

DATE: March 21, 2021
TO: Board of County Commissioners
FROM: Janet Kask, Dir., Parks & Open Space
RE: County Parks & Open Space - 2020 Year-End Report/Synopsis

2020 was another busy year for the San Miguel County Parks & Open Space department, which manages several programs including the County's Parks, Trails, Fairgrounds, Open Space, Historic Preservation, Vegetation Control & Management and Facilities Maintenance.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Parks & Open Space department led the County's proactive efforts and initiatives in educating the public with allowable uses and restrictions by staff's interaction with visitors and also frequently updating trail and park signage. County staff experienced a surge in trail and park recreational usage and responded accordingly. Parks & Open Space staff also modified County work spaces for safe interaction with the public in addition to creating safe employee work environments.

Below are 2020 highlights for each division and attached is a more indepth and detailed year-end report and synopsis highlighting additional projects and endeavors.

TRAILS -

- **Ingram Creek Spur Trail/Bridal Veil Creek Trail** - This trail area saw a tremendous surge in use. The County was awarded a CDOT Multimodal Options Fund grant 3/20 to construct a pedestrian bridge across Ingram Creek. The bridge will allow safe, consistent pedestrian use of the trail during high-water flows. Bridge engineering design has begun and construction is slated for the spring of 2021. This project and grant funding are being transferred from CDOT to Colorado Parks & Wildlife. Matching funds are being provided by both the County and the Telluride Mountain Club. The BOCC approved a resolution and CDOT IGA 11/20.

PARKS -

- **Mill Creek Park** - Parks & Open Space staff conducted a community survey for the County's proposed new Mill Creek Park, which will be located at the northeast corner of Mill Creek Road and Highway 145 (opposite the Shell gas station). Feedback was requested on proposed uses and services for this new 1.09 acre site and the survey was active from June-August 2020. The Open Space Commission reviewed the survey results and data to formulate an overall site plan. Hoping to break ground spring 2021.

- **Ilium Timber Deck Project** - Parks & Open Space staff repurposed timbers from the old RGS Wye/Bridge in Ilium to build a wonderful deck as a respite area adjacent to the river with scenic views for hikers and cyclists utilizing the local trails.

OPEN SPACE COMMISSION -

- **Class 1 E-Bikes** - Parks & Open Space staff and the Open Space Commission presented their recommendations to the BOCC for a Class 1 E-Bike Pilot Program 7/20. Class 1 E-Bikes are now allowed on 2 County trails - the M59 River Trail and the Whiskey Charlie 62 Trail. The BOCC adopted the Open Space Commission's recommendations.

- **Land Conservation Easement** - Parks & Open Space staff and the Open Space Commission completed a 1345 acre land conservation easement for the Elk Springs Ranch in collaboration with the Montezuma Land Conservancy, which closed 1/20. This project was funded by the County's Land Heritage Program.

HISTORICAL COMMISSION -

- **Matterhorn Mill** – Parks & Open Space staff continue to work on potential conveyance of the Matterhorn Mill structure and some land (TBD) to the County. Multiple meetings (on-site and via Zoom) held with the U.S. Forest Service and the Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety. DRMS oversaw stabilization and clean-out of this structure starting 10/20 (completed 2/21). Parks & Open Space staff prepared an RFP for public bid for professional architectural services for historic preservation of the Matterhorn Mill, which will tie in with the County’s State Historic Preservation Fund grant application.

SAN MIGUEL BASIN FAIR BOARD/ANNUAL FAIR -

- **San Miguel Basin Fair** - The Fair Board persevered with the Annual San Miguel Basin Fair, which occurred 7/20 during a tough time of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite this, the Junior Livestock Sale was a huge success and the Fair Board implemented an online bidding option, which increased overall livestock sales. This was a collaborative effort between the Fair Board, Parks & Open Space staff and the County’s IT department. A link was also provided on the County website for participation in the Junior Livestock Sale. It was great to implement new practices, which will improve and benefit the Annual San Miguel Basin Fair and the Norwood community for many years to come.

FAIRGROUNDS & REGIONAL PARK -

- **Outdoor Arena/GOCO Grant Project** – The County was awarded a GOCO Grant for \$157,103. for the Outdoor Arena Renovation and Upgrade Project. The scope of the project included removal and replacement of the footing and perimeter fencing; excavation of the Outdoor Arena floor to improve drainage; relocation of the power utilities and installation of a new power/light pole; installation of new drainage on the race track; and construction of a retaining wall between the race track and the Outdoor Arena. Contracts for the project were awarded 3/2/20 with a project start date of 3/16/20. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the project was shut down 3/26/20 and resumed 6/7/20. The project was completed 9/28/20 with final grant reporting completed 12/20. We can now boast of excellent footing in the Outdoor Arena; nice 6-rail coped welded fencing; paneled livestock pens and roping chutes/boxes.

VEGETATION CONTROL & MANAGEMENT -

- **The Vegetation Control & Management Department** treated 348 acres with 295 hours at a total cost of \$44,505.31. in 2020. This includes the Towns of Telluride, Mountain Village, Ophir (limited), the Telluride Airport, Trails and Open Space, Road & Bridge, County Roads, and the County Fairgrounds/Regional Park.

