



SILVERTON AREA TRAILS PLAN

FEBRUARY 2019

INTRODUCTION

In February 2018, an effort to update the 2004 Silverton Area Trails Plan began after surveys and public meetings about Kendall Mountain Recreation Area showed considerable community support for the idea of trail development. A series of three trail focused community visioning meetings were conducted by the Town of Silverton to gather data on existing non-motorized trails in San Juan County, as well as potential new trails that don't exist. From there, a Trails Task Force representing eight entities from San Juan County was formed, including representatives from the Town of Silverton, San Juan County, San Juan Regional Planning Commission, San Juan Development Association, Silverton Area Chamber of Commerce, Mountain Studies Institute, Hardrock Hundred and Silverton Singletrack Society.

The primary goal of this project is to diversify the community's recreation economy while simultaneously improving the quality of life for residents through the development of non-motorized trails for hikers, bikers and equestrians. Secondly, the plan aims to document existing trails in order to preserve public access. A third goal is to identify key unofficial trails and provide support to the BLM and USFS for inclusion into their trails systems, so these trails may benefit from exposure in official trail maps and be eligible for assistance from these agencies. This effort is intended to dovetail with and inform a number of other planning initiatives, including the San Juan County master plan, Kendall Mountain Recreation Area master plan, Bureau of Land Management Gunnison Field Office travel management plan, and United States Forest Service Columbine Ranger District recreation plan update.

With these goals in mind, the Trails Task Force held a series of nine meetings and focus group sessions to distill the information gathered in the trails visioning meetings into a draft plan. After presenting the draft plan for community input, a final trails master plan will be submitted to Town and County governments for adoption in early 2019, and then shared with the BLM and USFS for use in their planning processes.

ABOUT THE 2019 SILVERTON AREA TRAILS PLAN

The 2019 trails planning effort builds upon the solid work presented in the 2004 plan, and updates it to consider current trends and uses. The new plan identifies 14 distinct trail projects, some that provide specific details and recommendations, and others that are more general and conceptual. The 2019 plan also identifies a number of "connectors" – short segments that would take minimal effort to build but provide important connectivity between existing trails to create a better network.

The heart of the trails plan is the Silverton Perimeter Trail, which will serve as a hub around Silverton, connecting to spokes that extend outward into San Juan County. This is intended to encourage trail users to make Silverton a basecamp for multi-day exploration, resulting in increased revenues for lodging, meals and shopping in Silverton, thereby bolstering the local economy.

An important theme that carries over from 2004 to 2019 is creating a connection from Silverton to the Colorado Trail. The 2019 plan details two projects that would accomplish this goal: Silverton > Molas Lake (project # 13) and South Mineral > Bear Creek (project # 12).

The inclusion of mountain biking in the 2019 Silverton Area Trails Plan represents a significant shift in thinking from the 2004 plan, which did not address this use. By incorporating shared uses, addressing possible user conflicts, and proposing purpose-built mountain bike trails, the

2019 plan not only reflects current trail usage, but embraces this ever-growing sport and recognizes its potential as an economic driver. It is important to note that while this plan acknowledges the positive and growing presence of mountain bikes in our area, it is assumed that bike use may not be suitable on all trails.

This plan is intended to provide a high level conceptual view of trail development possibilities in San Juan County, and to document and preserve public access to historic trails. During the extensive process of mapping the many trails within San Juan County, the emphasis was on identifying and recording as many as possible. However, the effort did not focus on the particular uses that may or may not be appropriate to each, or the potential conflicts that could arise with private property owners. Further public input is needed to prioritize individual projects, consider appropriate uses, address the concerns of private property owners, and flesh out implementation plans and timelines. During the planning phase for any project, all user conflict, land ownership, and impacts will be considered by the body/organization responsible for development.

It is important to note that while the community can provide guidance to our public land management agencies about the uses allowed on a particular trail, the public land manager is ultimately responsible for determining usage. Additionally, all projects will go through a rigorous review and evaluation for potential environmental, cultural, and resource impacts by the public land agency responsible for the management of the land that project crosses, as defined by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA).

This plan is a living document that will be periodically reviewed and reassessed by the Trails Task Force, or similar body, as projects are completed or as new direction from the community arises.

Please note that projects are not listed or numbered in order of importance or priority, but rather are organized by their rough proximity to town.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Each public land management agency has clear guidelines for defining non-mechanized, mechanized, and motorized recreation. Guidelines and policies around novel forms of recreation, including Electric Bikes (or Ebikes), are being developed by these land managers. Ebikes have not been specifically addressed in this plan because this scope of work was focused on non-motorized, human powered recreation, and Ebikes are currently considered motorized vehicles. Silverton and San Juan County would be well advised to watch and wait before developing policies in regard to Ebikes. Seeing how this issue unfolds in larger communities and learning from their successes and failures will provide invaluable insight and direction for future policy development.

Due to significant increases in traffic, heavy use, and user conflict, it is recommended that the Ice Lakes and Island Lakes Trails be restricted to foot traffic only. Additionally, improved parking is necessary at the South Mineral Campground. Parking at the first switchback on Clear Lake Trail road (at the upper waterfall) has become problematic. New parking areas could be created along the road above or below the switchback, but no parking should be permitted at the switchback itself.

In an effort to further reduce potential conflict and respond to concerns voiced by the public, it is also recommended that the entirety of the Highland Mary Lakes Trail, as it leaves upper Cunningham Gulch, be closed to bicycle traffic. This trail offers very little in the way of mountain

biking, but is well used by hikers accessing Highland Mary Lakes and the Weminuche Wilderness.

Education and etiquette were topics that repeatedly surfaced throughout the trails planning process. The Task Force believes it will be essential to incorporate signage, informational kiosks, maps, and education into the implementation plan for any trail projects.

While the trails projects identified in this document are prioritized for action in the next 5 – 10 years, this does not preclude the possibility of additional projects being proposed in the future, nor does it negate the value and importance of other trails identified through the public engagement process and the 2004 plan. Substantial GIS data has been gathered on existing trails in San Juan County through this process, which can help inform this and future trail efforts.

TRAILS TASK FORCE

Input for this plan was received from a variety of individuals and organizations in Silverton and neighboring communities, and distilled by the Trails Task Force committee, made up of the following members:

Jared Boyd, Silverton Singletrack Society
Lisa Branner, Town of Silverton
Anthony Culpepper, Mountain Studies Institute
DeAnne Gallegos, Silverton Area Chamber of Commerce
Pete McKay, San Juan County
Melanie Russek, San Juan Development Association
Ken Safranski, San Juan Regional Planning Commission
Charlie Thorn, Hardrock Hundred Endurance Run

For additional information about this process and to view an interactive map, please visit the Town of Silverton's website at this link: <http://bit.ly/silvertontrails>.

A horizontal scale bar with tick marks at 0, 1.25, 2.5, 4.5, and 9. The unit 'mi' is placed above the 2.5 mark, and 'km' is placed below the 9 mark. The number '1:144,448' is printed vertically above the scale bar.

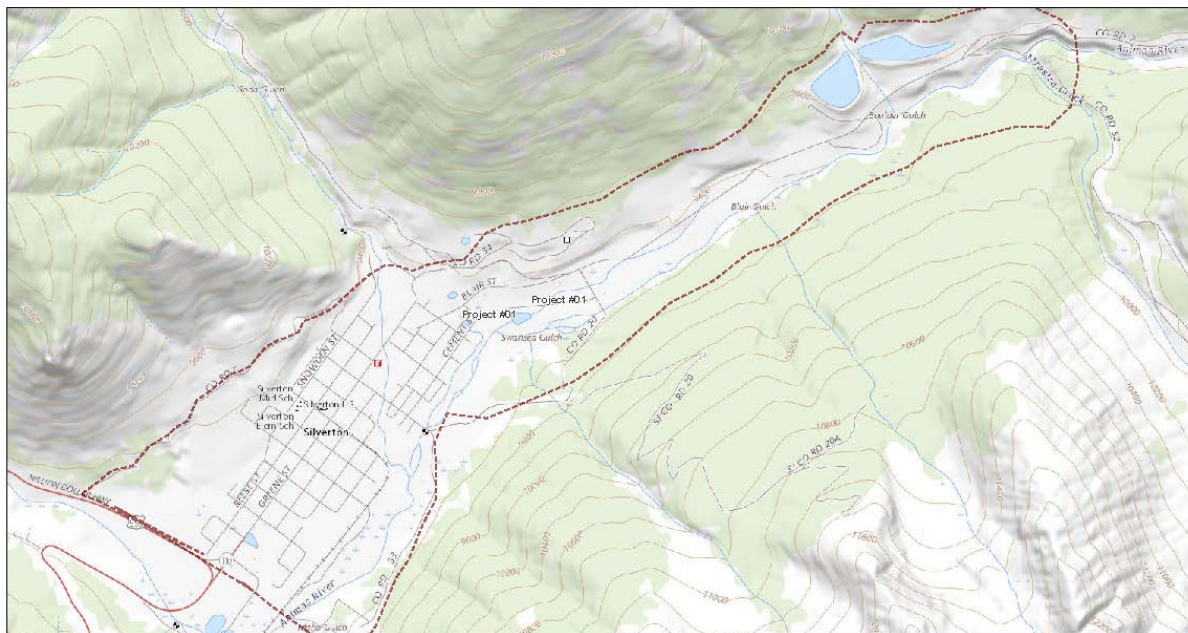
USGS The National Map: National Boundaries Dataset, 30EP Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National Structures Dataset, and National Transportation Dataset; USGS

Project #1 – Silverton Perimeter Trail

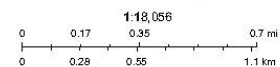
The Silverton Perimeter Trail is the core of the trails plan, looping around the Town of Silverton and serving as a hub that accesses a number of trail arteries that go out into the County. The Silverton Perimeter Trail will also provide immediate access to in-town/urban trails for day users or community members seeking a shorter excursion. Many segments of this trail already exist but better connectivity and signage is needed to formalize the route. Bathrooms, parking, and information kiosks will be needed at several points along the loop. Kendall Mountain Recreation Area, Memorial Park and the Visitors Center provide ideal locations for these, though others may also be developed (at the switchback on Shrine Road near S Rock trailhead or at the Powerhouse Business Park, for example). At least two pedestrian bridges are needed across the Animas River, at the Lackawanna Mill and at the south end of Town, location TBD. This trail would be open to pedestrians, equestrians and bikes. Segments could potentially be groomed for winter use. Bridges and restrooms will be costly to develop, so utilizing existing facilities is a preferred option. Challenges include private property and the EPA in order to cross above tailings ponds to the Boulder Mountain Headgate Road.

Possible landmarks and wayfinding for the route: Visitor's Center > Anvil Village > Shrine Road heading NE > Memorial Park > Boulder Headgate Road east above tailings ponds (private property issues/EPA) > Crossing CR 2 > River Trail > Arrastra Gulch (crossing river) > Beaver Pond Trail heading south > Kendall > Visitor's Center.

Project # 01 - Silverton Perimeter Trail



December 17, 2018



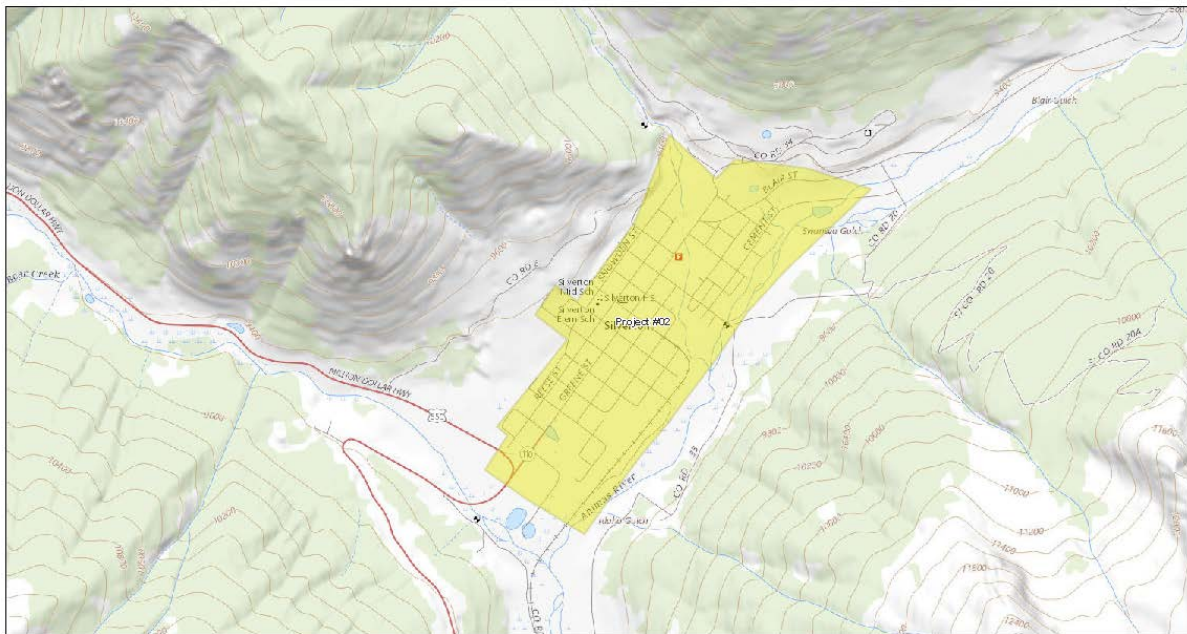
USGS The National Map: National Boundaries Dataset, 30 EP Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National Structures Dataset, and National Transportation Dataset; USGS

Project # 2 – Urban Trail Network

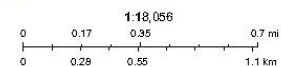
Urban Trails link to Open Space Public Trails, these are routes commonly used that follow the urban street grid: they include sidewalks, streets, unimproved street right-of-ways, paths and shortcuts. Greene Street is the backbone of the urban trail system along its entire length. 5th, 10th, 12th Streets are developed streets that cross the backbone of Greene from East to West Town Boundaries. 8th & 15th Streets provide connectivity to the western trails. The Western reaches of 8th, 10th, 12th & right of way of Gilman, Keystone & Bluff within the Taylor's Addition are undeveloped Town right-of-ways that can be designated as trails rather than roads because of site grades and hazard issues.

14th Street serves the connectivity east to Kendall. A 14th Street focus, east of Greene Street, that provides for pedestrian safety improvements and an improved identity that establishes a corridor that physically and visually links Kendall to the urban core. Routes paralleling both Cement Creek and the Animas River will be developed within the Town limits with connections and services developed as trail heads. Bridges to span waters and provide trail connectivity are recognized as a priority.

