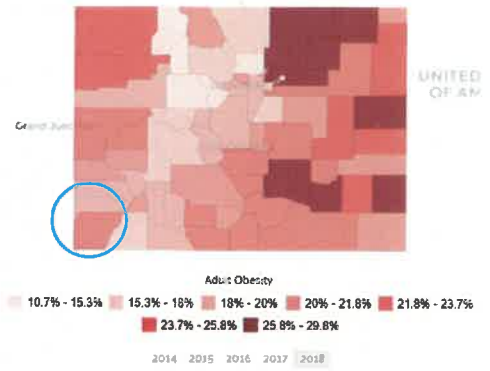
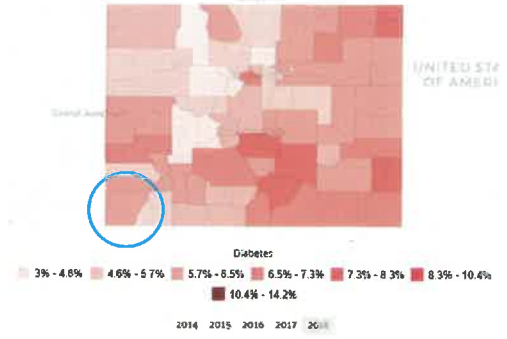
In 2016, with the help of CDOT, Montezuma County received funding through the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) to begin a Planning and Environmental Linkages Study to evaluate potential pathways between Cortez and Mancos. A two mile wide corridor between Mancos and Cortez was analyzed. After two years of evaluation, public meetings, outreach to private landowners, and consultation with CPW, the PEL has identified 7.5 miles of suitable route linking Mancos and Mesa Verde on the east side, which is Phase 1.

On the west end, Phase 2, property acquisition work is currently still underway. If successful, the property acquisitions will solidify a viable route between Cortez and Mesa Verde as well.

Also in 2016, Governor Hickenlooper unveiled his Colorado the Beautiful Initiative. This initiative carries the goal of having every Coloradoan, within one generation, live within 10 minutes of a park, trail, or vibrant green space. We are very pleased to have The Paths to Mesa Verde selected as one of 16 priority trails and if completed will accomplish the vision of Governor Hickenlooper, and greatly benefit all citizens in Colorado.

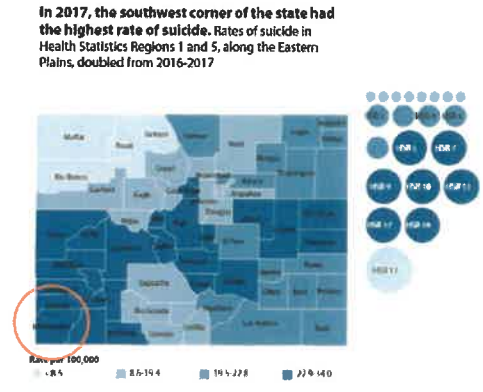
The PTMV Partners have identified four overlapping areas in which we believe the PTMV project can bring forth significant positive changes for our community, its citizens and our visitors;

**Health;** The development of the PTMV Phase 1 will have immediate and significant health benefits to the Mancos Community. Access to trails help develop healthy living habits in many people. Regular physical activity is associated with important health benefits, including reduced risk for premature death, cardiovascular disease, ischemic stroke, type 2 diabetes, colon and breast cancers, and depression.



2014 Center for Disease Control (CDC) research points to a lack of physical activity being directly correlated to higher medical costs. Research shows that inadequate physical activity accounts for 11.1% of aggregate health care expenditures overall. The mean annual expenditure difference per capita for inactive adults compared to active adults was \$1,437 (percent difference: 29.9%) and for insufficiently active compared to active adults was \$713 (15.4%).

The relationship between access to outdoor recreation and healthy bodies is well documented. However we would also like to stress that healthy bodies often start with a healthy mind and attitude. Unfortunately suicide rates are a good indicator of real struggles with mental health in rural communities. The rate in our region is 28 per 100,000, the second highest in the state. It is important to note that for every death due to suicide, there are on average six recorded attempts. In Western Colorado, that number is much closer to 11. Montezuma County suicide deaths average at 12 per year.



Montezuma County clearly has an urgent need to improve access to outdoor recreation, and quiet areas for the overall diversionary and mental health benefits that public lands provide. Many of our Veterans, Native American community members, and other low income or marginalized residents are at especially high risk. Providing opportunity to integrate these individuals into a healthy outdoor lifestyle will help them emotionally, spiritually and physically.

One of the most common public needs in rural areas is access to non-motorized recreational pathways, in part because they are fee free and available to everyone independent of income status. The PTMV would provide access to a wide variety of non-motorized opportunities to promote healthy exercise, improve mental health and resiliency, and get people out of their vehicles to enjoy and learn about their public lands.

**Safety;** There is both a perceived and real risk in using the existing US-160 shoulder as a cyclist, pedestrian, and other non-motorized user. A separated bike path will provide more appealing access and opportunity for a wider range of users that may otherwise turn to a motor vehicle.

US 160 is a two-lane, principal arterial roadway that contains several sections with insufficient clear zones, limited visibility, narrow shoulders and numerous accesses. Using the existing US 160 shoulder as a bicyclist, pedestrian, or other non-motorized user, poses a serious safety risk. Research also shows that 60% of people are in the “interested, but concerned” segment of bicyclists. This segment of the population prefers a physical separation from motor vehicles to operate their bicycle.



Road cyclist on the shoulder of Highway 160

The PTMV pathway will provide a safe and inviting transportation corridor for a wider range recreation users by tapping into the “interested, but concerned” group and providing that physical separation from motorists. Motorist will also benefit by being able to focus solely on the road.

**Quality of Life;** Perhaps the greatest benefits of this pathway will be towards the improving the livability of our community. Having access to public amenities, such as the Paths to Mesa

“In every walk with nature, one receives more than he seeks.”