POLLINATOR GARDEN/PAYMENT FOR ECOSYSTEM SERVICES -

- **CWCB Grant** - The County received a grant from the Colorado Water Conservation Board to expand its existing Payment for Ecosystem Services program to develop an informed, innovative approach to engage agricultural producers and large landowners to voluntarily implement beneficial practices for long-term water conservation, improved soil health benefits and other ecosystem service goals. The grant totals \$34,646. with the County matching at \$34,646. (\$69,293. total). This plan has been presented to and approved by the BOCC. Planned implementation set for spring of 2021.

FACILITIES MAINTENANCE -

- In adhering to COVID-19 restrictions and focusing on public health matters and safety, Parks & Open Space limited public access and various activities at County facilities. As a County staff safety measure, Parks & Open Space staff installed a doorbell for the Social Services dept. and plexi-glass panels in offices in the Miramonte building and the Court House. Public dropboxes were also installed at these 2 locations in addition to the Placerville School House to provide safe and easy access for the public.

DATE: February 19, 2021
TO: Board of County Commissioners
FROM: Janet Kask, Dir., Parks & Open Space
RE: County Parks & Open Space – 2020 Year-End Report/Synopsis

The County's Parks and Open Space (POS) department is comprised of a group of dedicated employees and encompasses the following budgeted divisions - Open Space Administration, Open Space Commission (PES/GuSG), Parks Administration (trails/parks/PVSH), Fairgrounds/Regional Park (Fair Board), Historic Preservation (Historical Commission), Vegetation Control & Management along with Facilities Maintenance for County buildings in Telluride and Norwood.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, POS staff have been diligent and flexible in addressing issues of community concern by installing/posting proper trail and park signage/notifications in consultation with the County's Public Health department. We saw a tremendous surge and increase in hikers and cyclists utilizing our County trails and parks. However, in adhering to COVID-19 restrictions and taking public health matters and safety into consideration, POS staff limited public access and various activities at County facilities and also cancelled the County's Annual Turkey Trot. As an overall County staff safety measure, POS staff installed a doorbell for the Social Services department and plexi-glass panels in several offices in both the Miramonte building and the Court House. Public dropboxes were also installed at these 2 locations in addition to the Placerville School House for safe and easy public access. At the same time, staff prepped for a potential economic downturn and reduced our divisional 2021 budgets within the overall POS department. Staff were prepared to still provide dedicated service to the community and, if it came to it, do more with less. Despite economic concerns, the POS department was able to provide community support funding to various well-deserving local groups/organizations.

In addition, the POS department is proud to itemize highlights of 2020 such as a land conservation easement, the completion of the GOCO grant-funded Outdoor Arena renovation and upgrade project at the County Fairgrounds, the continuation of plantings at the Pollinator Garden, enhancement of the County's Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) program through a Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) grant, a new scenic respite deck for hikers and cyclists in Ilium Valley adjacent to the river, a proactive E-Bike pilot program, a new Trail Signage Policy and the awarding of 2 Colorado Dept. of Transportation (CDOT) MMOV grants for a Down Valley Connector Trail feasibility study and a bridge for the County's Ingram Creek Spur Trail (aka Bridal Veil Creek Trail) along with pursuing grant funding to improve and secure Gunnison Sage Grouse (GuSG) habitat. These are just a few of the many accomplishments by POS departmental staff during 2020. Staff will provide monthly updates to the BOCC going forward, release our 2020 Annual Report (preparations are underway) and also start a monthly blog. These items will keep the public apprised of our goals, initiatives and upcoming projects. Below is a categorized year-end synopsis of POS staff accomplishments in 2020.

TRAILS -

POS staff worked hard on all trails, not only to perform continuous maintenance, but to also ensure user safety. Specifically this year by posting new/additional COVID-19 protocol signage to comply with public health restrictions, which changed and were modified often. Staff handled many intricacies involved with individual projects including, but not limited to, finalizing permitting requirements/special-use agreements for the Mountain Bike 100 race and the Box Canyon runs to name a few of the events requesting use of County trails.

- **Aldasoro Trail** – Communicated with the Aldasoro Ranch Homeowners Company regarding signage and non-motorized bike access and also contacted the San Miguel Bike Alliance to publicly post on Facebook in regards to this matter.

- **Angell Lode Trail** – Performed site walks to the old crystal cave and performed trail maintenance in this natural area. Continuous trail work/maintenance and installation/repair of water bars.

- **Bilk Creek Trail/Climbing Area** - POS staff and County Road & Bridge (R&B) visited the site to assess the bridge over the river crossing as local homeowners have deemed it unsafe. In a collaborative effort with R&B and the local homeowners, this bridge will be replaced in the spring of 2021.

- **Bridal Veil Trail (BVT)** – Performed continuous routine maintenance on this trail due to extremely high usage. Cut old mining cables that traversed the trail. A new kiosk with plexi-glass was installed at the trailhead to contain additional

informational signage. Called for utility locations at the BVT trailhead area for the Idarado electrical underground line. Also processed ice climbing use agreements and issued permits for Bridal Veil Falls.

- **Bridal Veil Trail (upper section)** - Staff hiked a roughed-in upper section of the BVT. Staff to explore a potential final trail alignment connector to Bridal Veil Falls to the top of the switchback at Black Bear Road (in OSC Work Plan).