Project # 02 - Urban Trail Network



December 17, 2018

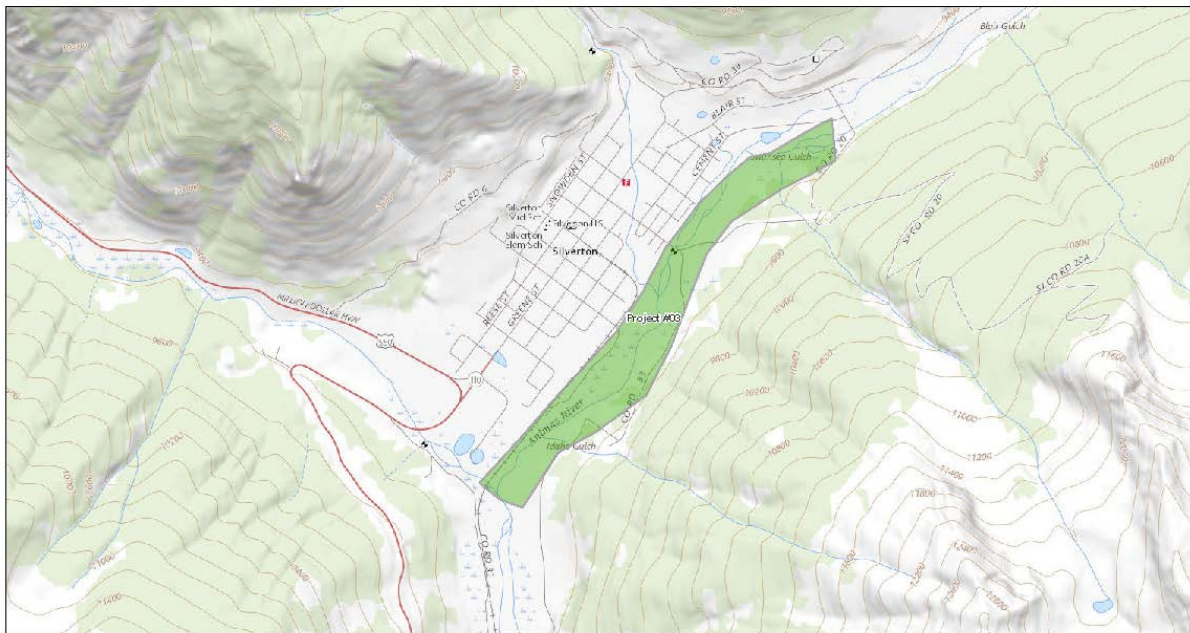


USGS The National Map: National Boundaries Dataset, 3D Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National Structures Dataset, and National Transportation Dataset, USGS

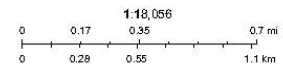
Project # 3 – River Walk

A river trail is proposed on both sides of Animas River from the former Lackawanna Bridge on the north end of Town to the railroad trestle on the south end. Two pedestrian bridges would be required to create this loop. It would be open to all users, with possible slow and fast tracks running side by side to accommodate multiple user groups. Interpretive signage on the area's flora, fauna, geologic features, and historic sites would enhance the trail. A river crossing could be created using riprap as stepping stones. This could provide an access point for the Whitewater Park proposed in the KMRA visioning sessions. Portions of this trail could be groomed in winter, and urban trails (project # 2) could provide connectivity to the Silverton Perimeter Trail (project #1).

Project # 03 - River Walk



December 17, 2018



USGS The National Map: National Boundaries Dataset, 30 EP Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National Structures Dataset, and National Transportation Dataset; USGS

Project # 4 – Anvil Mountain Trail Network

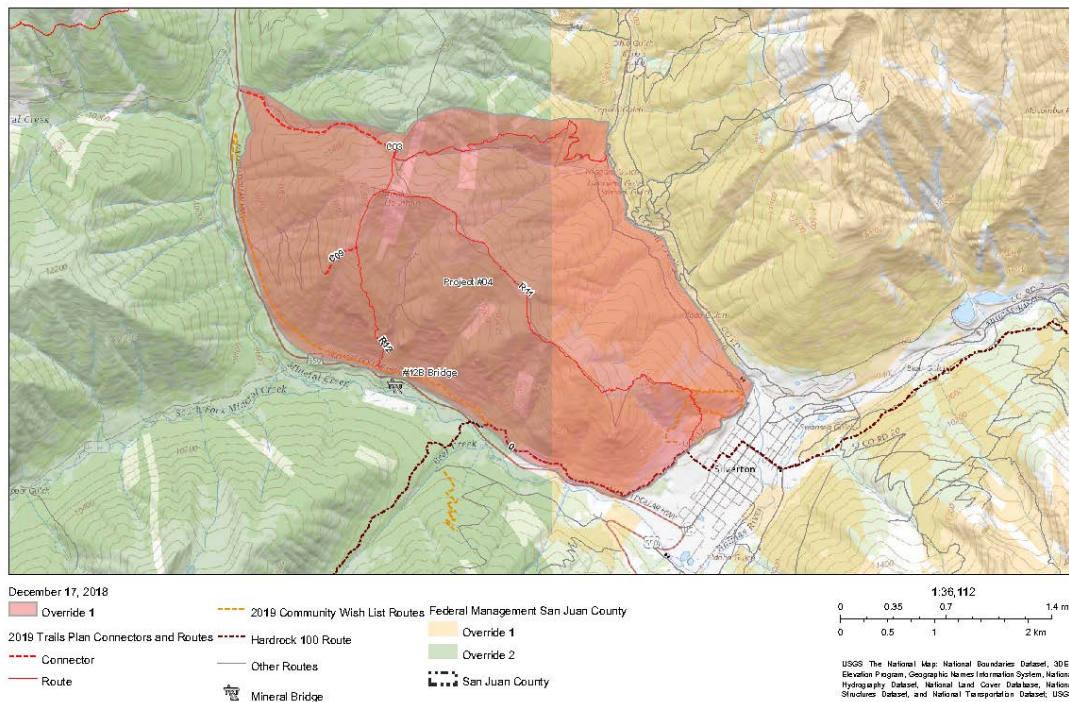
Anvil Mountain, bordering the northwest edge of Silverton, has many established trails along its base. The Soda Gulch Trail proceeds from the switchback on the Shrine Road to Niagara Gulch where it connects with the railroad grade and the Niagara Gulch Road. The Rainbow Route Trail starts at the western end of the Shrine Road and mostly follows the old railroad grade parcel to US 550 until it joins the highway near the Ophir substation.

The Niagara Gulch Road ascends about a mile, then continues as a trail past the Irene Mine to a saddle, and then Anvil Peak. There is a trail, intermittent in places, along the ridge to Indian Head. The Anvil ridge is also accessed from further north at Prospect Gulch and the Brooklyn Mine road at Brown's Gulch, which is passable by 4WD most of the way up. The Rainbow Route has many access points from Highway 550 including the Hardrock Trail at Bear Creek, Johnson's Park, and across from the Battleship slide path.

Old trails ascend to the Anvil ridge at the Cement Fill slide and Zuni Gulch. The 10,879 foot south eastern point of Anvil can be reached from the start of Soda Gulch at S Rock on a trail along the eastern ridge. The Little Anvil Climb provides a steep climb to summit.

Several connections are proposed for this area including a small connector from Belcher on Sultan Mountain to Pumphouse, a connector from the Rainbow Route to the Shrine Road to make a small loop, a connection from the Rainbow Route to the Irene Slide, and the Cement Fill connection to make a loop. It is assumed that most users on these trails will be hikers, though the portion from Prospect Gulch to Red Mountain Pass and the Rainbow Route (with new Cement Fill connector and Rainbow > Irene connector to create loops) will be desirable for mountain bikers.

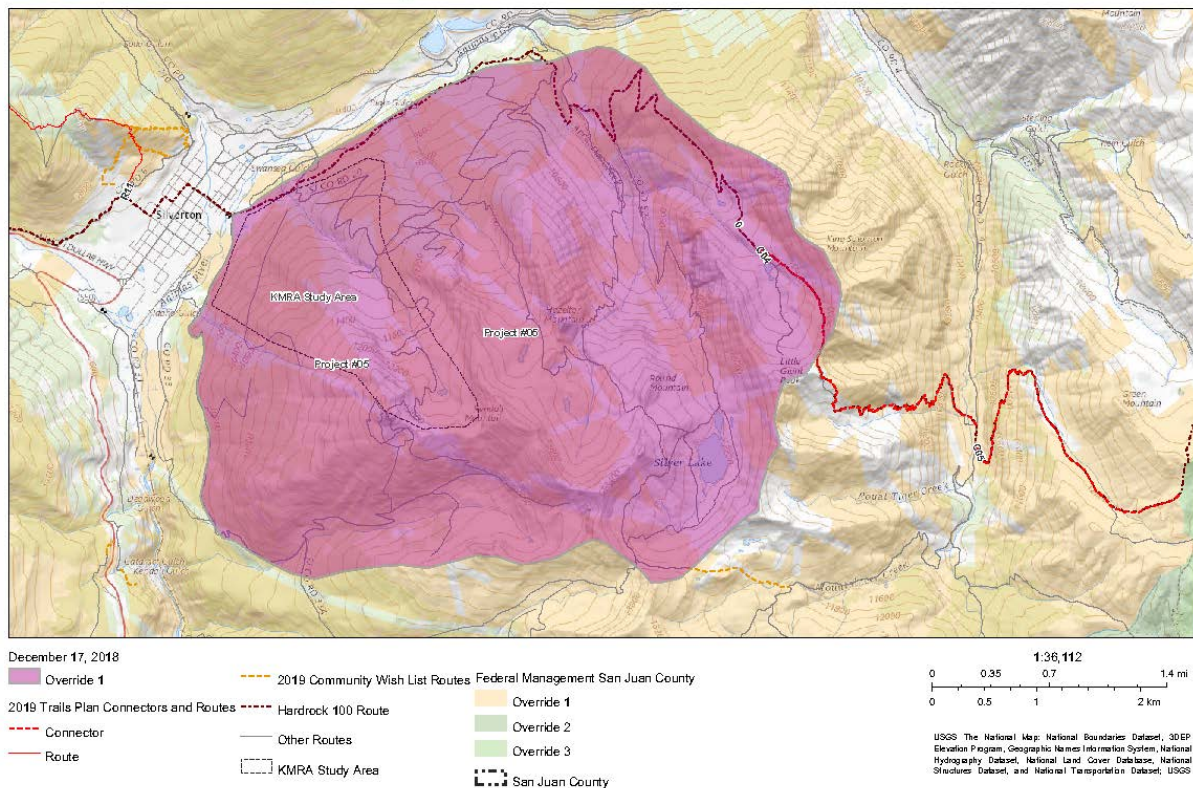
Project # 04 - Anvil Mountain Trail Network



Project #5 – Kendall Mountain Trail Network

Based upon community feedback, single track and lift serviced trails for mountain biking and hiking will be explored as part of the Kendall Mountain Recreation Area master planning effort and possible ski area expansion. Ideas include an expanded pump track/mountain bike park on the lower mountain adjacent to the base area, fat bike single track for winter use, lift served mountain bike trails, and single track on the flank of King Solomon. An interpretive trail for hikers in the base area/lower mountain with gentle grades could be developed for visitors, families and school children. The area being considered for development is roughly bounded by Swansea Gulch and Idaho Gulch, reaching to treeline and above. The larger Kendall Mountain massif contains excellent hiking trails that the community may want to prioritize for maintenance and improvement.

Project # 05 - Kendall Mountain Trail Network

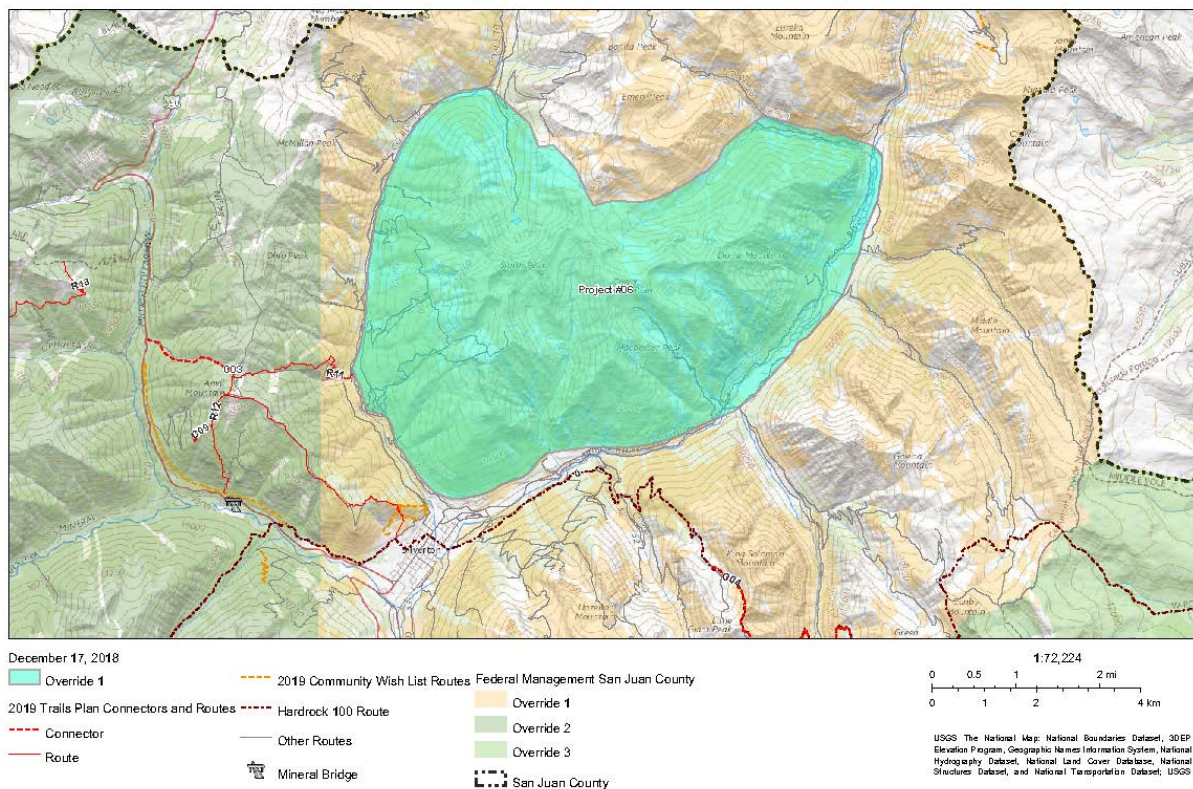


Project #6 – Storm Peak Massif

Moving counter clockwise, the area considered for this network of existing and proposed trails begins in Silverton, travels up CR 2 to Eureka, wraps around Dome Mountain along the South Fork of the Animas River on an intermittent but existing trail, which crests behind Velocity Peak (13,325 feet) before dropping back to Velocity Lake in Velocity Basin. From the highpoint near Velocity Peak, the Boulder Gulch Trail begins and descends back to the Boulder Gulch Headgate Road, passing by and potentially connecting with Storm Peak to the Northwest. The well-used Headgate Road currently serves as a connector from the water towers near La Chappelle Park to the Boulder Gulch Trailhead and is used by equestrians, foot and bike traffic. A bike specific downhill trail for the length of Boulder Gulch is the preferred option to help alleviate possible conflicts along that segment of the trail. This purpose built trail should be given top priority by the BLM so that it can be built at the earliest possible date. Additionally, a separate bike path should be constructed at the bottom of Boulder Gulch parallel to the existing “water tank to head gate” right of way road. This short segment is currently very popular with multiple user groups and a separate bike trail may be the best solution to alleviate potential user conflicts. Trail improvements are recommended to the existing pack trail between Velocity Lake and Boulder Gulch.

Silverton Singletrack Society (SSS) is in the process of designing and fundraising for an extensive network of trails in this area. In the fall of 2018, SSS contracted with the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) to complete a feasibility study on the Storm Peak Massif (see project #7 below).