John Muir

Verde, affect rural communities in many ways. For rural towns like Mancos, there is a very real lack of access to culture, shopping, sports, and recreational amenities like more urban areas. The Paths to Mesa Verde trail system will help local residents access the resources that they do

have...nearby BLM public lands. Nearby BLM Lands are fee free, and have over 14,000 acres of wildland for exploration, hiking and bicycling.

From Mancos, the closest BLM recreational trail opportunity is 6 miles away and 10 -20 minutes by automobile. Having a path in town available for recreation will substitute for some of automobile trips taken to recreate and reduce household transportation costs.

**Economic Stability and Diversity;** The Mancos Community, and Montezuma County as a whole are no stranger to the boom and bust cycles typically experienced in many of the western communities. Mancos is located on the Old Spanish Trail Trade Route, which was active from about 1829 to 1850. In the 1870’s cattle ranches were beginning to take root in the Mancos Valley. At first business was brisk, providing cattle and timber to the mining camps in the nearby San Juan and La Plata Mountains. However as the mining industry began to taper off so did the Mancos economy.

In its heyday Mancos had a railway, was major player in the regional economy, and was being considered for the County seat. However by the 1950’s the railway had been abandoned, and



the mining and the timber industry had nearly disappeared, leaving Mancos to rely heavily on its remaining agricultural industry.

In recent years the Mancos Community continues to struggle, despite absorbing some of the residential overflow from nearby Durango. According to the 2000 census data, the median income for a household in the Mancos hovers around \$25,223, and the median income for a family was \$32,188. The per capita for the town was \$13,946. About 11.8% of families and 16.1% of the population were below the poverty line, including 22.5% of those under age 18 and 15.5% of those age 65 or over. In addition, over 67% of Mancos Elementary Students receive free or reduce price lunches underscoring the difficulties young families have in making ends meet.

Montezuma County also desires to be a player in the transition to a new green energy economy, in-part to reap the health benefits associated with cleaner air, reduced fossil fuel consumption, and more human powered transportation. The Paths to Mesa Verde helps to accomplish this by offering a zero emissions transit option for students who commute to the Pueblo Community College (enrollment 350) or workers who commute to Mesa Verde (employment 300) 210 of which commute from Mancos or Cortez. Mesa Verde also hopes to reap the benefit of bicycle tourism through its shuttle system based at the park entrance.

**URGENCY;** The PTMV project carries an economic urgency for the Town of Mancos, as well as for greater Montezuma County.

In May 2017 a fire tore through the Western Excelsior lumber mill in the Town of Mancos, completely devastating it. This specialty lumber mill was one of the last viable timber industries



in Montezuma County, and had been in business since 1977. Western Excelsior, was the Town's largest business enterprise, employing over 100 workers. The mill produced erosion control products, evaporative cooler mats, and sound dampening ceiling panels produced from shaved Aspen wood. Although Western Excelsior is rebuilding in Mancos, the scale of the operation will be less than a quarter of the original size.

Montezuma County as a whole has been largely dependent on CO<sub>2</sub> production for over 30 years. Currently over 50% of the County's taxable revenue is derived solely from CO<sub>2</sub> production. Production within the CO<sub>2</sub> field is dramatically tapering off and experts estimate at best, there is only a 20 year supply remaining.

Montezuma County, had a per capita income of \$35,508 in 2012 which is 81 % of the national average of \$43,735. An area is economically distressed if it has a per capita income of 80 % or less of the national average. Montezuma County had a per capita income below 80 % of the national average as recent as 2009.

Montezuma County has few other exports that it can turn to, other than recreation and tourism, that are not extractive in nature. In addition Montezuma County is geographically isolated. We have no rail service, limited air service, limited high-speed internet service, we are nearly four hours from an Interstate north or south, and are therefore hampered by the inability to move goods and products into and out of our region. This discourages much new industry investments in our area. Recreational tourism remains one of our most promising opportunities for economic diversification.

Recreational tourism is one of the industries that is already deeply rooted in our community, and is compatible with conservation values, and transitional economies. Our goal is to capitalize on the natural beauty that Montezuma County has in abundance, and transition away from extractive industries to preserve air and water quality, while offering amenities that enhance the health and wellbeing of our citizens, as well as visitors.

Improving recreational access to public lands is critical to the Montezuma County mission to diversify the economy, and create a more stable, sustainable, economic base. E.g. In 2016 a MVNP report estimated visitor spending (regionally) was \$60.6M. On the local level MVNP reports that 883 local jobs were created by visitor spending.

Many local businesses are attributing as much as a 15% estimated revenue increase due to rising popularity of bicycling. Lodging, dining, gasoline and groceries all benefit directly from recreational tourism. The proposed pathway will create new business opportunities, diversify, and improve the overall economic health of the community. Research by the Urban Institute also indicates that improved economic health correlates with improved physical health, translating into more community dollars saved on health related issues.

Success builds upon success, so it is urgent to build momentum within rural disadvantaged communities like Mancos, to incrementally, but steadily, build up rural capital infrastructure, to provide healthy outdoor recreational options for residents and visitors ensuring healthy vibrant communities.

Planning for this project has been underway since 2016 and we currently at the 30% engineering design level for Phase 1. Our contract with our consulting engineer end in June 2020. It is urgent to obtain funds to infuse into the existing contract before it ends so that we do not have to put out a new Request for Qualifications (RFQ) which will cause extended delays, and could lead to the loss of the current consultant, who is most familiar with the project, and who we are very happy with.

It is also urgent that engineering plans are brought up to the 100% level so that we can have a “shovel ready” project for future funding opportunities. Montezuma County is pursuing federal construction dollars but federal agencies are concerned that the project is not 100% shovel ready and therefore reluctant to consider funding.



Biking with friends at Phil's World.

**3. CUMULATIVE IMPACTS;** This grant application is for Phase 1 (7.5 miles), of a larger 2 phase (16 mile) overall project.

When the PTVM is fully realized, it will provide access to over 14,000 acres of BLM SRMA lands, centrally located within the County and specifically dedicated to recreation. The BLM is supportive of the PTMV because the purpose of the pathway is to improve public access to BLM recreational areas, which one of their goals as well.