- **Bridal Veil Trail/Black Bear/East End** - This trail area saw a tremendous surge in use. A collaborative effort between the POS department and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). Met and hiked with the seasonal USFS Recreation Rangers to discuss management of this area. Arranged for the installation of porta-potties (regular and ADA compliant). The costs are split each year between the County and the Town of Telluride. POS staff met with Idarado to inspect the improved Valley View parking area and to relocate the portable toilets and bear-resistant polycart. The POS department also provides funding for the USFS summer Recreation Ranger program.

- **Coal Chutes Loop Trail (CCLT)** – Worked on E-Bike signage as well as performed routine maintenance clean-up of the trail. POS staff installed new strip signage on the CCLT to the Galloping Goose Trail (GGT) at Vance Junction trail. Cut down a tree on the CCLT and checked the trailheads in Ilium Valley.

- **Down Valley Connector Trail (potential)** - The County was awarded a CDOT Multi-Modal Options Fund (MMOF) grant to conduct a feasibility study for a potential Down Valley Connector Trail. This is a proposed 3.4 mile trail that would add a necessary link between the Down Valley/satellite communities and Telluride. There are many challenges with this project due to the physical grade of the land along with private property and the need to obtain recreational trail easements. The County's Open Space Commission (OSC) held a kick-off meeting with CDOT 9/20. POS staff are drafting an RFP for public bid for the trail design engineering and feasibility study, which will commence in the spring of 2021.

- **Galloping Goose Trail (GGT)** – Participated in a Skunk Creek bridge crossing area site walk with Black Hills Energy (BHE), the USFS, Lawson Hill HOA, County Vegetation Control & Management (VC&M) staff and a member of the County's OSC regarding BHE's project and re-veg effort in this area. POS staff performed routine maintenance and re-vegged a section of the trail by laying branches down to assist with the overall revegetation efforts.

- **Idarado Legacy Trail** – Coordinated with CDOT for the delivery of boulders to prevent unauthorized parking/pull-off along the roadway. Spent time repairing the trail with crusher fines, as it needed tractor work. Also maintained the dog waste stations at this location.

- **Ilium Flume Trail (potential)** - A collaboration between the County's Historical Commission and the USFS. This new trail would follow the historic flume and ultimately connect with the existing Galloping Goose trail.

- **Ingram Creek Spur Trail/Bridal Veil Creek Trail** - This trail area saw a tremendous surge in use. The County was awarded a CDOT Multimodal Options Fund grant 3/20 to construct a pedestrian bridge across Ingram Creek. The bridge will allow safe, consistent pedestrian use of the trail during high-water flows. Bridge engineering design has begun and construction is slated for the spring of 2021. This project and grant funding are being transferred from CDOT to Colorado Parks & Wildlife (CPW). Matching funds are being provided by both the County and the Telluride Mountain Club. The BOCC approved a resolution and CDOT IGA 11/20.

- **Keystone Gorge Loop Trail** – Installed new 'no dogs' signage and escorted 11 kids from the Norwood school out for supervised trail maintenance. Educated the 7th and 8th graders on the proper use of tools and safety protocol. Checked chain-link fence and signage down in the Two Rivers/Lower Keystone Gorge area. A collaborative effort between the POS department and the USFS. Met and hiked with the seasonal USFS Recreation Rangers to discuss management of this area and enforcement of the 'no dogs' restriction.

- **M59 River Trail** – Communicated with BHE, the BLM and CDOT regarding the damage BHE caused during their project and the repairs required for the trail. Staff worked on the design for a new Nordic skiing trail sign at the Silver Pick trailhead as well as routine maintenance. Also installed a new dog waste station at the Silver Pick trailhead. This trail has been approved for Class 1 E-Bike usage during the spring/summer/fall. However, E-Bike signage was removed for the winter due to Nordic skiing activities on this trail. Staff continue to work with the BLM to monitor unpatented mining claim efforts in this area.

- **Marshall Creek Trail** – Replaced the damaged trailhead sign and installed rebar protective caps on the rebar.

- **Perimeter Trail (potential)** - Working with Idarado and the USFS to plan and ground truth a safe trail alignment. Preliminary survey work conducted in 2020 and to be continued and completed in 2021.

- **Remine Creek Trail** – Attended site walk visits with the San Miguel Valley Corps. to discuss biker safety on the bridge and possible new locations for the creek crossing. Replaced 3 'no trespassing' signs along with other new posts and signage.

- **Society Turn Climbing Wall/Trail (STCW)** - As per an MOU with the County, the Telluride Mountain Club (TMTc) continues their volunteer stewardship of the STCW/trail area. TMTc coordinates community volunteer trail work days.
- **Vance Junction GG Trail** – Performed regular maintenance of the trail and installed new signage.
- **Whiskey Charlie 62 Trail** – Began work on the upper part of the trail, and installed signage for allowable Class 1 E-Bike usage. County staff also provided continuous noxious weed management work on this trail.
- **Telluride Nordic Association (TNA)** – POS staff regularly groom (2 days/week) the Nordic ski trails at the Trout Lake RR grade and the Priest Lake area as assistance to TNA. Staff also set up signage, performed maintenance on the snowcat and various equipment and installed a donation dropbox. The County has also assisted with TNA’s endeavor to provide Nordic skiing on the M59 River Trail for Down Valley residents. The POS department also provides funding to the TNA.