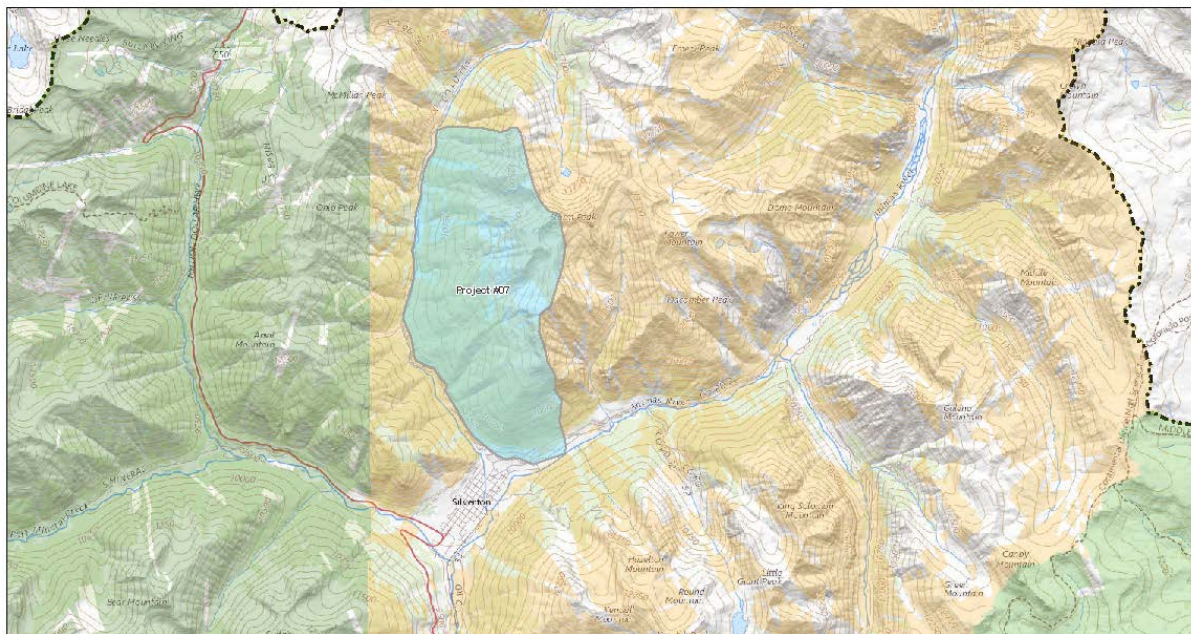
Project # 06 - Storm Peak Massif



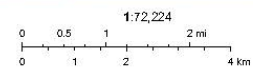
Project # 7 – Storm Peak Massif – Purpose Built, Bike Optimized Trail System

The Storm Peak Massif is the current and primary focus for SSS. In addition to the above description, SSS/IMBA is including the south face of Boulder Mountain, extending up CR 110 to include Hancock Gulch and Illinois Gulch and terminating on the north-south ridge at Storm Peak. SSS's goal is to develop a network of town-accessible trails for both beginner and advanced riders with nearly 4,000 vertical feet to work with. This south facing area has little private land and very quick access from the town of Silverton. Locations for parking and restrooms will be considered as part of this plan. SSS has received financial support from San Juan County as well as the support of the community and the BLM for this project. The feasibility study performed by IMBA should be complete before January 1, 2019. By providing new trails designed specifically with bikes in mind, this project has the potential to alleviate tension between user groups on other trails.

Project # 07 - Storm Peak Massif Mtn Bike Trails



December 17, 2018

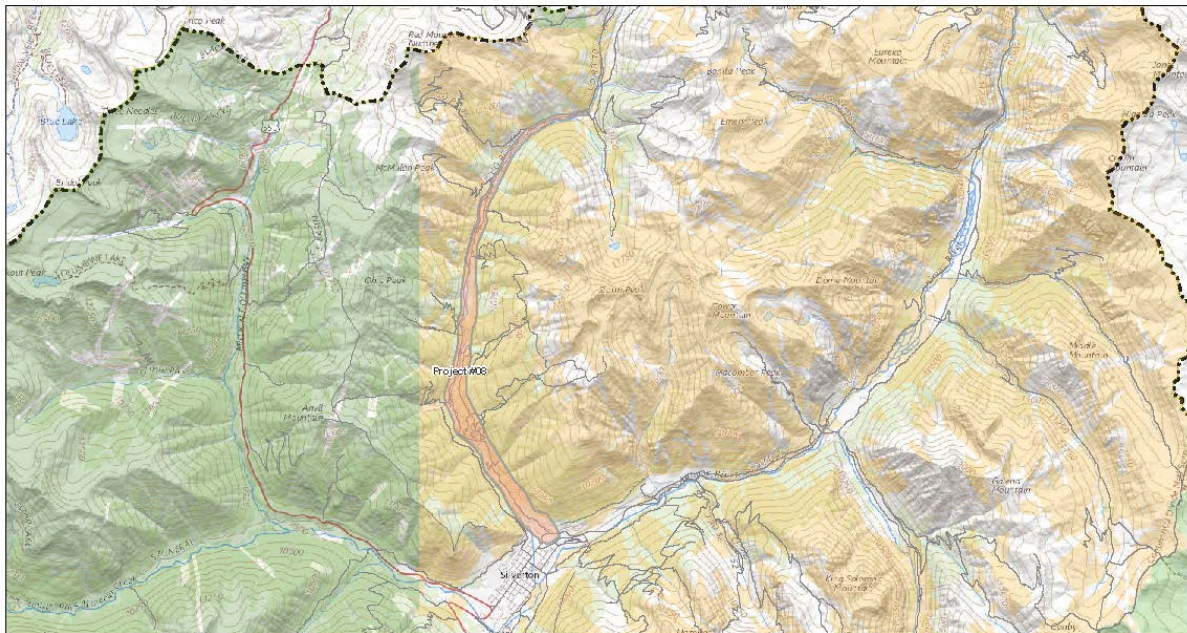


USGS The National Map: National Boundaries Dataset, 3D Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National Structures Dataset, and National Transportation Dataset; USGS

Project # 8 – Gladstone Loop (2004 Trails Plan Project #5)

A lollipop or loop from Silverton to Gladstone and back along both sides of County Road 110. Possible trailhead parking at the Shrine Road switchback, with a starting point at S Rock Extension (Soda Gulch Trail to the Irene Slide) on the west side of CR 110, with trail running on the hillside above the roadway. Much of the route can use the railroad grades of the Silverton, Gladstone & Northern. Return route along the east side of CR 110, eventually connecting to La Chappelle Park and Memorial Park. A better connection is needed between La Chappelle Park and Memorial Park and a bridge crossing may be needed. New no trespassing signs needed at Pietz Pass at Power Pole. User groups include pedestrians, equestrians and bikes.

Project # 08 - Gladstone Loop



December 17, 2018

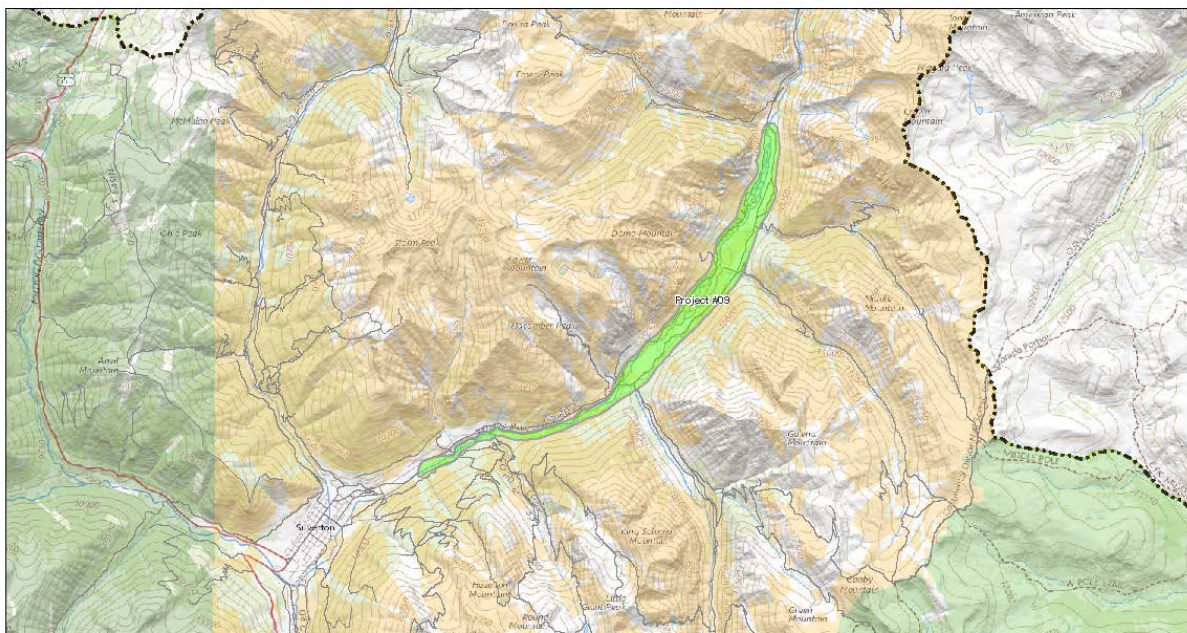
1:72,224
0 0.5 1 2 mi
0 1 2 4 km

USGS The National Map: National Boundaries Dataset, 3D Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National Structures Dataset, and National Transportation Dataset, USGS

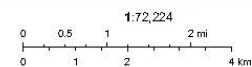
Project # 9 – Arrastra > Eureka Loop (2004 Trails Plan Projects #2 and #8)

Much of this trail follows the historic Otto Mears Toll Road. Loop starts on the River Road to the mouth of Arrastra Gulch to Eureka and back, using the County's right of way on east side (Forest Queen area from Cole Ranch to Eureka Campground), then returning along CR 22A along the west side. Pedestrian bridge needed at Eureka Gulch to access CR 22A (Otto Mears Toll Road) on the return. Beaver Trail variation can also connect from Kendall Mountain Recreation Area to Arrastra. Wayfinding: Arrastra > CR 22 (River Road) to Howardsville > Forest Queen (connector needed) > County right of way to Eureka Campground. Significant trail building efforts are needed on east side of river. This trail would be open to pedestrians, equestrians and bikes.

Project # 09 - Arrastra > Eureka Loop



December 17, 2018

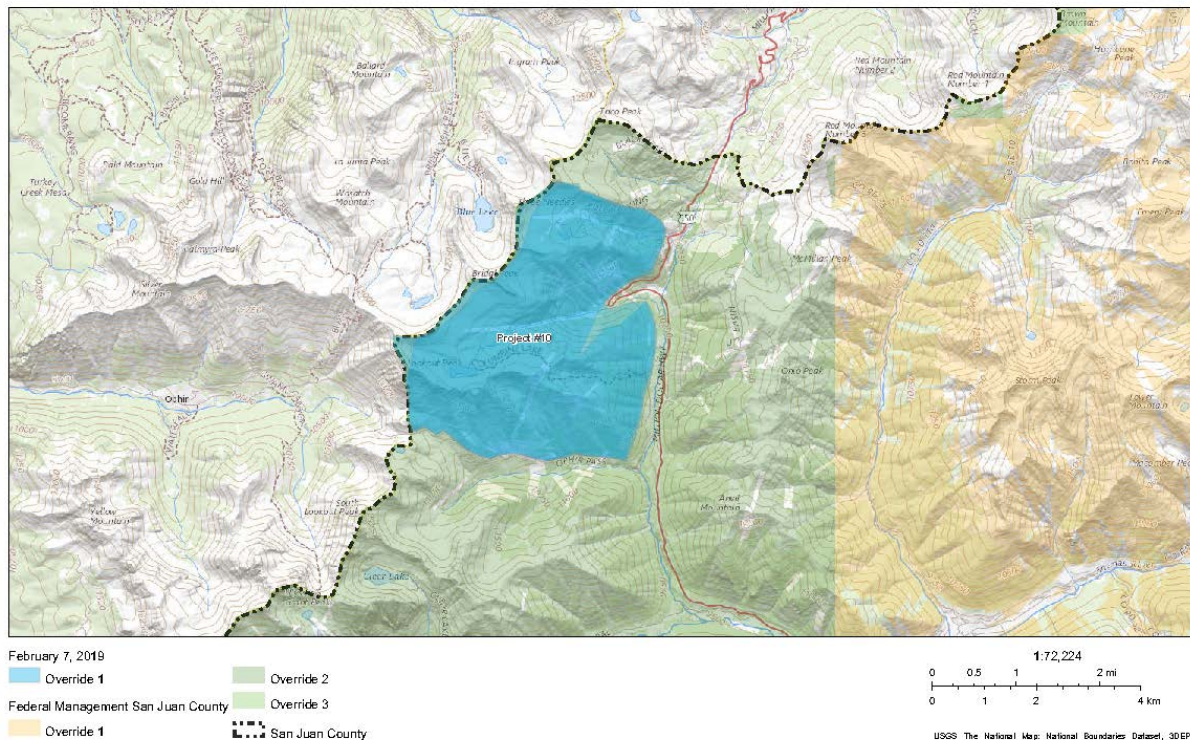


USGS The National Map: National Boundaries Dataset, 30 EP Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National Structures Dataset, and National Transportation Dataset; USGS

Project # 10 – Ophir > Columbine Lake

This project proposes creating/improving a connector from Ophir Pass Road/Opus Hut to the Columbine Lake Trail to create a loop, and capitalizes on trail work already done by the owners of the Opus Hut. If connected with project #11 (Rainbow Trail > Red), this could become a loop. A separate, purpose built bike trail to connect Columbine Lake with both Ophir Pass Road and Highway 550 is needed in this area because of the current heavy use by hikers on the existing trail to and from Columbine Lake. This purpose built trail should be given priority by the Forest Service to alleviate both user conflicts and safety concerns. Expanded parking is necessary at the lower Columbine Lake trailhead. With the Ice Lakes Trail experiencing record use, it is expected that Columbine Lake will soon see increased usage as an alternate option. It is currently recommended to keep the Columbine Lake open to all users, however, it might be wise to consider limiting usage in the future and to manage this as a quiet use area open only to pedestrians, equestrians, and bikes. It is recommended that bikes be prohibited from any trails connecting Black Bear Pass to Columbine Lake. It would be very difficult to maintain a sustainable bike trail in this area and it sees very little use as is, therefore it makes sense to apply resources to other more logical places for bikes. The general consensus from all user groups participating in the creation of this plan is that this area remain open to foot traffic only.

Project #10 - Ophir > Columbine Lake



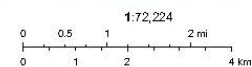
Project # 11 – Rainbow Route > Red Mountain Pass (2004 Trails Plan Project #6)

This loop goes to the top of Red Mountain Pass by following the Rainbow Route to Highway 550, crossing at the Ophir substation, to the Ophir Road, to South Mineral, continuing adjacent to the Animas River, and then returns to the Silverton area. There is the potential to connect this with projects # 10 and #12 possibly including development of another connector trail and bridge at Silver Ledge. Ultimately there is a desire to extend the Rainbow Route to the top of Red Mountain Pass (possibly using the grade of the Silverton Railroad, connecting at Chattanooga and the old highway), but significant research is needed to make this connection. A key to this route will be using the railroad grade where possible, and developing an alternate route where it meets the highway. This route will be open to pedestrian, equestrian and bike traffic.