The BLM is currently updating their travel and transportation management plans for these lands, and acknowledged the PTMV as providing access to trail heads and parking areas. The BLM is also aware that the PTMV may include alignments that traverse BLM lands and this will be addressed in their forthcoming management plan.

Mesa Verde National Park has also been a very supportive partner because they also share the goal of providing public access to federal lands under their jurisdiction. The newly completed Mesa Verde Museum is the trail nexus between the east and west sides, and Mesa Verde has also acknowledged the PTMV, and the intent to cross National Park lands to access the Museum in their transportation plan.

The Montezuma County Comprehensive Land Use Plan also supports trail development of all kinds. The County will be updating their Comprehensive Plan over the coming year and the PTMV will be specifically acknowledged through this plan as well.

“Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”  
Ralph Waldo Emerson

Montezuma County regularly coordinates with adjacent Counties on transportation planning and management, including for trails. The County will coordinate with La Plata County on future concepts for connectivity eastward to Durango.

All of the partners are in some form responsible for transportation management and maintenance for infrastructure within their jurisdictions. Montezuma County will coordinate with each respective jurisdiction to determine how the maintenance funding and responsibilities will be divided.

**4. WILDLIFE & NATURAL RESOURCES;** Montezuma County began consultation with CPW early in the planning process. During the evaluation of potential alignments, impacts to wildlife were analyzed for each alternative. The final route was selected in part due to the lower impact on area wildlife.

The final route is located 100% within existing CDOT ROW. This alignment will reduce loss of habitat, require no new fencing, and utilize an existing stream crossing, thereby lessening the overall impacts to wildlife.

The proposed alignment also crosses a small portion of wetland near the Junction of Highway 160 and Business 160 west of Mancos. Montezuma County will coordinate with CPW to reduce wildlife impacts, as well as coordinate with the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), who has jurisdictional authority over wetlands, on the required 404 permit. Potential impacts to the wetlands have already been mitigated partly because of the alignment within existing CDOT ROW which results in the shortest crossing possible.

Of great concern in Montezuma County is potential impact to cultural resources. Each alternative route was evaluated for potential known archaeological sites. The final route also minimizes potential impacts to cultural resources by staying within CDOT ROW, which is largely already disturbed ground. While good research and evaluation will help us avoid any known archaeological sites, any potential new discovery will have protocol in place to halt construction, coordinate with SHPO and evaluate possible mitigation strategies.

**5. COLLABORATION;** The PTMV is a highly collaborative project. Montezuma County is in a three-way local agency cost sharing partnership between the County, the Town of Mancos, and the City of Cortez.

Because the intent of the project is to provide access to federal lands, the BLM and Mesa Verde National Park are also non-funding partners in the project. Furthermore because the project connects to federal lands there is a federal nexus which invokes the NEPA process. The Federal Agencies are assisting in coordinating and reviewing NEPA evaluations, and the final Environmental Assessment.

In addition our partnership includes the Colorado Department of Transportation. CDOT has been very integral in our planning process and graciously assisted the local agencies by securing the initial planning dollars through a TAP Grant in 2016 to develop a Planning and Environmental Linkages Study (PEL).

A PEL study is a collaborative approach to transportation decision-making. The study looks at transportation, environmental, community, and economic goals early in the planning process. It uses the information developed during planning to inform the environmental review process. The PTMV PEL study was initiated by CDOT, and will be approved by Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

**6. IMPLEMENTATION;** Phase 1 of this project will focus on completion of the eastern half of the trail, and when implemented, will complete roughly 50% of the overall project.

The pathway routing for Phase 2 is more complicated due to the need for land acquisitions. Alternative routes are still under evaluation to determine the final alignment. When 100% complete, the overall project will extend approximately 16 miles from Cortez to Mancos. The trail will include access to MVNP (visitation 600,000 annually), and multiple BLM Lands, including



Riding the renowned "Rib Cage" at Phil's World.



one of the BLM's top 20 "Backyard to Back Country" rides, the BLM Phil's World Trail Park (visitation 23,000 annually).

The realization of the full 16 miles of the PTMV sets the stage for additional regional trail connectivity. From Mancos we envision the trail eventually extending non-motorized connectivity to the City of Durango approximately 28 miles east of Mancos, as well as to the Town of Dolores 17 miles northwest. The PTMV will also provide access to the Colorado Trail via an existing trail connector into The Town of Mancos. We anticipate this connectivity will be very popular with mountain bikers.

**7. PUBLIC COMMENT & INVOLVEMENT;** Montezuma County places a very high value on public input and transparency. The PTMV has been a community vision for over 20 years now. In 2014 surveys were sent to county residents and initial public scoping meetings were held in Mancos and Cortez to gauge public support for the trail proposal.



An early stage Public Meeting 2014

Respondents were overwhelmingly positive for the development of the Mesa Verde Trail and community members had many ideas about possible trail use, ranging from ski-jouring to roller blades. Through this public process four main categories of use became dominant. Walking, Running, Biking, and Equestrian.

The public identified places of interest along the possible trial routes, including Mesa Verde National Park, BLM SRMAs, the County Fairgrounds, and the Pueblo Community College Mancos Campus (enrollment 350).

The public also provided important input on the trail design including surfacing, width, and wayfinding systems.

There have been some comments in opposition to the project. Objections have been mostly focused on the use tax dollars for the project that are derived from Federal Transportation Funds (fuel tax). Montezuma County continues to try to educate those with objections about how bicycles and pedestrians both contribute to fuel taxes, as well as through general taxes, and how bicycle use is responsible for very little wear and tear on roads.

One of the challenges of the trail design is how to accommodate equestrian users, which make up a significant part of the recreational base, and are an integral part of the cultural identity of our community.

To accommodate equestrian users a larger ROW, and an off highway route would be required. Montezuma County worked with a ROW Specialist to reach out to land owners along potential trail routes, but after nearly a year and a half of working with landowners the design team was unable to find a route outside of the highway ROW for the Mancos side.