PARKS -

POS staff provided continuous year round/ongoing maintenance from noxious weed management to improving the County’s Down Valley Park (DVP), Placerville Park (PVP) and the Placerville Cemetery. Installed temporary COVID-19 signage and new signage for parks and surrounding trails. Constantly checked these areas to ensure everything was maintained as issues developed. Also coordinated and scheduled reservations for the Placerville School House (PVSH) year round. Replaced, repaired, and winterized all equipment after summer use. Removed snow at the bus stop and PVP/PVSH bathrooms as-needed. Collected quarterly water samples from both park water systems and sent them to the Mesa County lab for coliform analysis. Processed forms with the State of CO’s Dept. of Public Health and Environment.

- **Down Valley Park** - Continued with new plantings in the Pollinator Garden. A “Plant Identification Guide” is being finalized as a helpful tool and presentation to identify various species of plants, shrubs and trees growing and flourishing within the County’s Pollinator Garden. POS participated in a tree donation program and cooperated in new tree plantings at the DVP during the summer.
- **Galloping Goose Park (GGP)** - Staff want to develop an overall landscape site plan for the GGP and are drafting an RFP for public bid. The Galloping Goose #4 train was temporarily relocated to Ridgway 10/20 for the winter season for protection and maintenance. It will be returned to the GGP 5/21 before Memorial Day weekend.
- **Ilium Timber Deck Project** - POS staff repurposed timbers from the old RGS Wye/Bridge in Ilium to build a deck as a respite area adjacent to the river with scenic views for hikers and cyclists utilizing the local trails.
- **Mill Creek Park** - POS staff conducted a community survey for the County’s proposed new Mill Creek Park (MCP), which will be located at the northeast corner of Mill Creek Road and Highway 145 (opposite the Shell gas station). Feedback was requested on proposed uses and services for this 1.09 acre site and the survey was active from June-August 2020. The OSC is reviewing the survey results and data to formulate an overall site plan. Hoping to break ground spring 2021.
- **Placerville Park (PVP)** - Staff cleaned/waxed the historic school house bell and the historic interior floor was refinished. Tree work was performed at the PVP to remove dead trees/lurking limbs. Scheduled repairs for the PVP water system.
- Performed regular checks at the DVP, PVP and PVSH including, but not limited to, trash and recycling, dog waste stations, chlorine checks, shoveling walkways around bathrooms and the school house, water system adjustments, security cameras, mouse traps and sweeping out the Placerville bus stop.
- Coordinated DVP pond ice use agreement and volunteer waiver forms with local users for the winter season. County risk management discussion regarding future direction for management of pond ice for the public. Installed COVID-19 signage regarding DVP pond ice usage. Continue to monitor pond ice for safety.

OPEN SPACE PROGRAMS/OPEN SPACE COMMISSION -

- **Open Space Commission (OSC) Meetings** - POS staff met with the County’s OSC on a regular basis throughout the year and took minutes – every other month, 4th Monday of the month at 4:00 p.m. OSC meetings are monthly beginning January 2021. Jason Merritt and Olivia Coe were appointed to the OSC on 9/16/20 and 12/9/20 respectively. (2021 - Yvette Henson was appointed on 2/17/21). OSC is currently composed of 7 members with 1 vacant alternate position.
- **Work Plan** - POS staff and OSC members presented their 2021 Work Plan to the BOCC on 11/18/20. This is considered a working document and sets goals and initiatives for various programs including, but not limited to, the San Miguel Land Heritage Program; Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES); Education/Outreach; Mining, Oil and Gas, and Development; Gunnison Sage Grouse; the Planning Dept. Referral Process; Enhancing Recreational Opportunities and Trails; collaboration with the Town of Telluride’s Open Space Commission; and Scenic Resource Protection. The County’s OSC

determined priorities, timelines and related budget needs for action items. The Work Plan is on the County's website - <https://www.sanmiguelcountyco.gov/DocumentCenter/View/6659/Open-Space-Commission-Workplan-and-Goals-for-2021-PDF>

- **Class 1 E-Bikes** - POS staff and the OSC presented their recommendations to the BOCC for a Class 1 E-Bike Pilot Program 7/20. Class 1 E-Bikes are now allowed on 2 County trails - the M59 River Trail and the Whiskey Charlie 62 Trail. The BOCC adopted the OSC's recommendations.

- **Down Valley Connector Trail (DVCT) (potential)** - The County was awarded a CDOT Multimodal Options Fund (MMOF) grant to conduct a feasibility study for a potential DVCT. This is a proposed 3.4 mile trail that would add a necessary link between the Down Valley/satellite communities and Telluride. There are many challenges with this project due to the physical grade of the land along with private property and the need to obtain recreational trail easements. The OSC held a kick-off meeting with CDOT 9/20. POS staff are drafting an RFP for public bid for the trail design engineering and feasibility study and this project will commence in the spring of 2021.