Project # 11 - Rainbow Route > Red Mountain Pass



December 17, 2018

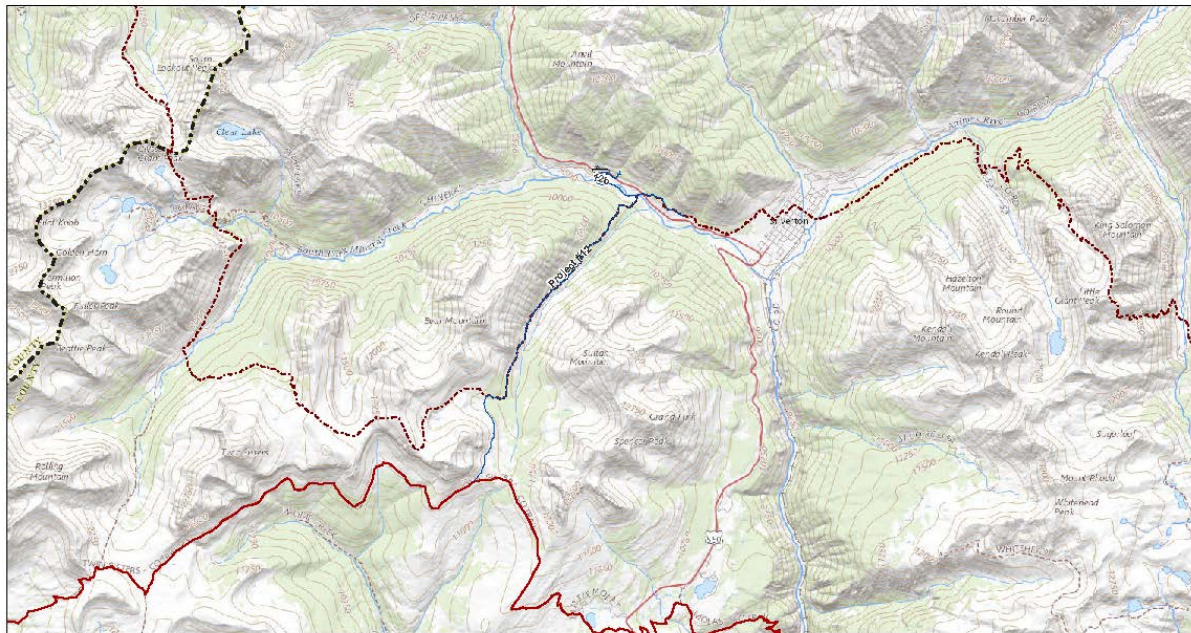


USGS The National Map: National Boundaries Dataset, 30 EP
Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National
Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National
Structures Dataset, and National Transportation Dataset, USGS

Project # 12 – South Mineral > Bear Creek (2004 Trails Plan Project #4)

There are two possibilities for using the Bear Creek Trail to connect Silverton to the Colorado Trail. The first is being proposed by a private landowner, and involves a new connector trail called the Ruby Trail and pedestrian bridge located on private property off of South Mineral Road (CR 585). While access will be granted to the public through this private property, a public parking area will be needed on USFS land near the bridge, and a possible extension of the Rainbow Route will be necessary to provide connectivity to Silverton without using Highway 550. A second option for crossing Mineral Creek would be at the current terminus of the Rainbow Route (the traditional Hardrock Hundred crossing where racers ford the creek). There is a possible connection to Molas Lake at the big bend on Hwy 550 (project #13). It is recommended that the Bear Creek Trail be recognized by the USFS as a system trail, and this trail would be open to pedestrians, equestrians and mountain bikes.

Project # 12 - South Mineral > Bear Creek



December 17, 2018
 Project #12 - Mineral-Bear Creek
 --- Hardrock 100 Route
 — Colorado Trail
 Mineral Bridge
 San Juan County

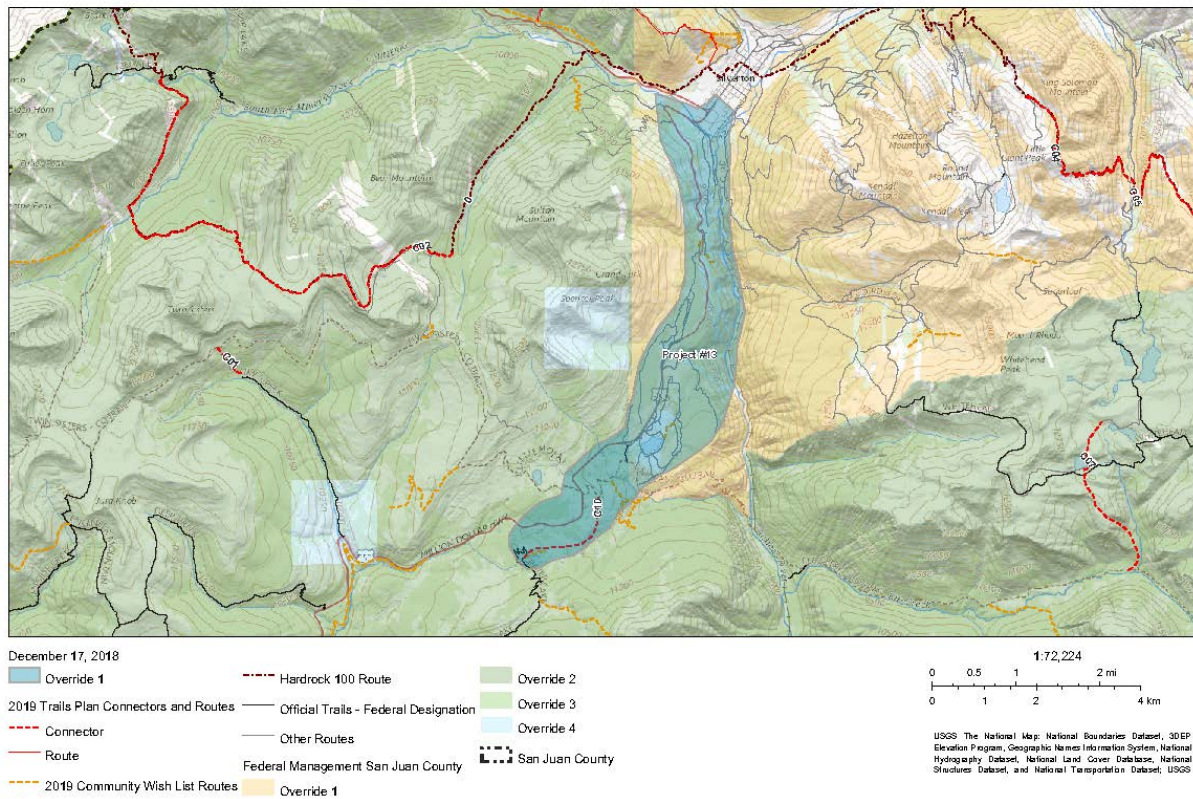
1:72,224
 0 0.5 1 2 4
 0 1 2 4 km

USGS The National Map: National Boundaries Dataset, 3D Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National Structures Dataset, and National Transportation Dataset; USGS

Project # 13 – Silverton > Molas Lake > Andrews Lake (2004 Trails Plan Project #9)

A trail linking Silverton to Molas Lake, Little Molas Lake, and the Colorado Trail was identified as a priority in the 2004 Trails Plan, and again in 2019. A logical starting point would be the Visitor's Center. The trail could run on either side of the highway. One possible routing may be P&G Road, Powerline Road to King Slide, Old Molas Highway at A-frame and Powerline Road on West side of highway, sheep pen road crossing highway to Molas mine. The key to developing this trail will be finding connections between existing trail segments, and navigating private property issues. Creating a safe highway crossing is another challenge. Development of single track trails in the vicinity of Molas Lake Campground and a connector trail to Andrews Lake (C10) that are open to mountain bikes would enhance recreation in this area for those staying at the campground as well as day users.

Project # 13 - Silverton > Molas Lake > Andrews Lake



Project # 14 – Hardrock Hundred Route

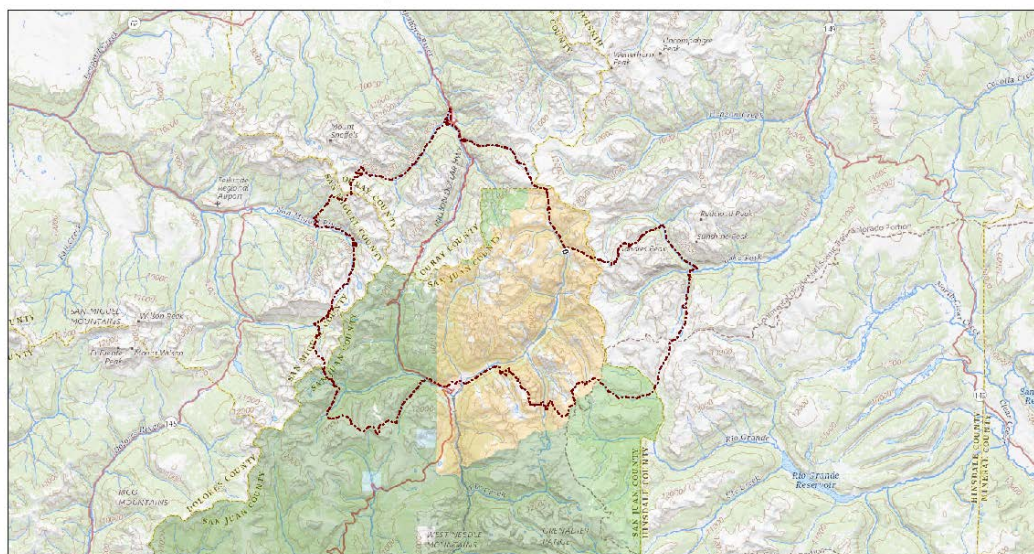
The Hardrock Hundred, established in 1992, is a 100-mile loop run taking runners up and down the high San Juans on mostly old mining trails. It begins and ends in Silverton, Colorado and alternates direction each year. The run has an average elevation of over 11,000 feet with over 33,000 feet of climb. One initial goal of running Hardrock Hundred was to be a way to remember and celebrate the miners and adventurers who toiled, building almost impossible trails and mines, to extract the mineral wealth of the San Juan country more than 100 years ago.

Going in the clockwise direction, the trail enters San Juan County in West Fork of Pole Creek, climbs up to just north of Canby Peak, crosses Stony Pass, traverses south of Green Mountain before descending into Cunningham Gulch. The route then climbs up Dives Gulch and descends Little Giant Basin before crossing the Arrastra Gulch drainage and then along an old trail, entering town near the Silverton Ski Hut. From Silverton, the route follows the Rainbow Trail (See #8) about two miles west before dropping down to Mineral Creek. It climbs the Bear Creek drainage into Putnam Basin, traverses Cataract Basin and descends near Porcupine Creek into South Mineral Creek before connecting to the old Island Lake mining trail after a brief overlap with the Ice Lake trail. To the north of Island Lake, the Hardrock route exits San Juan County at almost 13,000 feet under the shadow of US Grant Peak as it drops down Swamp Gulch into San Miguel County.

The Hardrock Hundred run has become known worldwide because of both its extreme difficulty and because of the overwhelming beauty of the San Juan Mountains. In 2018 more than 2200 runners applied for entry. However, the route is also a magnet for many more hikers and runners and even skiers not necessarily associated with the run. Because of its spectacular beauty, wild and tough route and increasing popularity, it is recommended to seek special designation for the Hardrock Hundred course, such as National Scenic Trail or National Recreation Trail status. Such designation would be a fitting memorial to the hard rock miners and explorers who made the Hardrock Hundred adventure possible today.

Partners include Hardrock Hundred, USFS, BLM and San Juan County.

Project # 14 - Hardrock Hundred Route



December 17, 2018

0 2.75 5.5 11 mi
0 4.5 9 18 km

USGS The National Map: National Boundaries Dataset, 3D Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National Grayscale Dataset, and National Temperature Dataset. USGS

CONNECTORS

C1 – Lime Creek > Colorado Trail

This route would connect the end of the West Lime Creek Trail with the Colorado Trail. Currently, tread does not exist.

On US 550, at about MM 60.2 at the uphill side of the horseshoe curve, there is a trailhead leading to a trail north and west up the west branch of Lime Creek. During the summer hiking season, vehicles are commonly parked at that location or at about MM 60 where a wide shoulder is present. The trail goes about two and a half miles before petering out. In order to connect this Lime Creek trail with the Colorado Trail, a short, roughly one mile route, should be identified and constructed. Such a connector would provide hikers and bikers access from the south to this relatively remote Colorado Trail section.

An additional connector from the Colorado Trail up the east side of the west branch of Lime Creek would easily connect to the Hardrock Trail in Cataract Basin and then either east over to Putnam Basin and down to Silverton on Bear Creek or west along the Hardrock Trail down the Porcupine drainage to the Rico Silverton Trail above South Mineral Campground. There is an old mining trail up from the Colorado Trail to Cataract Basin, making this a relatively easy route to reestablish.

C2 – Putnam/Bear Creek > Ice Lakes

This connector is part of the Hardrock Hundred course. See description for project #14.

C3 – Rainbow > Irene

An identified connector between the Rainbow Route Trail, at the Ophir Pass road, to the Irene saddle. This route is conceptual. See Anvil Mountain Trail Network description (project #4)

C4 – Little Giant > Dives Basin

This connector exists as part of the Hardrock Hundred course. See description for project #14.

C5 – Green Mountain Connector

This connector exists as part of the Hardrock Hundred course. It can provide a route, with existing tread, from Cunningham Gulch to the CDT. See Hardrock Hundred description (project #14).

C6 – Ross Basin > Sunnyside

This old mining trail connects the saddle above Ross Basin to the roads near Lake Emma and the Sunnyside Mine. At the town of Gladstone, several county roads intersect very close to the Gold King adit. County Road 53 goes north on the east side of Cement Creek about two miles to the Mogul Mine. A 4WD road continues north and goes east above the Mogul and several hundred feet below County Road 10. The trail then winds eastward past Mogul Mine workings into Ross Basin before switching back on scree to Sunnyside Saddle. From Sunnyside Saddle, you can look down on the now dry lake bed of Lake Emma where County Road 25 comes up from Eureka. Near and below Lake Emma, trails to Velocity Basin and to Boulder Gulch connect. Setting up the the Ross Basin connector provides several loops for hikers, backpackers, and mountain bikes.

C7 – Grouse Gulch > American Basin

This route exists between Grouse Gulch and American Basin. It is the main access to Handies Peak from San Juan County and part of the Hardrock Hundred course. See Hardrock Hundred description (project #14).