To continue to try and meet the needs of the equestrian community, Montezuma County is still working diligently to find a suitable equestrian route on the Cortez side. This is important because the Cortez side will link to the Montezuma County Fairgrounds, which has an equestrian focus, and suitable parking. Furthermore the trail routes still being evaluated are off highway routes, which will be more conducive to equestrian use. Finally the Cortez side provides closer access to BLM SRMAs, one of which has an equestrian emphasis with over 3,000 acres available for open riding.

**8. PLANNING PROCESS & OUTCOME;** Because so much preliminary planning and design work has already been completed, the success of this planning effort will be defined by the production of a FWHA/ CDOT approved (shovel ready) bid set for construction, and completion of environmental reviews (NEPA). Ultimately the “on the ground success” will come with a successful fundraising campaign for construction dollars, trail implementation, and public use.

Planning on the Cortez Side will also continue, and is critical for the full realization of this project. The County and its partners will continue to work with CPW to steer funding towards phase 2 as the project advances and funding streams become available.

- **Objective 1;** Finalize engineering plans outlining construction phasing and priorities for CDOT and FWHA approval.
  - **Task 1;** Complete ROW and Easements plan
  - **Task 2;** Finalize trail and structural designs
  - **Task 3;** Prepare plans for CDOT Final Office Review (FOR)**End Products;** Present ROW & Easements Plan to CDOT, Present final trail and structural designs to CDOT. Participate in the CDOT Final Office Review.
  
- **Objective 2;** Finalize the NEPA & FWHA Environmental Clearances
  - **Task 1;** Complete Threatened and Endangered Species Report
  - **Task 2;** Complete Hazardous Materials/ Site assessment
  - **Task 3;** Secure ACOE 404 permit and approval
  - **Task 4;** Prepare wetland Findings for CDOT
  - **Task 5;** Complete FACWet for CDOT / CPW**End Products;** Concurrence from CDOT to move forward on final bid set
  
- **Objective 3;** Prepare final CDOT bid set plans
  - **Task 1;** Prepare final trail design for CDOT concurrence
  - **Task 2;** Prepare final concurrence plans
  - **Task 3;** Prepare Final Bid Set**End Products;** Final CDOT and FWHA approved bid set. (Shovel Ready Project)

**Exhibit B**  
**Budget Form - Project Name:** Paths to Mesa Verde (PTMV)

SOURCE OF FUNDS	Date Secured				CPW Trails Grant Request [A]	Total Project Match [B]	Total Funding (\$) [C]	
<b>CASH</b>								
CTB	TBD				\$ 193,350.00		\$ 193,350.00	
Montezuma County	2/19/2019					\$ 41,575.00	\$ 41,575.00	
Town of Mancos	2/19/2019					\$ 41,575.00	\$ 41,575.00	
<b>IN-KIND</b>							\$ -	
<b>TOTAL SOURCES OF FUNDS</b>					<b>\$ 193,350.00</b>	<b>\$ 83,150.00</b>	<b>\$ 276,500.00</b>	
<b>[CASH] Description of Work</b>								
Qty	Unit	Unit Price	Total (B*D)	CPW Funds	Total Project Match (\$)	Total Funding (\$)	Balance [should be 0]	
<b>CATEGORY 1-Contracted Services</b> <small>Identify as: Youth Corps, Engineering, Contractor, etc.</small>								
<b>Engineering/ Planning Services</b>								
Engineering/ Planning/ Professional Services	120	hr.	\$ 100.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 8,400.00	\$ 3,600.00	\$ 12,000.00	0
<b>NEPA &amp; FWHA Environmental Clearances</b>								
Agency coordination	20	hr.	\$ 100.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 800.00	\$ 2,000.00	0
Review existing databases	40	hr.	\$100	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 2,800.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 4,000.00	0
Threatened/Endangered Species Report for Federal and State	55	hr.	\$ 100.00	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 3,850.00	\$ 1,650.00	\$ 5,500.00	0
Hazardous Materials/ Initial Site Assessment	55	hr.	\$ 100.00	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 3,850.00	\$ 1,650.00	\$ 5,500.00	0
Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit	25	hr.	\$ 100.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 1,750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 2,500.00	0
Coordinate with CPW	50	hr.	\$ 100.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 5,000.00	0
Wetland findings for CDOT	15	hr.	\$ 100.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,050.00	\$ 450.00	\$ 1,500.00	0
FACWet	15	hr.	\$ 100.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,050.00	\$ 450.00	\$ 1,500.00	0
<b>CDOT Final Office Review (FOR)</b>								
ROW & Easements plan	250	hr.	\$ 80.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	0
Trail Design	720	hr.	\$ 100.00	\$ 72,000.00	\$ 50,400.00	\$ 21,600.00	\$ 72,000.00	0
Structural Design	500	hr.	\$ 100.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	0
FOR Meeting	80	hr.	\$ 100.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 5,600.00	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 8,000.00	0
<b>CDOT Final Construction Plans</b>								
Final Design	520	hr.	\$ 100.00	\$ 52,000.00	\$ 36,400.00	\$ 15,600.00	\$ 52,000.00	0
Final Concurrence Set	200	hr.	\$ 100.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	0
Final Bid Set	150	hr.	\$ 100.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 10,500.00	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 15,000.00	0
<b>Category 2 - Salary/Wages</b>								
				\$ -			\$ -	0
<b>CATEGORY 3-Materials/Supplies</b> <small>Identify as: Signs, crusherfines, native seed, weed barrier, etc.</small>								
				\$ -			\$ -	0
<b>Additional Categories</b>								
				\$ -			\$ -	0
<b>USE OF FUNDS - CASH SUBTOTAL</b>					<b>\$ 193,350.00</b>	<b>\$ 83,150.00</b>	<b>\$ 276,500.00</b>	
<b>[IN-KIND] Description of Work</b>								
Qty	Unit	Unit Price	Total (B*D)	CPW Funds	Total Project Match (\$)	Total Funding (\$)	Balance [should be 0]	
<b>Category 1 -</b>								
							\$ -	0
<b>Category 2 -</b>								
							\$ -	0
<b>IN-KIND SUBTOTAL</b>						<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	
<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST</b>					<b>\$ 193,350.00</b>	<b>\$ 83,150.00</b>	<b>\$ 276,500.00</b>	
<b>30% REQUIRED MATCH</b>						<b>\$ 58,005.00</b>		





Montezuma County is located in the far southwestern corner of the State... in the "Four Corners Country". Regionally Montezuma County is relatively isolated . It is four hours north or south to get to the nearest Interstate Highway. Montezuma County is rich in outdoor recreation opportunities with 73% of its land base in federal ownership, substantial miles of trail already in use, one of the Nations most unique National Parks, and many other local amenities like the fairgrounds. . The County's challenge is connecting the dots with a safe, family friendly, non motorized pathway, accessible to everyone .