- **Gunnison Sage Grouse (GuSG)** - BOCC Hilary Cooper and POS Director Janet Kask attended GuSG site assessment field visits in the Miramonte area and Dry Creek Basin with CPW and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation in 7/20. A GOCO Restore grant application was submitted, which would enable enhancement of GuSG habitat including the installation of additional Zeedyk structures, etc. This was a collaborative effort between the San Miguel Basin GuSG Working Group, the Montezuma Land Conservancy and the Dove Creek GuSG Working Group. The County will contribute matching funds of \$14,500. if the grant is awarded. The application was submitted 10/20 and grant awards will be announced 3/21.

- **Ilium Flume Trail (potential)** - A project overseen by the County's Historical Commission and working with the USFS and the County OSC. This new trail would follow the historic flume and ultimately connect with the Galloping Goose trail.

- **Land Conservation Easement (LCE)** - POS staff and the OSC completed a 1345 acre LCE for the Elk Springs Ranch in collaboration with the Montezuma Land Conservancy, which closed 1/20. This project was funded through the County's Land Heritage Program.

- **Mill Creek Park (MCP)** - Conducted a community survey for the County's proposed new MCP, which will be located at the northeast corner of Mill Creek Road and Highway 145 (opposite the Shell gas station). Feedback was requested on proposed uses and services for this new 1.09 acre site and the survey was active from June-August 2020. The County's OSC is reviewing the survey results and data to formulate an overall site plan. Hoping to break ground spring 2021.

- **Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES)** - Additional plantings took place at the Pollinator Garden, which is located at the County's Down Valley Park (DVP). The County was awarded a Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) grant to enhance its existing PES Program and the RFQ to administer the CWCB grant was awarded to The Terra Firm. The County's Soil Health program will continue into its 6th year. Landowner agreements are being drafted for spring 2021.

- **Perimeter Trail (potential)** - Staff are working with Idarado and the USFS to plan and ground truth a safe trail alignment. Preliminary survey work conducted in 2020 and to be continued and completed in 2021. POS staff and the OSC have conducted site walk visits to determine which direction to proceed.

- **San Juan Skyway Scenic Byway Committee** - The County has reps. from both the OSC and the HC serving on the SJSSBC to identify critical viewpoints and move towards protection of historic resources and interpretive signage.

- **Trail Signage Policy (TSP)** - POS staff and the OSC presented their recommendations to the BOCC for a County Trail Signage Policy statement 7/20. The BOCC adopted the OSC's recommendations. The OSC TSP committee held a subsequent meeting with the Tri-County Health Network and the Sheep Mountain Alliance to address concerns for bilingual translation on trail/park signage. POS staff worked with the IT department to develop a QR code, which provides a helpful link to the County website for translation. The new QR code will be placed on County trail/park signage in 2021.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION/HISTORICAL COMMISSION -

- **Historical Commission (HC) Meetings** - POS staff met with the HC on a regular basis and took minutes - every other month, 2nd Tuesday of the month at 5:30 p.m. Bob Mather was appointed as the 2nd Alternate by the BOCC on 10/21/20 to a 3-year term. John Wontrobksi was reappointed by the BOCC on 2/3/21 to a 3-year term. The HC is full with 7 members - 5 regular and 2 alternates.

- **Work Plan** - POS staff and HC members presented their 2021 Work Plan to the BOCC on 12/9/20. This is considered a working document and sets goals and initiatives for various programs including, but not limited to, historic preservation, conveyance, structural repairs/assessment, repairs, etc. of historic structures located within the County. The HC

determined priorities, timelines and related budget needs for action items. The Work Plan is on the County's website-
<https://www.sanmiguelcountyco.gov/DocumentCenter/View/6660/San-Miguel-County-Historical-Commission-Workplan-and-Goals-2021-PDF>