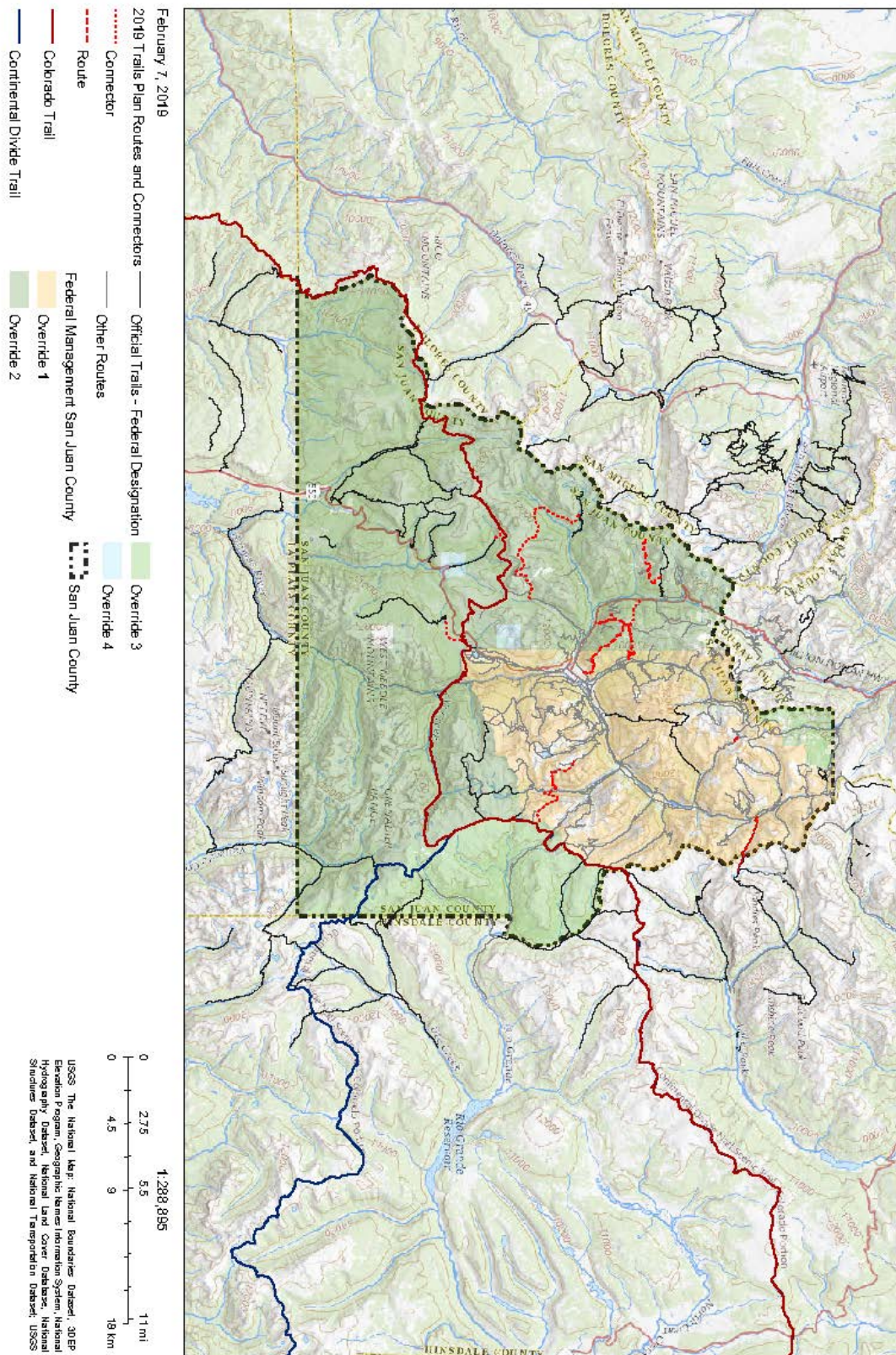
C8 – Cement Fill

A possible connection between the Rainbow Route Trail and Irene/Niagara Gulch. See Anvil Mountain Trail Network description (project #4).

C9 – Molas Pass > Andrews Lake

This route does not exist but would provide a link between the Colorado Trail, Molas Pass, to Andrews Lake. See Silverton > Molas > Andrews description (project #13).

2019 Silverton Area Trails Plan Priority Connectors



APPENDIX

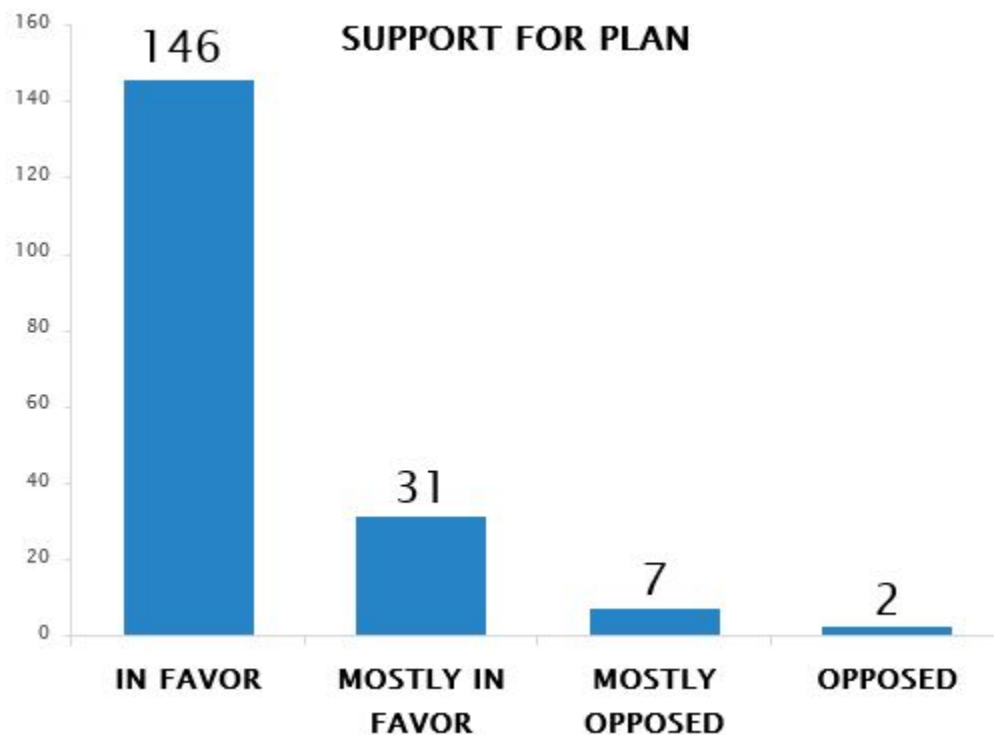
- **COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENT**
- **2004 SILVERTON AREA TRAILS PLAN**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment on the 2019 Silverton Area Trails Plan was accepted from December 15, 2018 through January 15, 2019 via email, paper comment forms, and an online form. A total of 216 responses were received, which included both demographic information as well as open ended responses. The personal information of the respondents will remain confidential, but all other information is reported below.

Respondents were not asked to answer a yes/no question about their support of the plan. Rather, the responses were open ended. Therefore we have attempted to categorize the comments by their level of support for the plan as illustrated in the graph below.

Please note that 30 of the 216 responses received were either unclear, or referenced issues outside the scope of work of this planning effort. The graph below excludes those responses, and percentages are calculated based on the remaining 186 responses. All 216 comments have been included in the compilation that follows in the pages below.



In Favor = 78%

Mostly In Favor = 17%

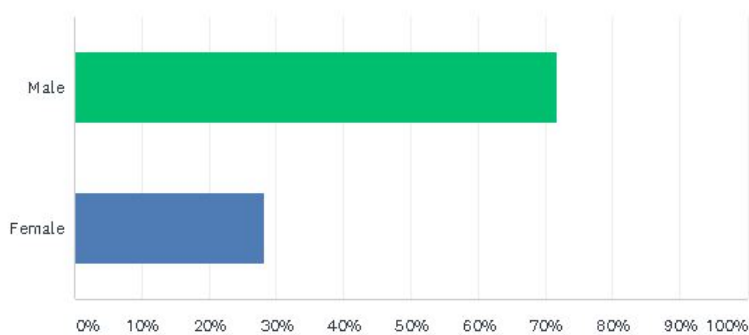
Mostly Opposed = 4%

Opposed = 1%

Below are the questions and information collected as part of the public comment process.

What is your gender?

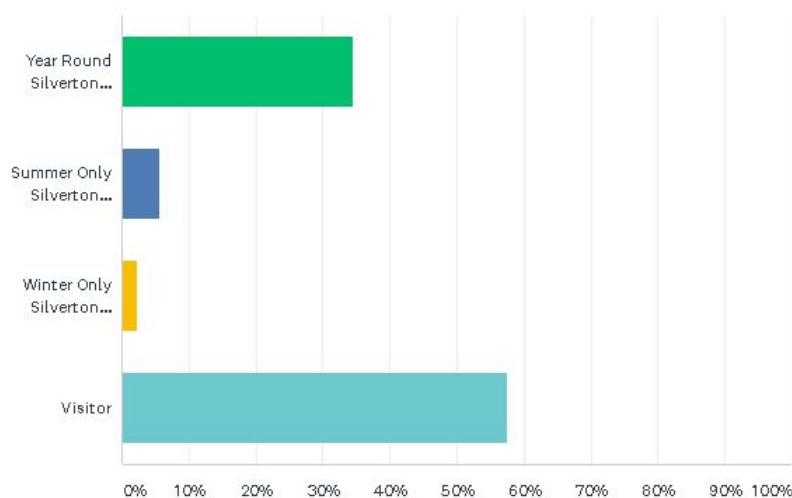
Answered: 216 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Male	71.76%	155
▼ Female	28.24%	61

What is your residency status?

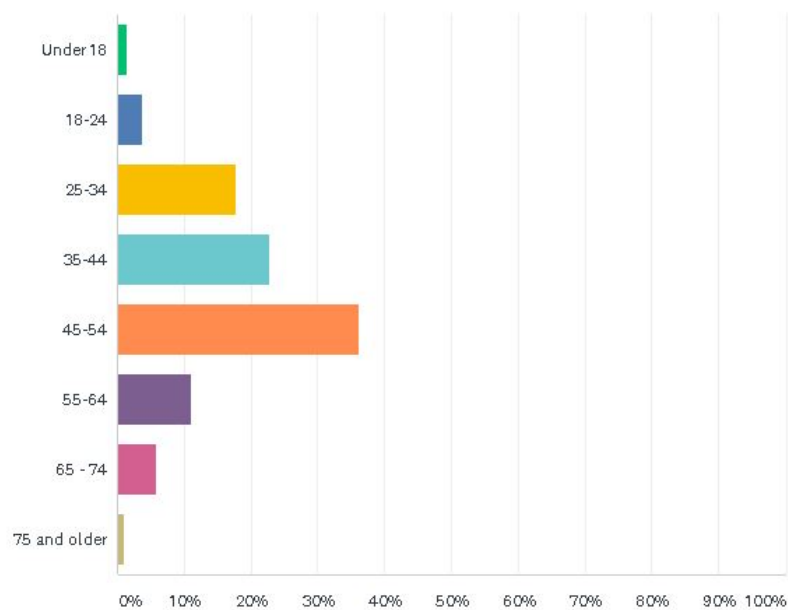
Answered: 214 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Year Round Silverton Resident	34.58%	74
▼ Summer Only Silverton Resident	5.61%	12
▼ Winter Only Silverton Resident	2.34%	5
▼ Visitor	57.48%	123
TOTAL		214

What is your age?

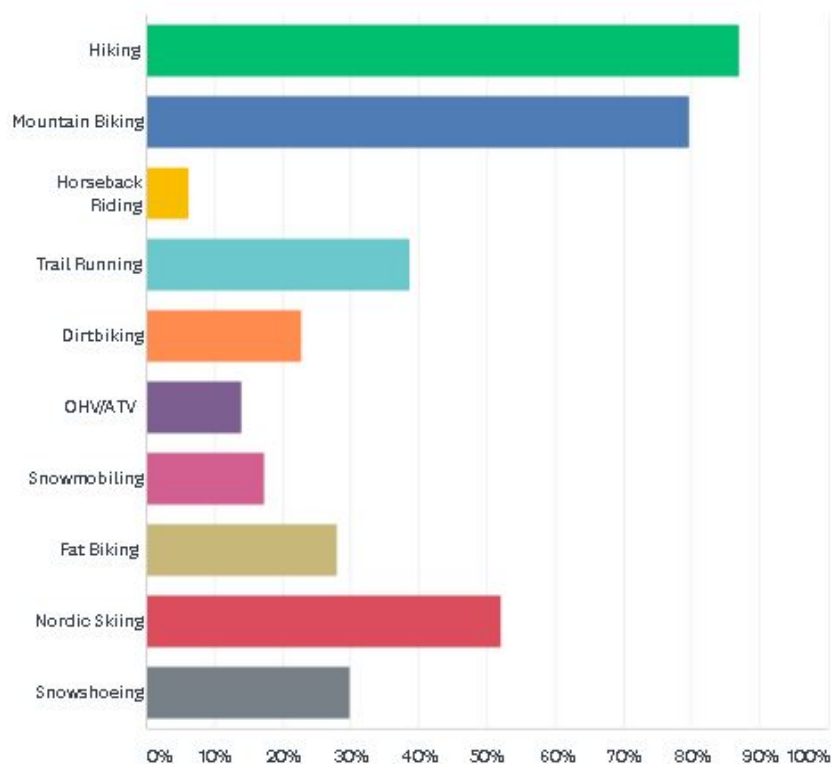
Answered: 207 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Under 18	1.45% 3
▼ 18-24	3.86% 8
▼ 25-34	17.87% 37
▼ 35-44	22.71% 47
▼ 45-54	36.23% 75
▼ 55-64	11.11% 23
▼ 65 - 74	5.80% 12
▼ 75 and older	0.97% 2
TOTAL	207

What trail activities do you participate in? (select all that apply)

Answered: 207 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Hiking	86.96% 180
▼ Mountain Biking	79.71% 165
▼ Horseback Riding	6.28% 13
▼ Trail Running	38.65% 80
▼ Dirtbiking	22.71% 47
▼ OHV/ATV	14.01% 29
▼ Snowmobiling	17.39% 36
▼ Fat Biking	28.02% 58
▼ Nordic Skiing	52.17% 108
▼ Snowshoeing	29.95% 62
Total Respondents: 207	

[Comments \(47\)](#)

Other Activity Responses:

- Downhill skiing
- Backcountry skiing, ice climbing
- BACKCOUNTRY SKI, SOCCER, ROAD BIKING, GRAVEL ROAD RIDES
- Fly fishing, hunting
- Trail riding and exploring ghost towns in a full size 4 wheel drive vehicle.
- Canyoneering, Rock Climbing
- Back country skiing
- Hunting
- these are activities our family enjoy
- Skiing
- Backcountry skiing
- Quit time out in the back country. Respectful time interacting with & observing our neighbors of other species. Still & video of same. Sharing the backcountry & the natural world along with our human history with our community & our visitors. Encouraging appropriateness with one & all.
- Ski touring
- Backcountry skiing
- Jeeping
- X country skiing
- Backcountry skiing
- Back country skiing, climbing
- back-country skiing
- Specifically excited to see Silverton create trails for biking at at gravity fed and enduro styled. This type of riding would be an excellent compliment to the more cross country specific riding in Durango.
- Backcountry Skiing
- ski
- Snowkiting
- backcountry skiing
- Primarily trail running related to the Hardrock Hundred Endurance Run.
- Backcountry skiing
- Backcountry skiing
- -Backcountry Splitboarding -Backpacking
- Electric mtn bike
- Back country snowboarding
- splitboarding
- birdwatching, nature photography
- Hardrock
- backcountry skiing, skating, mountaineering, climbing
- I'm an event promoter and I'd like to bring a few mountain biking events and running events to the silverton area.
- 4x4ing I'm a passenger vehicle. Not in an ohv/atv.
- Camping
- Answering these for our household not just me.
- Skiing
- paragliding
- Backcountry skiing
- Photography
- Hardrock
- Backcountry snowboarding
- Back Country Skiing
- down hill skiing

Please feel free to share any questions, concerns, or comments about the 2019 Silverton Area Trails Plan here. Let us know if you are in favor of the plan as proposed or would like to suggest changes.