### Proposed Paths to Mesa Verde Trail

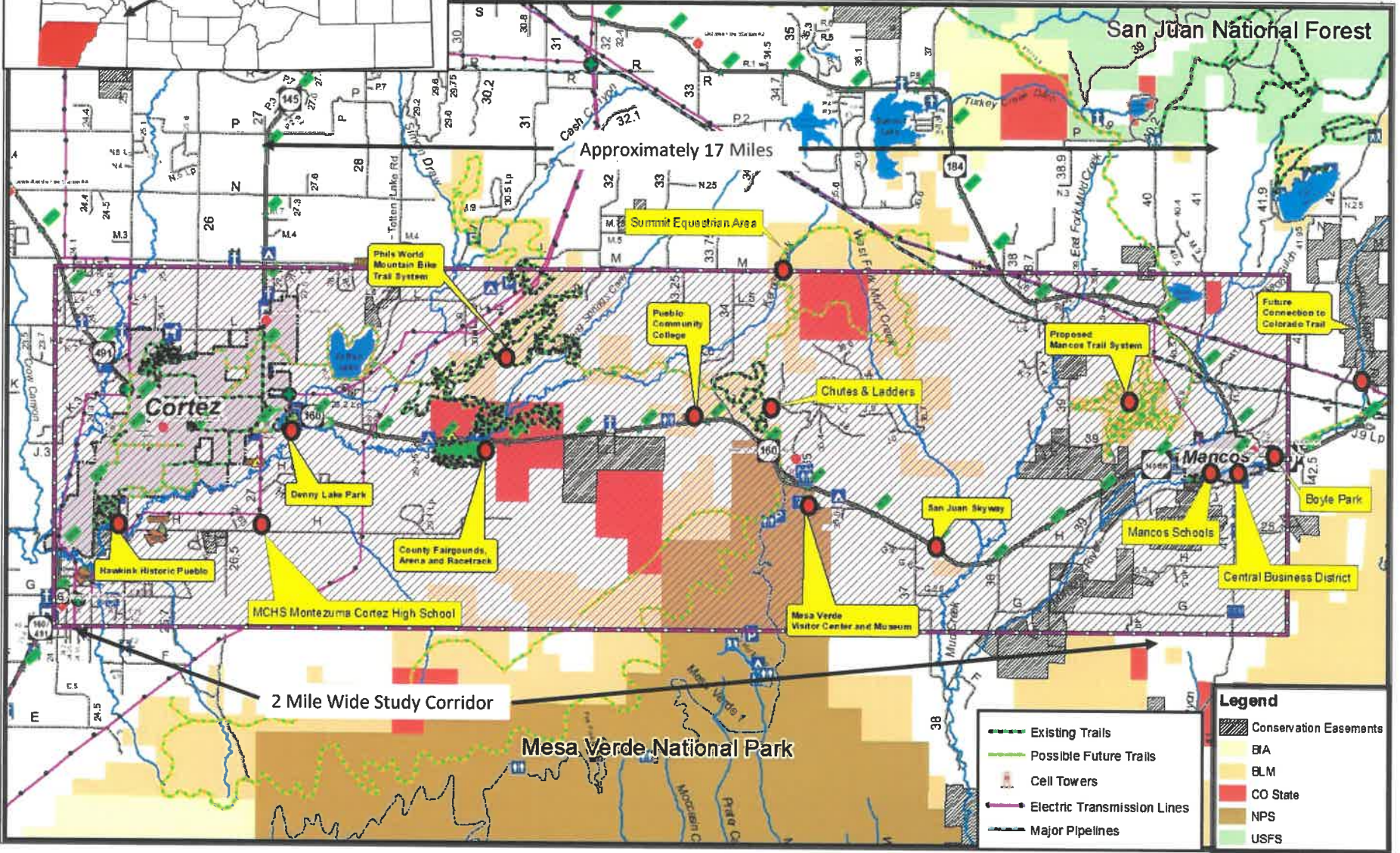
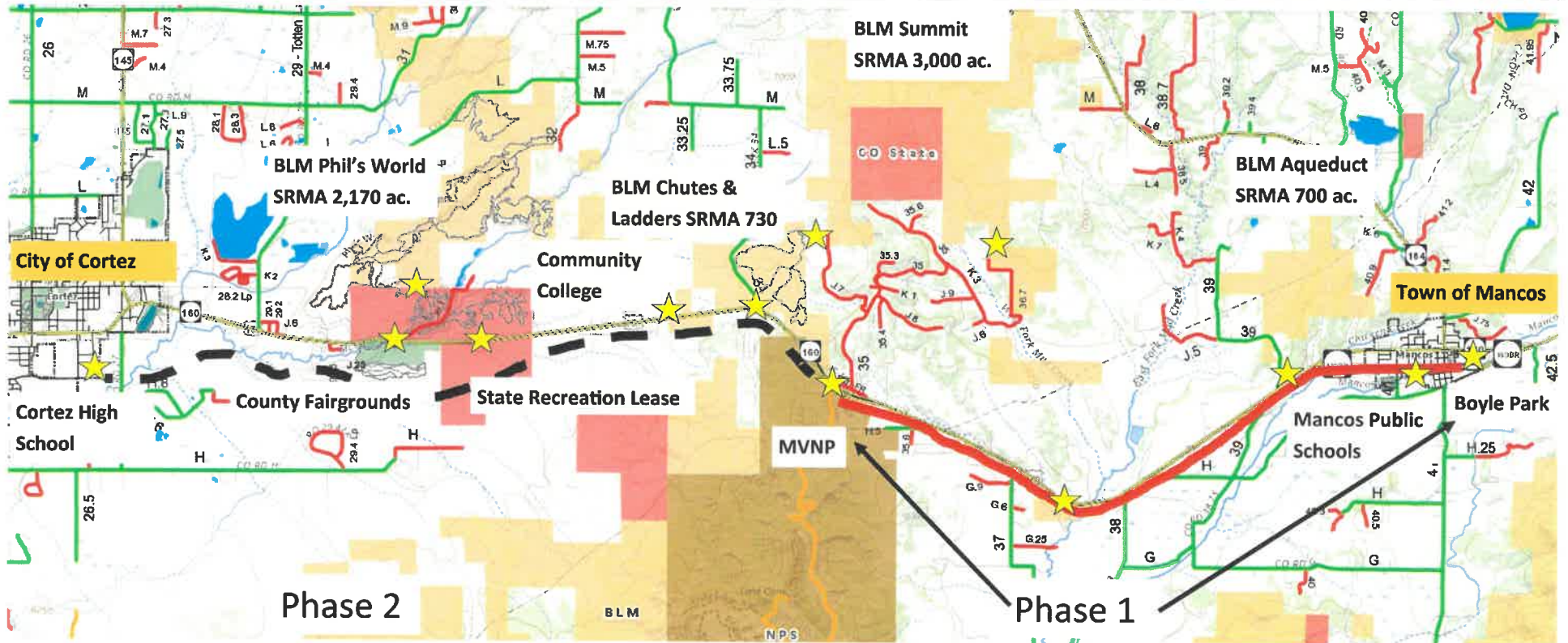