- **Alta Lakes** - Under private ownership, but POS staff/the HC want to install interpretive signage for historic structures. Also working with County R&B to better define a structured parking area for public access/use.
- **Ames Howard's Fork Decommissioning** – POS staff continue to meet with Xcel Energy, the HC and the USFS to discuss potential conveyance of the Penstock, Surge Tank and Diversion Dam structures to the County. POS staff provided the BOCC with an update of options on 5/6/20. Xcel/PSCo requested the County review their draft 'Summary of Terms' document. Xcel/PSCo revealed 5/20 that a private party expressed interest in purchasing these structures and bringing them back online. No status change as of 1/21. Potential future USFS trail adjacent to the Penstock?
- **Barlow historic Homestead** - Located within the Elk Springs Ranch land conservation easement (1/20). POS staff and the HC are working with the landowner on potential historic designation.
- **Court House** – POS staff installed plexi-glass panels/work stations for employees to interact with the public safely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As another safety measure, staff installed metal exterior gates at the front entry steps on both sides to close off this entry during the winter season due to falling ice and snow. Staff also refinished Judge Sharon Shuteran's bench and replaced the American flag on the top pole with the assistance of the Telluride Volunteer Fire Department. POS staff also installed Christmas/holiday decorations and lighting at the Court House.
- **East End Historic Resources Map** - The HC and POS staff will continue to identify and prioritize historic structures and develop a work plan with the USFS for this project. This initiative has been delayed due to staffing changes at the USFS.
- **Fort Peabody** - Staff performed ongoing repairs. Need to update signage and work with the San Juan Historical Society.
- **Fruen Building** - Staff performed repairs to the Fruen building - replaced the windows and exterior siding of the building on the west side. Staff also handled interior and exterior renovations for the Food Bank and County office space.
- **Galloping Goose Train/Park** - The Galloping Goose #4 train was temporarily relocated to Ridgway 10/20 for the winter season for protection and maintenance. It will be returned to the GGP 5/21 before Memorial Day weekend.
- **Ilium Flume Trail (potential)** - A project overseen by the County's Historical Commission and working with the USFS and the County OSC. This new trail would follow the historic flume and connect with the existing Galloping Goose trail.
- **Ilium Timber Deck Project** - POS staff repurposed timbers from the old RGS Wye/Bridge in Ilium to build a deck as a respite area adjacent to the river with scenic views for hikers and cyclists utilizing the local trails.
- **Lewis Mill** – POS staff will seek grant funding to pursue stabilization/structural repairs/assessment, reinforce flooring, windows, etc. based on a contractor's recommendation. POS staff will issue an RFP for public bid for this project and possibly pursue historic preservation grant funds.
- **Matterhorn Mill (MM)** – POS staff continue to work on potential conveyance of the MM structure and some land (TBD) to the County. Multiple meetings (on-site and via Zoom) held with the USFS and DRMS. DRMS oversaw stabilization and clean-out of this structure starting 10/20 (completed 2/21). POS staff prepared an RFP for public bid for professional architectural services for historic preservation of the MM, which will tie in with the County's State Historic Preservation Fund grant application (8/21 deadline).
- **Pandora Mill** – POS staff maintain contact with Ildarado/Newmont for any updates regarding historic preservation.
- **Placerville School House** - Staff cleaned/waxed the historic school house bell, the historic interior floor was refinished.
- **RGS Placerville Depot Project** - The HC is working with CDOT and County Planning on the potential acquisition of 2 structures to rebuild the original RGS Depot and move/relocate it within CDOT ROW along Highway 145. Funds are budgeted in 2021 to conduct a feasibility study for this project. Potential collaborative project with the Telluride Volunteer Fire Department.
- **San Juan Skyway Scenic Byway Committee** - The County has reps. from both the HC and the OSC serving on the SJSSBC to identify critical viewpoints and move towards protection of historic resources and interpretive signage.
- **Trout Lake Water Tank** - POS staff performed masonry foundation repairs and restructured/replaced the old beams, which hold and support the exterior water chute in place. The new beams were also stained.

SAN MIGUEL BASIN FAIR BOARD -

- **San Miguel Basin Fair Board (FB) Meetings** - POS staff met with the FB on a regular basis. Hugh Hardman was appointed to the FB on 8/5/20 for a two-year term. Dustin Weitzel was appointed on 1/20/21. Therefore, the FB currently has 8 members with 2 open vacancies (1 regular position and 1 alternate position).

- **San Miguel Basin (SMB) Fair** - The Fair Board persevered with the Annual SMB Fair, which occurred 7/20 during a tough time of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite this, the Junior Livestock Sale (JLS) was a huge success and the Fair Board implemented an online bidding option, which increased overall livestock sales. This was a collaborative effort between the FB, POS staff and the County's IT department. A link was also provided on the County website for participation in the JLS. It was great to implement new practices, which will improve and benefit the Annual SMB Fair and the Norwood community for many years to come.

FAIRGROUNDS & REGIONAL PARK -

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted all projects and events at the County's Fairgrounds and Regional Park. Some budgeted projects were put on hold. The focus was to keep our community safe while trying to maintain some sort of normalcy to the function and maintenance of the facility. Countless hours were spent attending virtual meetings with government entities and industry peers to discuss viable options. Many historical and new events were cancelled, some persevered with extremely successful results, and new ones appeared. The Fairgrounds became the venue for County COVID-19 testing starting 12/20 with regular community testing on Tuesdays.

- **Outdoor Arena/GOCO Grant Project** – The County was awarded a GOCO Grant for \$157,103. for the Outdoor Arena (OA) Renovation and Upgrade Project. The scope of the project included removal and replacement of the footing and perimeter fencing; excavation of the OA floor to improve drainage; relocation of the power utilities and installation of a new power/light pole; installation of new drainage on the race track; and construction of a retaining wall between the race track and the OA. Contracts for the project were awarded 3/2/20 with a project start date of 3/16/20. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the project was shut down 3/26/20 and resumed 6/7/20. The project was completed 9/28/20 with final grant reporting completed 12/20. We can now boast of excellent footing in the OA; beautiful six-rail coped welded fencing; paneled livestock pens and roping chutes/boxes. Many thanks to the understanding companies and individuals participating in this project who were tireless team supporters, especially in light of the COVID-19 project delays with remobilization of equipment, etc. They contributed greatly and helped make the project a huge success.

- **Maintenance Projects** - Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Fairgrounds staff were able to complete many maintenance projects including, but not limited to: the large animal scale – new floor installation; concessions building – new vent; repurposing/recycling of tires – painted and placed at various locations to protect and identify traffic sensitive infrastructure; arborist/tree maintenance; installation of a new door for DMV at the Glockson building; installation of floor tiles at the County's rental home in Norwood; repairs at the bus barn; an upgrade to the ventilation system in the Event Center; and snow removal at County facilities in Norwood. Coordinated signage with SMART for the transit lot.