As an active hiker with a long record of exploring San Juan County, I would like to respond to Julie Singer's comments about our recent work on a trails plan. The Trails Committee requested comments and are open to hearing differing points of view. The committee was not overrepresented by mountain bike enthusiasts. Many of our own group were dubious about the increased presence of bikes on our trails. This is one reason that the plan may seem short on details as we feel decisions about the usage of trails will continue to be made into the future. As for the impact on wildlife, from personal experience, hikers and cyclists have a far less negative effect on deer and elk than those who travel the back country with their dogs. A hiker may startle or scare off a deer. A dog will often pursue wildlife. A backcountry traveler is more likely to stop and take a picture or quietly watch. Concerning how many miles of trails there are in the plan, what does it matter if there are 68 or 86? It's just a number and much of the plan is conceptual with open ended pods containing possible routes. A plan is an advisory document to guide land development decisions. When it comes to private property, a trails plan can act as a tool for the advocacy of access to the back country. Regarding the question of bringing more people to the county because of a trails plan, that is actually one of the goals triggering this process. Community meetings identified the need to diversify our tourist economy and trail development was seen as a top priority. Any attempt to keep the trails in the back-country secret is futile. The cat is out of the bag. Numerous books and publications including descriptions of hiking, climbing and ski routes are available everywhere, not to mention that trail locations and descriptions can be found on the internet (Oh, I just mentioned that). And for all those cars at the Lime Creek trailhead, there's a book by Steve Meyers about Lime Creek. Many are fishermen. They could easily park at the large area just south of the trailhead. A trails plan would provide a scheme for arranging the increased use of our land in a more orderly fashion. As a group, we did consider segregation of uses, signage and parking issues. I advocated for an interpretative trail along our proposed town perimeter trail. This trail could function as a venue to provide educational information about proper trail etiquette to our visitors. Let's face it, the area is growing, more people are coming. We can try to encourage their impacts in an organized fashion or let things develop willy-nilly. Our mountains and streams are beautiful. We should remember the lesson we were taught in kindergarten: to share. I believe we can do this and still protect the environment. As for process, the trails committee met over the past year, accepting oral and written comments in developing this plan. The comment period has been extended. Let's seriously consider all input from the public. Otherwise this whole process is a charade, a waste of time, and never should have been undertaken in the first place. I'm no fan of meetings. Often so little is accomplished while expending so much time and effort. However, our meetings, led by Lisa Branner of the Town, were steadfastly and professionally focused on the subject of nonmotorized trails. Who would have imagined that our group would be accused of such sinister motives as trying to run the OHV's out of the area? I never heard any discussion about prohibiting OHV's from any of their routes. Trails are simply an additional component of our transportation plan. Hiking and biking are wonderful, healthy ways to get exercise and enjoy the fresh air. It's my opinion

that these trails, most of which are already there, can be developed and improved as amenities for visitors and locals alike.

Hello Town of Silverton, I'm writing to say that I support most of the 2019 Silverton Area Trails Plan. One thing that I think should be changed in the document, however, is to include language that allows both Class 1 and Class 2 electric bicycles on both soft-surface and hard-surface trails. Overall, the ideas for new trails that the plan maps out around Silverton is impressive and would provide ample opportunities for exploration where it wasn't previously as accessible. Please do not allow any one organization to create a monopoly over trail construction, as is the case in Durango. Single private interest groups controlling all aspects of the design and build phases of trail construction will create resentment among those living in the community. Thank you for accepting my comments.

Our concerns include the following: 1. Trail destruction. Who will be taking care of repairing the trails? Forest Service and BLM do not have the manpower to handle trail maintenance now. 2. We know mountain bikers are riding on the tundra. There are already bicycle tracks on the tundra at Ice Lake. How will this be prevented? Our community was upset this summer when dirt bike riders were found driving on the tundra. 3. Conflict between bikers, hikers and horseback riders will and has happened. Speeding downhill bike riders have forced hikers off the trail. Someone will be injured by riders who either won't stop or can't stop in the downhill pursuit. We should expect conflict and confrontations. 4. Trail monitoring. Will a monitoring system be put into place for reporting trail destruction and off trail use such as creating braided trails and other improper use?

Dear County Commissioners and Town Board; I appreciate the effort of the Town of Silverton to put forward a plan to develop trails in the Silverton Area. We understand the desire to diversify the Silverton economy. I am however concerned about the magnitude of the plan and potential long-term impacts. The draft trails plan is recommending a huge change of use in the high elevation backcountry. The draft plan has not taken into account the impacts that would result from the development and promotion of potentially hundreds of miles of trails, many of which are in the fragile alpine tundra ecosystem. Development of some of these trails for mountain bike use and greatly increased hiking and horseback use would likely have significant impacts to wildlife, vegetation, soils, and historic and prehistoric cultural resources. Mountain bikes would be especially damaging to this environment. Many of the proposed routes have the potential to impact private property rights. Some people think that putting all the area trails into the plan will ensure future access to these trails. It might be the first step in claiming these trails, but it could also be the first step towards lawsuits. Landowners may notice that their property is crossed by one of these trails and take steps to fence their property off. The proposed plan does not address the costs of such a trail system. These costs would include construction/improvement, maintenance, and monitoring of the trails, and the mitigation of impacts which would result from mountain bike use of the trails. The draft plan calls for the construction of at least seven bridges, several parking areas, several bathrooms and trail signs. Who will pay for all of this? The federal agencies' budgets are continuing to decline. They have no capacity to take on additional trails into their system. They are hard pressed to take care of the trails they already have and have recently closed several bathrooms and campgrounds due to funding shortfalls. San Juan County is currently struggling to deal with increased impacts to the County roads. The County does not have adequate funds to keep up with the impacts to the road system. If the federal agencies can't include these trails in their trail system, will the County or the

Town foot the bill for these trails? These costs will be long-term, not just for the initial development. They will require yearly maintenance and monitoring, especially if they have significant mountain bike use. If the County and Town will be in charge of the trails, will they foot the bill for either negotiating easements or suing private property owners for trail rights-of-way? That could be very expensive. Silverton Single Track Society may be able to get grants for the initial trail development, but those grants will require matching funds, and don't pay for the long term maintenance and monitoring. Who will pay for that? San Juan County? The Town of Silverton? The proposed trail plan has been promoted as being an economic driver. But the plan fails to quantify how many people it would bring in? How many people riding mountain bikes, hiking and horseback riding would it take to make a positive economic impact on Silverton? Would such an economic benefit be justified considering the potential impacts and costs, not to mention the effect on the quality of life for Silverton residents? The draft plan would add Silverton trails to the list of over used places. The Ice Lakes trail currently has over 250 people per day in the summer. Would 250 people a day mountain biking/hiking up to Columbine Lake and Boulder Gulch be worth the price? Ice Lakes and Highland Mary are now known as "sacrifice areas". Promoting and "dispersing" use to other areas would only result in those areas being as over-used as Ice Lakes. During the public meeting held to discuss the draft plan, the authors of the Draft Plan said that the plan is really a 30-40 year plan. One of the stated goals of the plan was to help inform the upcoming BLM travel management plan. The BLM travel management plan will only address the next ten years. The draft Silverton Trail Plan should be scaled back to address ten years of development. That would then fit within the timeframe of BLM travel management, and allow for reasonable development and assessment/mitigation of the impacts at a much more manageable scale. Publishing the draft plan as it is currently written will immediately promote use of the trails identified prior to any analysis and development. If some of these trails won't be properly developed for 30-40 years that would mean decades of unfettered trail use and substantial unmitigated impacts in the high alpine ecosystem. Due to the concerns outlined above we are recommending the following:

- Scale back the plan to make it a more achievable 10 year plan. See how things go. You can always revisit adding additional projects/trails in the future.
- Include the following five trails in the draft trail plan:
 - Silverton Perimeter Trail
 - Urban Trail Network
 - River Walk
 - Storm Peak Massif-Purpose Built, Bike Optimized Trail System
 - Rainbow Route-Red Mountain Pass

Please take the following trails out of the trail plan:

- Take out Project #6- Storm Peak Massif (Boulder Gulch) and Project #12- South Mineral/Bear Creek. These project areas include the Town of Silverton's drinking watersheds watersheds. Use of this area by mountain bikes would cause erosion, increase run-off, and damage vegetation. This damage would likely impact the Town's drinking water supply. Do we really want 250 people/day riding mountain bikes and hiking in these watersheds?
- Take out Project 4- Anvil Mountain; Project 5- Kendall Mountain; Project #10- Ophir/Columbine Lake/Black Bear Pass; the Hardrock Hundred Route; and the following connectors: Putnam/Bear Creek to Ice Lakes, Little Giant to Dives Basin, Green Mountain, Ross Basin to Sunnyside, Verde Lake to Elk Creek, Grouse Gulch to American Basin, Cement Fill. These are all high elevation trails which would result in greatly increased use and impacts to this fragile ecosystem. They would be difficult and costly to construct, maintain, and mitigate impacts. Mountain bikes would be especially damaging to this ecosystem.
- Project 8- Gladstone Loop- unless this loop would stay on CR 110, it should be removed from the trail plan. If it is not on the County Road it would require miles of new trail construction over difficult terrain and crossing several private properties.
- Project 9- Arrastra- Eureka Loop- This route also crosses several private properties. If an easement cannot be

negotiated with the private landowners, it should also be removed from the trail plan. • Project 13 Silverton-Molas calls for a trail on either side of the highway. Engineering a trail here would either impact traffic on Highway 550 or impact private property. Developing a mountain bike trail from Molas Lake to Andrews Lake may be feasible, but it would also encourage mountain bike use of the Crater Lake trail which is mostly within the Weiminuche Wilderness. These trails should not be included in the Trail Plan • Do not pursue/encourage listing of the Hardrock Hundred Trail as a National Scenic Trail. This would greatly promote use of this rugged high elevation trail. As mentioned above, it would result in tremendous impacts to the alpine ecosystem. Many portions of the Hardrock Hundred Trail would put members of the public at risk. As we have already seen with the promotion of the Ice Lakes trails, the general public often has no conception of the risks involved and the precautions necessary for hiking at these elevations. Designation of the Hardrock Hundred Route would greatly highlight the area to segments of the public who lack the skills and preparedness for such a trail. The public's perception of "National Scenic Trails" would be not in keeping with the hazards associated with this trail. • Take out the Lime Creek to Colorado Trail connector. Access to this trail is from Highway 550. Parking is very limited and is already creating a hazard on the highway. There is no room for creating additional parking for this trailhead. Promotion of this trail would only create more hazards. • Respect private property rights. Encourage negotiation of easements and rights-of-ways with private landowners. Consider pursuing funding to purchase properties from willing landowners. • Make quality of life for the residents of San Juan County one of the prime focuses of the plan, not just economic development. Additional recommendations: 1. Extend the comment period. The draft plan was released with only a two week comment period on December 17th. This is during a very busy holiday season. It is not conducive to receiving "balanced" public comment during this brief and busy time. Many people are not aware of what is in the plan and what the consequences of the plan would be. 2. The Trails Task Force needs to have hiking and horseback riding represented. These are not adequately represented. 3. Quantify the number of miles of trails that are identified in the draft plan for each proposed project area. 4. Quantify the increased number of mountain bikers and hikers that will be the result of implementing the plan and needed to achieve the plan's economic goals. 5. More adequately recognize and address user conflicts between hikers/horseback and mountain bikes. The draft plan does little to recognize or address this very significant issue. 6. Take the draft plan that has all the identified trails off the internet immediately. Only post a plan with project areas without the trails. Posting the plan with the trails identified will only encourage use without proper planning and development. It also puts the Town and County at risk of being sued by private landowners. 7. Determine the capacity that will be a "benefit" to the residents of the County. How much development is too much? What level of development will affect the quality of life for San Juan County residents in a positive result? How much will result in a negative result?

Silverton Area Trails Plan, I reviewed the area trails plan and I am super thrilled with the level of planning. Thank you for putting effort into non-motorized travel. My comments are below. Winter use It would be terrific to get the roller/groomer back in action. I like the small groomer that is being used this winter but miss the big groomer that allows for Nordic skate skiing. In the right winter, Silverton could be a skate skiing hub. Summer use I have been in the Silverton area since 1990 working for Outward Bound. I am familiar with many of the "social trails" that have been around for years. I am a trail runner and use trails around Silverton that I can access from town (I don't like getting on the dusty roads during the summer). In the last two years, mountain bikers have starting

using Bear Creek, Putnam Basin and Boulder Gulch much more often. I have had a few user conflicts with downhill bikers and bikers building obstacles (jumps, etc.) on the trails. One day in Bear Creek a biker was so out of control he almost hit my dog. For the Silverton Area Trails Plan to be successful, there needs to be a tremendous amount of education around bikers in the backcountry and how to avoid user conflict. Because the Colorado Trail was closed due to this summer's fire, the trails were loaded with bikers exploring new areas. Unfortunately, I observed a lot of bike tracks off trail. I saw this in Deer Creek, Putnam Basin and in Boulder Gulch. There will need to be significant trail markings to avoid bike tracks in the alpine tundra, marsh areas, and open meadows. There will need to be additional trail maintenance because bikers erode trails more quickly. And there will need to be education about when NOT to ride in an area (wet, spring/early summer conditions) or how to carry bikes around wet areas! Overall, I hope the plan is successful. And I would like to volunteer to help implement and address some of the hiker/biker conflicts. Please contact me about future actions and volunteering.

I would like to suggest that hiking only trails be considered. More and more, the incompatibility between cyclists and hikers is becoming apparent in the San Juans. I've been nearly mowed down by reckless mtn bikers.

Hello, Thanks for the opportunity to provide comments on the Silverton trails. I appreciate that these were developed by a diverse group from the public. I'd just like to request that the proposals go forward hand in hand with a solid plan to support and protect the natural habitats in the area. And educate the trail users about the amazing and precious natural system that provides a backdrop to the recreational experience. Because of the incredible weight of environmental challenges climate change is bringing along with the legacy problems from past and current development, additional development like these trails need to be carefully vetted, put in least damaging locations, and honestly mitigated with proven methods, and a lot of education. The introduction of weeds and fire ignition sources needs to be addressed and long term commitment secured to address these. Bighorn protection, dog and wildlife issues, need to be addressed. Thanks

I am unable to attend the upcoming meeting about Silverton trails. I would like to express my interest and enthusiasm in ebike friendly trails of all kinds. I spent many days this last summer riding up many of the jeep roads around town and then hiking from the end of the road. It would be great to have some more singletrack options. Thanks!

Received 7/31/18: I think a trails map should only have the "published" trails on it. Meaning the trails on the topo maps and various others. To me, finding trails is half the fun and I would think it would be that way for others. Pretty much every gulch has a trail up it and pretty much every mine has a trail to it. You can just say that and leave the finding of the trails to the explorers. A world with everything already mapped would leave little in the way of exploring. Well, that's my thoughts.
Received 12/27/18: Having read the plan a couple times, I'm still unclear about a couple things. First, in projects 6 and 7 it sounds like the group envisions some "bike only" trails. I'm not clear if these would be newly made trails or merely designating already existing trails. I think it's a poor idea to designate any existing trail as a bike only - or an anything only trail. Second, in project 13, while I'm all in favor of a trail from Silverton to Molas Lake, I'm not at all sure there is a path that can be done without blasting. This trail needs to be planned very well to avoid making it too difficult for the average Joe. Finally, the Bear Creek trail is not easily accessible from the north. The Hardrock trail

with a bridge over Mineral creek or the road from the big bend of 550 south are by far more appropriate. Perhaps I've misunderstood the idea of the ruby trail. I wish you the best of luck in getting some of these things done.