FIGURE 1.) Project Overview Phase 1

PATHS TO MESA VERDE TRAIL SYSTEM



The overarching concept of the Paths to Mesa Verde Project is to develop a multi-modal pathway between the City of Cortez and the Town of Mancos a distance of approximately 17 miles. This pathway when completed would provide multi-modal public access to over 14,000 acres of BLM administered public lands, including 4 Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMA). Furthermore the pathway will provide direct access to Mesa Verde National Park from two of Montezuma Counties three municipalities. BLM SRMAs have been identified by the public as important places for various types of recreation within distinct landscape settings and have distinct recreation markets and recreation niches. All of the BLM Cortez SRMAs have a non-motorized recreational emphasis.

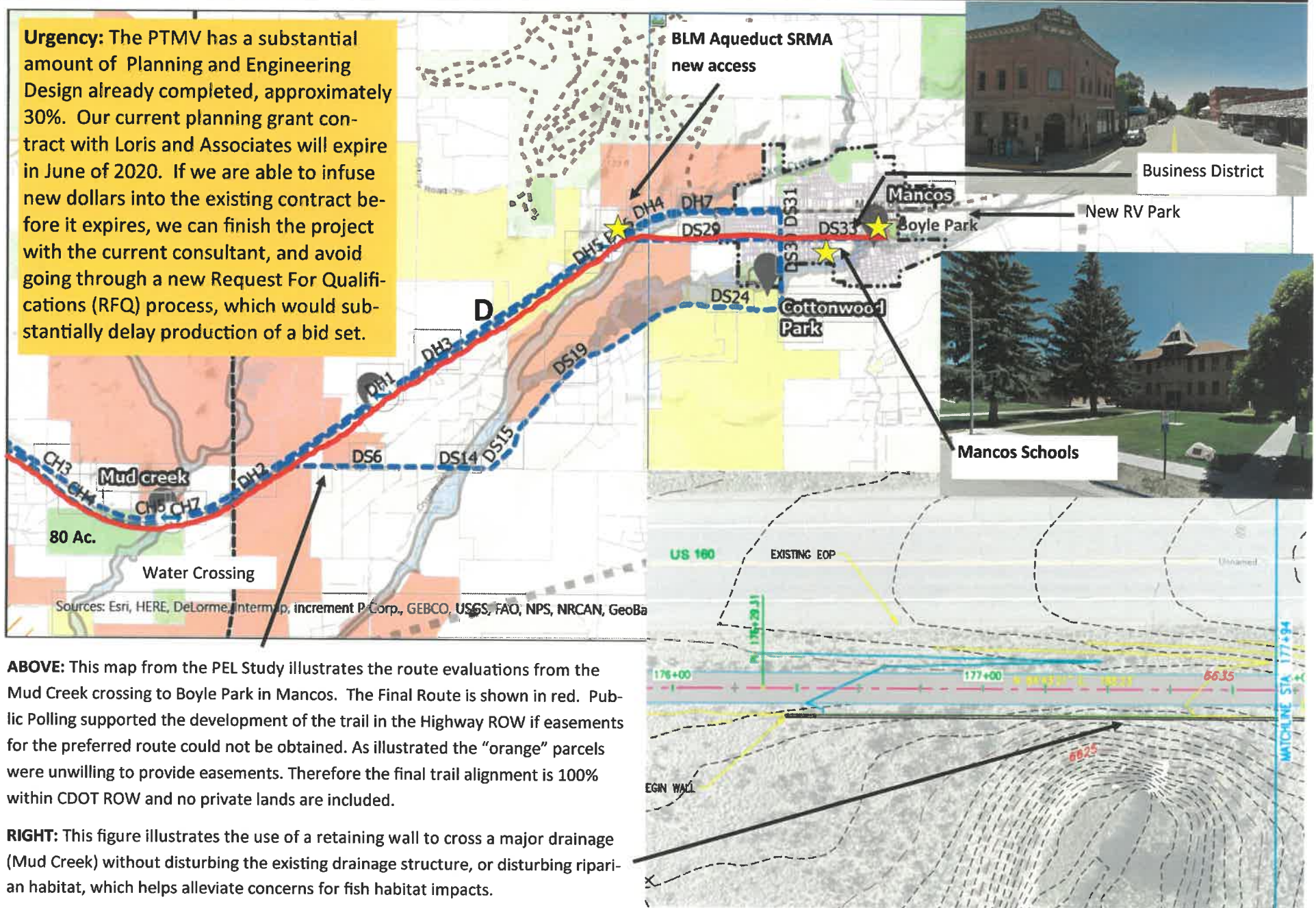
Phase 1 will complete approximately 50% of the overall project and provide the Town of Mancos with immediate economic, social and health benefits. Phase 1 will link the Mancos Public Schools directly to the pathway, encouraging use immediately. The pathway will also connect to Boyle Park, and the downtown Mancos business district which includes lodging, dining, and a new 75 lot RV park located adjacent to Boyle Park. Economically, recreational trail development is very important for the Town of Mancos, which is struggling with stubborn poverty levels lingering at 22.5%. In comparison the County poverty level is at 16.8% and the overall State Poverty level at 11.5%\*.