- **Historic Events** - The Annual 4-H Achievement/Carcass Awards Banquet was attended by County staff. The Lone Cone Dressage Club held strong by continuing with their scheduled season - producing 8 of the 10 clinics scheduled to include a schooling show and an end-of-season Freestyle Exhibition luncheon.

- **New Events** - In addition to two new equine clinics – the Sandy Thurston Western Riding Clinic and the Shamus Working Cow Horse Clinic, the Fairgrounds was the “send-off host site” to the 2020 U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree. The Christmas tree was harvested on 11/6 from the Grand Mesa Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forest with the first stop on 11/10 at the Fairgrounds before heading east for a cross-country trip to the nation's U.S. Capitol in Washington, DC.

- **Cancelled Scheduled Events** - The following events were scheduled, but then subsequently cancelled due to the influences of the COVID-19 pandemic - The Annual San Miguel Basin Rodeo, Horse Powered Reading Program; two of the Deb Hindi Dressage Clinic series; Mock DUI Crash historically sponsored by the Norwood Fire Protection District/EMS; Wrights Mesa Livestock Jackpot Show; Ride the Rockies; Snyder Family Reunion; Lone Cone Livestock Clinic; Telluride Wooden Bat Baseball Tournament. There was no baseball program scheduled for the season. The Norwood Parks and Recreation District also cancelled their request for the winter ice skating rink at the Pig Palace.

- **Future Planning (winter/spring)** - Staff focus on Emergency Management Response Plans for major events at the Fairgrounds is a collaborative effort with the County Sheriff's Office, but this initiative was delayed due to COVID-19.

- **County Renewable Energy/Resiliency Project** - Planning began in 2020 for a solar energy generation, resiliency and energy improvement project utilizing structures at the Fairgrounds. The Event Center (EC) is instrumental. Solar arrays for the Glockson building, new Sheriff's Annex, and the EC/Pig Palace will be installed on the EC roof. Each subarray will connect directly to a building's electric meter. LED lighting upgrades will be made inside and outside the EC. The existing

natural gas-fired furnace will be removed and replaced with a 12kW electric duct heater. The existing water heaters will also be replaced with electric water heaters. This is a 2021 project and should be completed by the end of the year.

VEGETATION CONTROL & MANAGEMENT -

- **The Vegetation Control & Management Department (VC&M)** treated 348 acres with 295 hours at a total cost of \$44,505.31. in 2020. This includes the Towns of Telluride, Mountain Village, Ophir (limited), the Telluride Airport, Trails and Open Space, Road & Bridge, County Roads, and the County Fairgrounds/Regional Park. CDOT application wasn't performed this year due to the loss of their contract, but VC&M is pursuing having this contract reinstated.

- **MOU's** - VC&M had MOU's in place with the Towns of Telluride, Mountain Village, Norwood, the Telluride Airport and the Lone Tree Cemetery District. VC&M is committed to using the most environmentally safe and efficient methods of weed control to maintain the beauty of the region, to safeguard County staff, the local community and visitors, and to promote practices which sustain biodiversity. VC&M contacted the Town of Telluride to discuss their noxious weed management (NWM) initiatives on the Valley Floor and met with the Dolores River Restoration Partnership to discuss their MOU.

- **Alternative Treatments** - VC&M staff made a presentation to the BOCC 12/20 to discuss pesticides and pollinators focusing on alternative weed control possibilities such as organic/non-herbicide and natural treatments including Foamstream Weed Control (FWC). FWC is the leading herbicide-free solution for controlling unwanted vegetation including weeds, moss and algae. At the request of the BOCC, VC&M staff spoke with Boulder County, as they utilize the FWC applications, but they haven't had great success actually killing the roots of perennials. VC&M also made a presentation to the OSC on 11/30/20.

- **Noxious Weed Data** - VC&M staff spent 300 hours collecting weed data regarding current infestation sizes, which will be used to stimulate further grant work in 2021/2022. Staff also spent over 100 hours working with private landowners either treating their property or discussing noxious weed management including alternatives to herbicides. VC&M staff also attended the Colorado Weed Mgmt. Assoc. training conf. and discussed oxeye control with Steve Ryder, CO State Weed Coordinator.

- **The Disappointment Valley Project** - The Western Colorado Conservation Corps. didn't perform any work in 2020 due to a communication error. However, VC&M spent 100 hours in the area discussing the project with landowners and releasing biocontrols, then following up with monitoring. This is one of the most infested areas identified for Tamarisk.

- **Citizen's Weed Advisory Board (CWAB)** was formed at the request of the BOCC, but still maintains 5 vacancies for 3-year terms. POS staff will continue to advertise the CWAB and hope for applicants soon.

- **2021 Grants** - VC&M spent approx. 150 hours trying to write/prepare two separate grants for the County. One was a GOCO grant for open space and the other was a State & Private Forestry (SPF)/State Grant for noxious weed treatment. Efforts were compromised by the inability to get commitments from the USFS for these projects.