Thumbs up to the trails plan. The area (old) trails are perhaps our greatest asset. It is cool to see them get formally developed. Hiking, running, biking, bird watching, enjoying nature...what is better?

None provided.

Columbine Lake should be non motorized. I understand motos were utilized to create the trail, however this is an extremely fragile area as you travel into the alpine tundra where there hasn't been much of a trail in previous years. This is one of the few places that the serious runner and hiker can go with minimum traffic. Motos are a dangerous aspect, especially as you drop into the steep switchback. Foot traffic and mountain bike traffic is increasing significantly each year. Protect Columbine and the amazing alpine tundra and watershed. Yeah new trails in town!!

Overall I like the direction the new trails plan is heading. I personally am an advocate for trails that all abilities can ride. The loop around town with spurs heading out in different direction is a great idea. Connecting to the CT should be considered a priority. Piecing together a route up to Molas lake would be great as would developing the beginner level trails in and around Molas Lake campground. As for changing the designation on Columbine lake trail to quiet use could be a problem unless there are plans to provide a new sweet single track to a sweet lake for the moto crew. Keep up the good work !

Thank you for the opportunity for the public to comment upon the Silverton Areas Trail Plan. I'm commenting in my role as the Program Manager for San Juan Citizen Alliance's Land and Forest Protection Program and with that I'm not commenting on my individual ideas and/or concerns, but rather from a wide focus of public access and use of their public lands, especially federal public lands including the US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management. I understand that this is an initial step from the Town of Silverton and San Juan County residents to express their preferences, suggestions, concerns and so on per trails in SJ County and furthermore that there are many steps ahead should any of these trail plans be formalized. Of course, there are different processes for the various jurisdiction varying from the Silverton town council's approval, for example, of a new trail or trail designation, to the "other end" of the spectrum that would necessitate a National Environmental Policy Act process (and EA or EIS) for projects/plans on SJ National Forest or BLM lands. It is critical for all of us to remember that these BLM and Forest Service lands are held in joint ownership by all Americans, and therefore local interests and desires don't necessarily "carry the day", though obviously they are exceedingly important in the decision making process. We applaud the town, the county and the residents in being pro-active in planning for the local trail system and considering a wide variety of concerns as they engage the project including economic, environmental, societal/social, and so forth. In general SJCA doesn't become deeply involved in "per trail" designations or locating, rather we ask and consider some wider questions per the trails planning process and project, and that is the light in which our following comments are written. 1) We suggest that a very thorough investigation and consideration be given before moving forth with a National Scenic Trail designation for the Hard Rock 100 Trail for a couple reasons. A NST designation is a Congressional action, and due to that magnitude it may be difficult to obtain, but more importantly, once obtained it will be virtually impossible to reverse - after all, it "would take an act of Congress." The "just over the hill" Calico Trail in the Dolores River watershed might be an example to heed, as though the Calico Trail is "only" a National Recreation Trail (not requiring an act of Congress, but rather a Secretarial designation usually) it has faced a number of challenges related to it having a NRT designation. As it turns out, when the Calico was first designated a NRT decades ago it included motorized use and in that era the motorized use was very minimal. However, when we 'fast forward' from it's NRT designation to the present we find that motorized use has expanded greatly and that the motorized vehicles are vastly more powerful. The result? The upper Calico Trail is now completely closed to ALL trail use and has been for a couple of years because it's location, design, elevation, etc. have not been appropriate for the amount and type of motorized. Certainly the idea with Hardrock 100 trail would for it to become motorized route, however, we believe the lesson from the Calico is likely that any type of essentially permanent (act of Congress) designation should be VERY closely examined before being pursued - frankly, once it's done, you've got it forever! 2) The SATP includes a vast amount of info and amounts and I certainly do not profess to have reviewed and read every sentence and pored over every map, however, my strong sense is that every non-motorized trail (or very close to it) is also open to mountain biking. This approach is most likely not a good solution for almost anyone involved, especially the non-mtn-bikers. It needs to be recognized that there are quite different non-motorized uses with the bikers (at least 50% of the time - the downhill) travel much more quickly than hikers and that bikers can not respond as quickly as hikers when they need to stop, hop off the trail, etc. While certainly some of these trails can and should be co-use for hikers and bikers, it is a recipe for conflict (and injury) to have mtn biking as an allowed use on all non-motorized trail. One doesn't have to look too far away (as in Durango) to see where

certainly trails such as the Junction Creek/Colorado Trail from it's terminus on up is now a trail that many hikers refuse to engage and feel "pushed off" from due to heavy use of bikes, especially fast moving downhill bikers - plenty unfortunately with "me first" attitudes. In the long run there likely will become a significant backlash against bikers if all trails include bike use - this is probably a situation almost everyone would like to avoid. As well, remember that both the BLM and USFS have standards for trail design that promote safety and sustainability - the assumption that a hiking trail on federal lands (OUR lands) is suitable for hiking is simply not factually accurate. 3) There appear to be some trails that are suggested to bring into the trail system that are user created trails and that is problematic in many ways. Readily adopting user-created trail is a recipe, or more specifically an invitation for specific interests to build (or being to build) a trail with the assumption it will become a USFS or BLM system trail. Obviously this can cause a proliferation of trails across the landscape that are built all at the discretion of private or individual or other special/specific interests. Most usually these trails are not "built" to standards for safety or sustainability, etc. My understanding is that an example of this is the trail leaving the Opus Hut area with a general northward trajectory towards Columbine Lake. I have not been able to locate this map on any federal lands map and the last time I "poked around" that locale it certainly wasn't apparent as a system trail that was decided upon, decided upon and implemented as part of a federal lands NEPA process. Such trail proliferation as these is very problematic. Perhaps a trail off of the Ophir Pass Road to/towards the Columbine Lake trail is a good idea, however, a "pirate" trails building effort (assuming that this is indeed the situation) is ill conceived, inappropriate and in fact illegal. Rewarding unapproved trail building in this landscape is not a precedence that is a good fit for a Silverton trails plan as it most likely will, as in numerous other locales, be determined in the long run to be problematic in terms of it's location, maintenance expense/time, sustainability and so on. Most often a professional trail designer/builder would not choose a route location/design chosen by a user-builder. Thanks again for the opportunity to comment. We have some concern as to how these public comments will somewhat "retroactively" influence the plans design at this stage of the process, but we plan on remaining involved in the process in behalf of the general public and the many SJCA members who are residents of SJ County. Thank you,



I am opposed to the plan as proposed - I have sent an email with a full explanation to the Standard and to lbranner@silverton.co.us. A summary: I don't have any suggestions to keep mountain bikers on the designated trails, but I do have one idea to keep us hikers a little safer on the trail - whenever a mtn. biker is riding downhill (usually very fast) and encounters a hiker, the mtn. biker will dismount their bike and the hiker and the biker will walk past each other. Following the same procedure going uphill would be nice too, but not as necessary since there is usually much less speed involved. I'm also not in favor of trying to connect all the trails in the high country. **ADDITIONAL COMMENT SUBMITTED VIA EMAIL 1/15/19:** As I looked at the "Draft of 2019 Silverton Area Trails Plan," all I could think about was the influx of mountain bikes on the trails like the influx of OHV/ATV's on the back roads in the Silverton mountains. I now look for trails higher up and far from the reach of OHV/ATV's and their noise. And now you want to encourage mtn. bikes to invade even these trails. The bikes are quiet, yes, but the speed and recklessness that I have encountered on the trail by some mtn. bikers in CO and AZ sets me on edge and threatens the peace that I seek and the safety that I feel on the trail. And if the OHV/ATV unlawful intrusion onto the fragile alpine tundra is a problem,

the mtn. bikers can show them how it's really done. Just check a popular mtn. biking area around Sedona, AZ and all the illegal and damaging trails that the mtn. bikers have created there. I just dread what could happen in the mountains if you attract all the mtn. bikers that you hope will come. I don't have any suggestions to keep mtn. bikers on the designated trails, but I do have one idea to keep us hikers a little safer on the trail - whenever a mtn. biker is riding downhill (usually very fast) and encounters a hiker, the mtn. biker will dismount their bike and the hiker and the biker will walk past each other. Following the same procedure going uphill would be nice too, but not as necessary since there is usually much less speed involved. I'm also not in favor of trying to connect all the trails in the high country. I may be only one person to write, but I daresay that there are many that could, to tell you that because of the OHV/ATV situation in Silverton, we have stopped coming into town except occasionally during the shoulder seasons. So, yes, you got a lot of people in town when you allowed OHV/ATV's onto many Silverton streets, but there are many more of us quiet types who now pass your town by and head straight into the mountains. And now if you fill up the trails with mtn. bikes - well, I find it very sad that we who want a peaceful and safe trail on which to hike and relax will have an even more difficult time of it as we encounter mtn. bikers speeding downhill towards us. So enjoy the extra monetary benefits that the OHV/ATV traffic has brought, and look forward to even more that the mtn. bikers and others who are attracted by the publication and advertisement of your trails system will bring, but know also that you are discouraging many of us who have enjoyed your town and trails for many, many years. I think that the charm of your area is slipping away, and it makes me very sad.

I attended meetings and helped to draft up this plan. There have been some concerns brought up that this trail plan does not consider environmental impacts. I think it is important to understand that the plan is a general guide. Final trail design and layout will be subject to all laws, regulations and agency guidelines. If a trail doesn't meet these requirements it cannot be built. What is being asked for is that these trails be approved to be considered for future study and development. Silverton needs this sort of outdoor activity. Especially mountain biking. Mountain biking is very popular and a great activity for both locals and visitors. The idea that mountain biking should be confined to existing roads or to trails in towns or along highways does not recognize what most avid mountain bikers seek. That is terrain that is challenging in areas that also have spectacular scenery. It will be a draw to the economy of Silverton with minimal impacts.

In favor of the plan

I will be moving to Silverton full time next fall. I'm in favor of the plan.

More bike trails please. Less OHV traffic.

I just now found out about the plan and haven't had time to review it. Recreational opportunities are always a good thing as long as all users are considered equally. I will be coming out to Silverton for the 5th year in a row primarily to explore the area in my pickup truck. I wouldn't like to lose access to areas that are now available to me.

I am in favor of the trails plan

<p>My family owns 3 mining claims up in the most beautiful corner of the world - along the Animas between Howardsville and Eureka. I don't mind sharing the views with hikers. I'm not so keen on anything motorized. There was an odd note in the last slide of the "Visioning" presentation. The presentation seems to be about right-of-ways, easements, and some creative use of the term "highway." Anyway - under "What Now?" point #3 is "Don't ask my parents for permission." I'm not sure I'm reading this correctly, but its a little hinky, and makes me nervous - I'm inferring from the rest of the presentation that it refers to 'don't ask private landowners for their permission/consent/etc.' related to the Trail Plan - just go ahead and do it. Whether it effects their property or not, whether it crosses their property or not - just ask forgiveness later if anyone catches it? Boy - if that's the case, there's something wrong with that approach. Will you please advise as to how landowners will be informed or included in this process? Thank you to the newspaper for the fine coverage. Thanks to the town for having comprehensive/accessible information on the trail plan on the web site.</p>
<p>As a member of most user groups and mostly non-motorized, I'm concerned about no motorized single track for motorcycles. Multi-use single track is diminishing. There are certainly trails that should only be hiking and horse, a few more that should be hiking, horse and mountain bike, but also be trails that are hiking, horse, mtb and motorcycle. There has to be some acknowledgement that you can literally hike or ride a horse on any portion of public land! There's far more limited access for 2 wheeled transport. At a bare minimum connection trails should be in the plan.</p>
<p>I am in favor of further trail development around at the Silverton area.</p>
<p>We live in Durango and spend many weekends a year in Silverton. We camp often in the summer and rent houses in the fall and winter. Prioritizing non-motorized trail use would be a big win for my family of five and the friends we introduce to Silverton.</p>
<p>I am very in favor of all of this! As an very frequent visitor and past resident I think Silverton will thrive with more trails and trail activities. I am particularly in favor of mountain biking specific trails! I think it would be so awesome to have that unique thing in this area!</p>
<p>More trails would be excellent. I love silverton and would be more reasons to come over Mt bike then spend some money in town. Food and beverages!!!</p>
<p>Moving to Ridgway next year. The more places to ride, the better!</p>
<p>One of the primary reasons I choose to be associated with Silverton is the backcountry recreation activities, particularly the undeveloped, non-motorized historic trails. I have seen substantial increase in pressure on the backcountry over the last 30 years, with it becoming increasingly more difficult to have a quality backcountry experience due to the quantity of people, invasion of ATV's, and backcountry cabins. A portion of the trail plan, largely that proposed for above timberline, will exacerbate the problem and put even more pressure on and further degrade the high country. I am in favor of the trail plans directly around the Silverton town limits in existing disturbed areas, particularly Projects 1-4, 5 below timberline, 9, 11, and 13. These projects will meet the goals of the Trails Plan and provide recreational opportunities to a variety of users using primarily existing routes without adverse impact. I am adamantly opposed to Projects 6, 10, and the portion of 5 above timberline, as the impacts to the above timberline ecosystem and tranquility are too great. Mountain bikes especially need to be prohibited, as they do not stay on trails, cut corners, and braking on the</p>

steep downgrades rapidly degrades the trails. I witnessed mountain bikers in the upper more primitive portion of Boulder Gulch cutting across the tundra and generally ruining what was once a great primitive trail. Not all trails in the country need to be developed- leave the few historic mining trails that remain as primitive routes!

I personally enjoy non motorized loop trails 12 miles or under.

I am excited to see the potential for new trail development in the Silverton area, since it is long over due. I have lived in Durango for over 16 years and have been active in San Juan county the whole time. I am in support of mountain bike trails in particular since that type of option is severely limited around Silverton. I believe the more interconnected trail systems allowing mtb, the more it will help spread people out and diminish the impact of all users in the huge area around Silverton. Working on pre existing trail systems make most sense in the beginning. Bear Creek, South Fork, Boulder Gulch, Opus to Columbine all seem like feasible projects that could be completed in a timely manner. I'm also excited to see trail projects that could be potentially "shuttled", like the Molas to town, and Red mtn to town trails. These trails MUST BE OPEN TO MOUNTAIN BIKING! There are incredible amounts of roads all over San Juan county and I believe using these pre existing networks for potential uphill access and approaches would eliminate a lot of time, labor, and cost on many of these mtb trail projects. I would also help diminish the impact of more users as well. I would love to see the Hardrock 100 route open to mountain biking as well. Or as many sections as possible. There is needs to be an official hardrock 100 trail since many sections are vague and encourages people to create multiple paths. This could be a huge attraction as it has some of the best scenic, single track in the state. I am disappointed and concerned by the ambivalent stance on e bikes in the Plan. It seems that land managers are unsure how to deal with pedal assist bikes, so they are considered the equivalent of dirt bikes and essentially outlawed from the majority of trails. IMBA, the organization that will create many of these trails in this plan, did a independent study on Class 1 (pedal assist (no throttle), speed limited bikes). http://b.3cdn.net/bikes/c3fe8a28f1a0f32317_g3m6bdt7g.pdf The study concluded that there are no significant differences in soil erosion or trail impact when e-bikes are allowed on trails. It is a lazy and restricted approach to just lump e bikes with dirt bikes. The differences between those bikes are much greater than that of traditional mountain bikes. Please open single track trails for class 1 ebikes! 99% of mountain e bikes are class 1, so there isn't really a threat of "super" e bikes taking over the trails either. Many people who have disabilities would benefit from the option to ride these bikes. E bikes are still new and make up a very small, niche market of bikes so allowing them on trails will be unnoticeable. The Columbine lake trail has been motorized, yet there are no reports of soil erosion or user conflicts due to e bikes. THIS TRAIL IS YOUR CASE STUDY!!! Also, the USFS Columbine ranger district bought an Trek, class 1, e bike that was loaned out to volunteers around the upper Hermosa Creek trail area. The volunteers interacted with other user groups and found that nobody really cared about e bikes. Silverton has an unique opportunity right now to defy the unwarranted ban of e bikes and create an unique attraction to a highly restricted user group. I hope the land managers and Silverton community would try to learn more about e bikes before out right banning them. For more info and IMBA's stance on them, <https://www.imba.com/education/emtb>

Wonderful plans!!!