Southwest Colorado is a rural impoverished region of the State that is struggling to move from an extractive economy, to a more diverse economy with a more robust tourism and recreation base. Currently over 50% of the County tax revenues come from CO<sub>2</sub> extraction. Montezuma County is proactively working towards a green economy which is more sustainable, and resilient to the boom and bust cycles of energy production and mineral extraction. This trail is desperately needed to provide the initial push towards tapping into a new economic opportunity. (\* Source; State Demography Office)



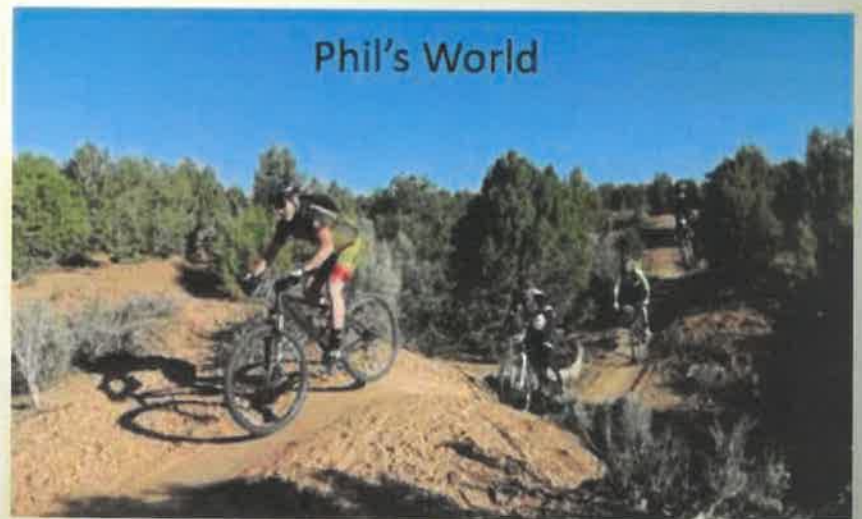
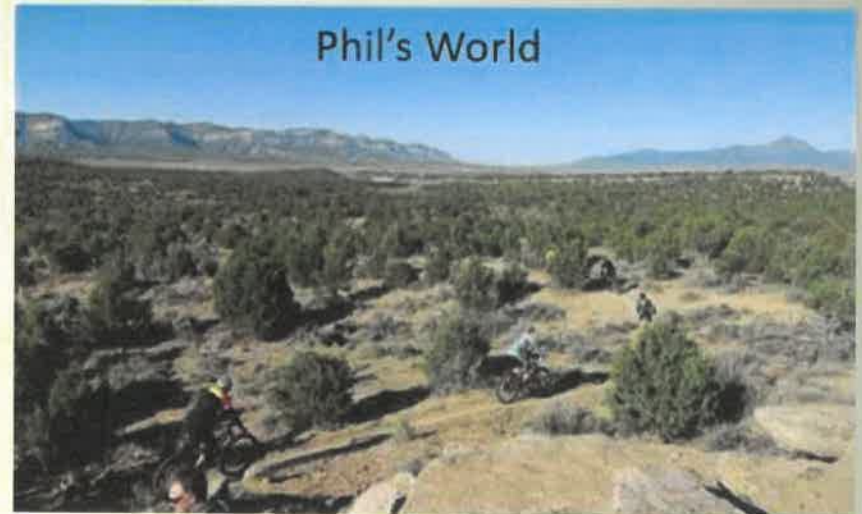
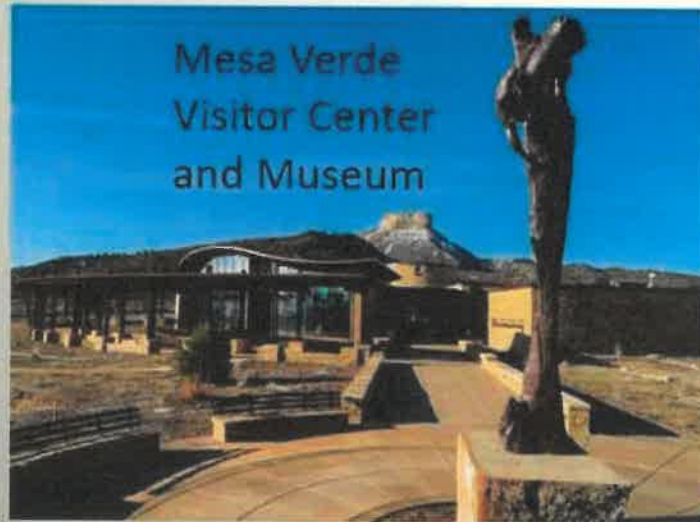
FIGURE 2.) Section D (Mud Creek to Mancos)

PATHS TO MESA VERDE TRAIL SYSTEM



# PATHS TO MESA VERDE

**The trail concept is to construct a main off-highway trail route between Cortez and Mancos which would connect to other nationally known community Public Land assets such as Mesa Verde and the BLM Phil's World Trail Park.**





# PATHS TO MESA VERDE



**The trail will provide an alternative transportation route which will connect with other local public facilities including the Montezuma County Fairgrounds, the New Montezuma Cortez High School and the Pueblo Community College.**







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July 24, 2019

Fletcher Jacobs  
State Trails Program Manager  
13787 South Hwy 85  
Littleton, CO 80125

Dear Mr. Jacobs,

The Mancos Town Board would like to express our support for Montezuma County's Paths to Mesa Verde (PTMV) 2019 Colorado the Beautiful grant application. The PTMV project will be designed and built in two phases. This grant request is for funding to complete the engineering design for *Phase 1*, from the Town of Mancos to the Mesa Verde Entrance. This route is approximately 7.5 miles in length and would complete the eastern 1/2 of the overall project.