- **Education** - VC&M staff prepared presentations to upload to the County website, including the weed identification presentation and the native thistle presentation and considerations of some additions to the County website including a pollinator registry along with 'no spray' zones. Staff are also working on an informational/educational letter on why spraying weeds is necessary and comparing more organic herbicides to the synthetic ones used. The idea is to educate the public about what we use and that it isn't highly toxic and, in many cases, the best and least damaging alternative. Staff are also working on Agterra software for mapping and correcting data points for San Miguel County (SMC). Working on GIS data for weeds in 'Map it Fast' to apply for State grants for oxeye daisy and uploaded it to Google earth to generate maps for State grants. Also reviewing procedure for downloading data into EddMaps which is required for State grants. Attended several training sessions, and worked with County GIS on issues/solutions for data mapping. Staff are also developing an organic program and seed mixes to generate revenue within the County.

- **Telluride Ski & Golf (TelSki)** - There is oxeye daisy on both USFS controlled lands and private property in the ski area boundary. Through the Wyden amendment, the USFS, VC&M crews and Southwest Conservation Corps. (SWCC) crews began treating some of the invasive species located within the ski area boundary and adjacent to the USFS boundary. Staff treated near the village core, but the oxeye daisy located near lift station 4 is surrounded by a wetland. We don't have an approved product that can treat the oxeye in this vegetation type. It would violate the EPA labels on the products we have approved. There is plenty of oxeye daisy on the mountain centered mostly around the chair 4 area upslope, especially above and below Gorrone's (private land). Staff treated the entire lift 4 area for many years before running out of funding for the SWCC crews about two years ago. TelSki is interested in continuing treatment, but we

require a minimum of 10 weeks for a SWCC crew and the project at best would take approx. 5 weeks. TelSki has funded the portion of the work on their private lands in the past and we have augmented with Federal funds via the Wyden amendment. VC&M staff met with TelSki to discuss applying for grant funds to continue NWM treatment.

POLLINATOR GARDEN/PAYMENT FOR ECOSYSTEM SERVICES -

- **Pollinator Garden** - Continued with new plantings in the Pollinator Garden (PG) at the Down Valley Park. The PG was initially planted in 2017. A "Plant Identification Guide" is being finalized as a helpful tool and presentation to identify various species of plants, shrubs and trees growing and flourishing within the County's Pollinator Garden. The PG is managed by both POS staff and the VC&M department. Initiatives at the PG which took place in 2020 include, but aren't limited to, the following - continued deadheading perennials, advised the PG seasonal employee on tasks, stuffed wildflower seed packets (250 done), transplanted silver buffaloberry from the PG to landscaping around the DVP parking lot, pulled weeds and aerated the soil, distributed 50 lb. bags of nutri-mulch in the PG, planted several lupines, organized herbicides, pruned rabbit brush, sprayed insecticide on infected shrubs, treated white top with herbicide, delivered live mason bees to the bee cabin, planted more plants and amended the soil at each planting site.

- **CWCB Grant** - The County received a grant from the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) to expand its existing Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) program to develop an informed, innovative approach to engage agricultural producers and large landowners to voluntarily implement beneficial practices for long-term water conservation, improved soil health benefits and other ecosystem service goals. The grant totals \$34,646. with the County matching at \$34,646. (\$69,293. total). This plan has been presented to and approved by the BOCC. Implementation spring of 2021.

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS:

- ADA - Americans with Disabilities Act
- BLM - Bureau of Land Management
- BVT - Bridal Veil Trail
- CDOT - Colorado Dept. of Transportation
- CWAB - Citizen's Weed Advisory Board
- DVCT - Down Valley Connector Trail
- EC - Event Center
- FWC - Foamstream Weed Control
- GGT - Galloping Goose Trail
- GuSG - Gunnison Sage Grouse
- JLS - Junior Livestock Sale (Fair)
- MCP - Mill Creek Park
- MMOF - Multi-Model Options Fund
- NWM - Noxious Weed Management
- OSC - Open Space Commission
- PG - Pollinator Garden
- PSCo - Public Service Co.
- PVSH - Placerville School House
- RFP - Request for Proposals
- RGS - Rio Grande Southern Railroad
- RR - Railroad
- SJSSBC - San Juan Skyway Scenic Byway Committee
- SMC - San Miguel County
- SWCC - Southwest Conservation Corps.
- TMtC - Telluride Mountain Cub
- TSP - Trail Signage Policy
- BHE - Black Hills Energy
- BOCC - Board of County Commissioners
- CCLT - Coal Chutes Loop Trail
- CPW - Colorado Parks & Wildlife
- CWCB - Colorado Water Conservation Board
- DVP - Down Valley Park
- FB - Fair Board (San Miguel Basin)
- GGP - Galloping Goose Park
- GOCO - Great Outdoors Colorado
- HC - Historical Commission
- LCE - Land Conservation Easement
- MM - Matterhorn Mill
- MOU - Memorandum of Understanding
- OA - Outdoor Arena
- PES - Payment for Ecosystem Services
- POS - Parks & Open Space
- PVP - Placerville Park
- R&B - County Road & Bridge department
- RFQ - Request for Qualifications
- ROW - Right-of-Way
- SMB - San Miguel Basin (Fair)
- SMART - San Miguel Authority for Regional Transportation
- STCW - Society Turn Climbing Wall
- TBD - To Be Determined
- TNA - Telluride Nordic Association
- USFS - United States Forest Service
- VC&M - Vegetation Control & Management