Recreational tourism has become increasingly important to the Mancos economy. Many of our businesses advocate bicycling, and provide special services to bicyclists. Approximately 1/4 of Montezuma County's overall economy is tourism oriented, and bicycling in particular is exhibiting exponential growth. This increased interest is in part due to Montezuma County's geographic location between Durango and Moab, both internationally renowned bicycling destinations, in part to the favorable shoulder climate for bike riding in the early spring and late fall. But the largest part is due to the public accessibility of riding areas located on public lands.

The Paths to Mesa Verde will significantly improve the non-motorized access to public lands riding areas, and is essential for meeting the type of holistic bicycling experience many recreational tourists are looking for. The proposed pathway will benefit local residents and visitors alike by providing a safer off highway route for accessing Mesa Verde and other BLM recreational areas. When Phase 1 and Phase 2 are fully completed, the pathway will be nearly 16 miles in length, and will set the stage for future regional trail connections to adjacent communities such as Durango.

The Town of Mancos is excited to be selected for Phase 1. The pathway will begin at Mancos' most heavily visited public park and will go directly through our business district and past our



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public schools. Everyone in town will have easy access to fun healthy recreational activities, and a clear pathway to the public lands beyond.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

*Ellen Queenie Barz*

Mayor Queenie Barz

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117 North Main Street • P.O. Box 487 • Mancos, Colorado 81328

Phone (970) 533-7725 • Fax (970) 533-7727

[www.mancoscolorado.com](http://www.mancoscolorado.com)



# United States Department of the Interior

## NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Mesa Verde National Park  
P.O. Box 8  
Mesa Verde, Colorado 81330

IN REPLY REFER TO:

N-79-08-1-9-1.B

July 29, 2019

Mr. James Dietrich  
Montezuma County  
Natural Resources Planning and Public Lands Coordinator  
109 West Main Street, Room 280  
Cortez, CO 81321

Dear Mr. Dietrich,

I am writing in support of the Paths to Mesa Verde 2019 Colorado the Beautiful (CtB) planning grant application. I and staff from Mesa Verde National Park are participating in a working group involved in the planning and design of this trail. The project has direct ties to Mesa Verde National Park since the park entrance and the Mesa Verde Visitor and Research Center are located along U.S. Highway 160 between the towns of Cortez and Mancos, Colorado.

The possibility of a non-motorized trail system linking the towns of Cortez and Mancos would improve the ability of residents and visitors to access the public lands along the U.S. Highway 160 corridor. The public along with the working group has identified a proposed trail alignment that would accommodate pedestrians and bicycles along the south side of Highway 160 from Boyle Park in the Town of Mancos to the Mesa Verde National Park entrance as the segments for initial construction. As a member of the working group we understand that additional engineering support is needed to finalize the construction plans for these segments of the trail.

The park supports thorough planning of the proposed trail and the subsequent construction of these segments of the pathway and believes that the proposed pathway would provide an excellent, alternate visitor experience and a much more safe connection for visitors to access the park and Visitor and Research Center by bicycling or walking from the local community of Mancos. In addition, this trail would provide exercise opportunities for residents and visitors and it will help reduce vehicular congestion in the park, as well as aid in reducing air pollution from vehicle emissions.

The proposed grant is an essential step in completing the planning and design of the initial construction phase of the Paths to Mesa Verde trail and continuing the partnership between local communities and government agencies to provide additional recreation and alternative transportation opportunities for residents and visitors alike. I wholeheartedly support this project

for the benefit of our citizens accessing our public lands in this area. Please contact me if I may provide any additional information at 970-529-4600.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Cliff Spencer', written in a cursive style.

**Cliff Spencer**  
**Superintendent**



# United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
TRES RIOS FIELD OFFICE  
29211 Highway 184  
Dolores, CO 81323  
[www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/sjplc.html](http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/sjplc.html)

July 25, 2019

Fletcher Jacobs, State Trails Program Manager  
13787 South Hwy 85  
Littleton, CO 80125

Dear Mr. Jacobs:

As the Field Office Manager for the Bureau of Land Management Tres Rios Field Office, I would like to express my support for the Paths to Mesa Verde Colorado the Beautiful (Planning) grant application. The grant would be used by the County to finalize engineering plans on Phase 1 of the project (connecting the town of Mancos to Mesa Verde National Park).

Staff from this office have been participating in a working group dedicated to pursuing this community/public land connection opportunity, with Montezuma County taking the lead. Phase 2 of the project would have direct ties to a portion of Tres Rios Field office called "Phil's World" which is a regionally popular and nationally recognized system of mountain bike trails located along Highway 160 between the towns of Mancos and Cortez. Use and popularity of this trail system has increased substantially every year with over 23,000 visitors recorded in 2018. The trail system provides nearly year-round riding opportunities and is located only 6 miles outside of Cortez, Colorado.

While not located on BLM managed lands, the current trail head for Phil's World (situated on a State Land parcel), is frequently filled beyond capacity on busy days. Once the parking lot is full, vehicles line the County Road accessing the parking area and residential properties beyond. A trail connecting Cortez to Phil's World would provide an alternative means of access for riders coming from Cortez, and may lessen the carbon footprint of visitors.

The possibility of a trail system linking the towns of Mancos and Cortez, via Phil's World and Mesa Verde National Park would improve the ability of residents and visitors alike to access the public lands along the Highway 160 corridor in a safe and enjoyable manner. The provision of such a trail would improve the health and well-being of our local communities, providing another mechanism to get outside and experience the benefits of an active lifestyle.

Sincerely,

Connie Clementson  
Tres Rios Field Manager