Please email out a map with new trail systems.
The plan as presented is good. If anything I would like to see a larger number of miles of designated MTB Singletrack. There is already enough trails that are only suitable for hiking and enough Jeep roads for motorized recreation. As well hikers don't necessarily need a trail. Connectivity via bike/hike trails between Silverton and nearby communities is important. Connector trails between town and the CT will also help our community grow in a positive way. Thanks for all your hard work on this!
I like to stay in town and ride trails during the day. I would like to see appropriate multiple use trails available to motorcycles. Trail etiquette is very important and should be promoted in town, in restaurants, bars, and hotels. Signs all over the trail system are obnoxious.
It would be awesome to have some more designated mountain bike trails that feature up and down routes
Mountain biking only trails would be a great and wonderful consideration.
Keep them open please!
Hi, we're part time residents of Ridgway with the goal of becoming full time in the next 5+ years and get up to Silverton often so we wanted to comment on the trails plan - love the plan and would love to see this addition to the community as it's a great benefit for residents and visitors alike.
We'd love to see the trails improved and expanded
I strongly support new trail building and the Silverton Area Trails Plan. It will take years to have a network of new trails so let's get started!
Always, we need more OHV trails.
I feel the need to allow motorized single track and maintain trails. Motorized single track used responsibly and shared with all users.
need to continue legal access to all downtown streets for OHV , need free parking for trailers unloading, need more dry camping areas close or in town
I'd love to see more motorized single track in the Silverton area. I feel Columbine trail should remain motorized and that the illegally built trail from columbine lake to porphyry basin be open to motorcycles as well as mtn bikes. I find the trend of illegally built trails that are then converted to legal mtn bike only trails very disturbing and unfair. other possible motorized connections would be re opening Minnie and Maggie gulch to connect to pole creek, like in the good ole days. Cuba gulch is another option that would decrease Moto traffic on all the pass roads. motorized single track is a legitimate use of our public lands and I've become very discouraged by the lack of support from local federal agencies. Will Silverton buck the trend? I sure hope so.
Ok will do

I hope that ALL recreational activities are looked at in this plan and ALL trails are looked at being expanded. Many people enjoy the area and I hope this is not a plan to try to push people out.
Please keep and increase OHV/Dirt Bike access. My family and I are planning to spend a lot of time in your area for years to come. We're looking forward to checking out the new trail system.
I would suggest that dirtbikes be allowed on existing and proposed trails, particularly single track trails. OHV's bring a lot of funds to the area, we purchase use permits, participate in trail clearing, building & repair. There are high quality groups in the area such as San Juan Trail Riders, WESTCORE, G.O.A.T.'s and Tomichi Creek Trail Riders.
I love the idea of expanding recreation opportunities! Please consider what a wonderful place silverton is for dirt bikes and dual sport bikes.
Need more multiple use access
In Favor....
I support sustainable development of non-motorized trails on public and private lands. I believe they can be a beneficial economical driver as well as provide the opportunity for local community members and visitors a place to recreate, exercise, and thus be healthy.
Mtn bike trails would be HUGE.
While I respect the need to bring in more year round tourist attractions, I would hate to see Silverton lose it's small town Victorian charm. I love the laid back atmosphere as opposed to the hustle and bustle of Telluride.
Largely in favor. Start with improving and signing valley trails: River trail, Lackawanna trail, Rainbow, etc. Closing the lower river road to motorized from Arrastra up would be great.
In favor!!
The silverton area is in desperate need of good single track for mountain biking. People are flocking to rat trails in ridgway and trails near Durango There is so much public land near silverton that is ideal for mountain bike trail development
We believe the proposed trails plan needs further study/ input
I'm in favor of this exciting plan
More trails means more safe outdoor activity options. Would love to see more trails.
Very excited for new mtb trails in Silverton. This will definitely result in us spending more time and money there.
With the mountain bike community that Durango has, providing high country trails would be a massive benefit to our community. And a healthy quiet peaceful beer drinking crowd is what this place lacks in the summer.

I am in favor of the trails plan. I'm very happy to see Silverton working hard to diversify away from it's economic reliance on the train and OHV's and diversify into mountain biking and non motorized sports. This balance is incredibly important going forward and the mountain bike specific trails will clearly bring benefit to the community in the same way these trails have reinvigorated Moab, Fruita and Crested Butte.
I think this plan will help Silverton out in a big way. Trails expand offerings and the trails currently suck in Silverton. Helping the town exceed in recreation not only helps the tourism out but it also expands the desity of tourists out by dispersing them among the different cities in Colorado. There are currently towns in Colorado that have too much tourism, this is a great way to take some of the high density tourism that is occurring across the state and capture a portion in Silverton and help disperse the impact. GO SILVERTON!
I am in favor of the plans suggested. I think it could impact the mountain biking community in a positive way and bring more business to the town as a whole.
I am in favor of the Silverton Area Trails Plan. I think it will greatly improve the quality of the town and give non-motorized users more opportunity for access. Having been on all of the trails listed I can attest that signage and development could be a good thing to help guide visitors.
As a frequent user of trail networks around Silverton, many of which I access from the Rico side, I am highly supportive of the plan. A couple comments: Project #10 - A connector between Columbine Lake and Lewis Lake and Lewis Mine is mostly existent and would complete an excellent loop taking in the Blixt trail suitable for mountain bikes etc. Project #12 - Definitely love the idea! Placing a bridge nearer the Bear Creek confluence with Mineral Creek would also better benefit backcountry ski users who frequent the north side of Sultan Mtn (i.e., "Pumphouse," "Pencil," and other runs), as there is no direct access in the winter without fording the river or going far upstream then back. Project #13 - An alternative to look at might be connecting the old mining road on the north side of Sultan Mtn (by Bear Cr and Pumphouse), which climbs to over EL 11,000', and connecting that around the east side of Sultan, Grand Turk and Spencer peaks to Little Molas Lake. The views would be unmatched and avoid the highway and most private land altogether.
I love the plan!
In favor of the plan and ready to volunteer to implement it!
As a long time and frequent hiker in the area, I'd encourage careful thought about existing uses of trails so you don't inadvertently create new user conflicts where none of presently exist. As an example, encouraging new mountain bike use on steep trails can create safety concerns and social conflict when some users are now hurtling downhill at high speeds while other users are moving at a much slower pace. The plan's recognition that the Ice Lake Basin trails are not appropriate for bike use is a good recognition and a good step at avoiding these types of conflict.
Having attended every meeting my support is 100%. Study as she goes. Late hour fear tactics & inaccuracies need to be debunked! 7
in favor of proposed plan

Pretty sad that none of the plan includes some singletrack access for dirtbikes. Did the committees forget that we help fund the development and maintenance of all OHV trails in CO with millions of dollars? Sad.
I am strongly in favor of the Silverton Area Trails Plan. It would be great to mountain bike an expanded network of trails in Silverton.
I am excited to see various groups and people coming together to work on this plan. I am excited to see an effort put forth to improve the trail systems around Silverton. I am a race director that has created a growing trail running race in Silverton that brings people from all over the world to enjoy the trails around Silverton. Although I am not a property owner in Silverton, I am personally invested in the trails in the area. I have been adopting the Rico-Silverton Trail since 2014 and have been taking groups of volunteers up to do trail work on this trails each summer. Significant improvements have been made to this trail with our efforts. I work closely with the Hardrock 100 to make this trail work happen each summer. My current plan is to continue to work with them in maintaining the Rico-Silverton and the Bear Creek - Putnam - Porcupine Creek trails. I am planning on combining efforts to work with Hardrock in maintaining the Bear Creek trails as the Silverton Ultra Marathon will use this section of trail as well for its race. Also, I am interested in a trail that goes from Silverton to the Colorado Trail. It would be so cool if a trail could go through the Animas River Gorge above the railroad tracks . . . I am very interested in the Bear Creek Trail and the Porcupine Trail and the Putnam trail be turned into a system trail.
Having singletrack trails all around town that link up with already established trails would be a boon to the summer economy. Even think about allowing EBikes on trails.
Yes I'm in favor of the plan!
I'm excited to see trails (specifically single track trails) in the Silverton area expanded and improved. There is great potential for Silverton to see massive benefit from a more well rounded outdoor recreation culture.
I like the plan...
Well, I can't read through a 42 page plan right now, but more non-motorized, rugged hand-built trails open to bikers is a good thing.
I think this is been a marvelous process put together by the community and sharing ideas in order to ask for additional trail network's and make multi use a thing of reality. We can only hope that the federal government when they receive our wish list feel that some of our ideas are worthy. This in turn should help diversify our back country use and our economy .
Not in favor of the plan due to questions about funding appreciate all the work community has done
I feel the plan has been vetted and identifies connections to already existing trails which I support. It will provide a way to better monitor usage and then promote as appropriate.
As an avid trail user I am in favor of efforts to plan, manage and care for our trails in the Silverton Area and throughout SW Colorado. I believe in the power of people to devise a plan that addresses all stakeholders. Overall, the care and longevity of the trails should be the north star when planning trail

use (which equates to what we 'take' from the trails and surrounding area). Trail care is what we give back.
How are you communicating with Private land owners where trails cross private property?
In favor!
Very much in favor!!!
In favor
I feel the town of Silverton can benefit from a comprehensive trail plan without spoiling the serene beauty that many people fear is being threatened. There is a vast amount of space in this area that can be allocated for trail development that will allow for various users to enjoy without being over crowded. A well thought out plan with designated user groups and directions should provide enjoyable recreational opportunities for many people. Additionally, the economic stimulation will become more diverse and not so dependent on the train and OHV's.
In favor of the plan.
I am excited to see silverton expanding summer and winter activities around the community. However, part of what makes silverton so cool is the still authentic feel of the town. I'm afraid if these plans go through that silverton would loose its remote feel. I fully understand that the community needs to do something to bring money in. Building trails and bringing people that will respect silverton for what it is, is the best option to keep silverton authentic
I am in favor of any plan that allows people access to the amazing landscapes in and around Silverton, while limiting damage to the existing environment. Trail building for mountain biking would be amazing and would create new revenue for Silverton. I'm also in favor of limiting motorized off road vehicle access. I've been skiing, climbing, and traveling around Silverton since the early 90's and have seen a HUGE increase in motorized vehicular travel in the San Juan mountains. This traffic has created many "trails" in fragile areas and ecosystems and have increased the degradation of the areas affected. Not only this, it has also created back country camps that are a fire hazard, and a rubbish pile. Most of these "camp spots" are littered with trash and rubbish. Keep Silverton green, keep it friendly, help the environment recover from the mining era, and create an outdoor recreational environment that provides meaningful access done in an ethical manner. Chur
Thumbs up on the plan! Nice work to all involved!
The trails plan was executed very methodically with community input & community desire driven through the entire process. The team should be proud of that!
I am definitely in favor of the plan as proposed. It would be awesome to see more multi-use trails in the Silverton area. As an avid mountain biker I would definitely utilize a trail system in the Silverton area!
Boulder and Bear Creek are the water sources for Silverton. Make sure there is signage for the Boulder Creek and Bear Creek drainages indicating that they are the water sources for Silverton and to keep the trails clean and not pollute.

Love the idea of Silverton Mtb destination.
More mtb trails will bring me to Silverton more often
I feel the Silverton Area Trails plan is a great step in developing and securing trail access, location, easements, etc for all users of the public lands in this beautiful area.
I am in favor of the plan
The plan looks great! Let's make it happen and do it in a way that is sensitive to all constituents and more importantly, the environment.
I am in favor of the plan!
Sounds awesome, let's do it!!
I am in favor of the proposal! Thanks!
What is the best way to receive updates of this work and participate in further planing meetings?
I am very much in favor of the proposed plan as it is created.
In favor!
This all looks great, mountain biking is advancing rapidly as a sport, and the inclusion of e-bikes is going to be very important moving forward. Bike technology is getting better, which means people will be looking further for their next MTB adventures. As a proven economic driver, the mountain bike infrastructure and community will help make Silverton great again as long as the trail development can look into the future of the sport. Durango and Trails 2000 are being left in the dust, and are no longer, in my opinion, considered a true mountain bike destination. The community has rifted in too many ways and cannot see past small differences in opinion. Silverton is the new frontier. Thanks to everyone involved for developing a plan that includes, healthy, and sustainable growth plans for a rad mountain community. Silverton is much greater than where the train ends and motorsports begin.
In favor of current plan
I am in favor
multi use! I think it is great
In favor of proposed plan
Strongly in favor of more non-motorized trails. As a homeowner in Silverton for 45 years, I have seen a steady deterioration in the quality of backcountry experience due to motorized recreation, both winter and summer.
In favor!!!!
I am in favor of the trails plan. For economic development and diversification this would be great for our community. Particularly those who don't have cush government jobs and benefits but who would like to see their employment options grow as a means to be able to stay and live here with their

families. After the drought and 416 fire it is prudent that local government support initiatives like this if the community is demanding/asking for it.
I'm not sure if it's been specified, but it would be great to have a range of difficulty for the trails, specifically some beginner-intermediate level mountain biking options. Given that the natural terrain is steep, rocky, and narrow, it's tough to find any single-track that a beginner mountain biker can tackle (other than jeep roads, which I avoid due to increasingly high traffic). Other than that, I think this is great!!
Please pursue non-motorized multi use opportunities. Thanks for all you do . There is plenty of motorized opportunity . MTB Anvil Ridge IMBA EPIC
In favor. More mountain biking trails would benefit the local economy and the people!
Looks good, the more the merrier. More Mtn Bike trails in the future.
In favor!
I think all of the proposed trails are well thought out and would be beneficial to the town. we need more finished single track loops for bikers, hikers and horses. I think all of them would be great multi purpose except proposal 4. this area is mostly north facing, shaded, forests, that generates large areas of moss and peat. I feel that bike and horse would GREATLY damage this trail due to the perpetual wetness of it and it's fragility. I saw one bike track in there this summer and it remained visible for over a month. I do not believe this trail can handle anything other than foot traffic. everything else, especially boulder mountain would be amazing for our town for single track use. I appreciate all of the hard work and thought that went into these trails. thank you!
Any enhancement of the trail system for foot traffic and the provision of supporting infrastructure is most welcome.
Im in favor of the plan and it is long overdue to enact yet another trail plan developed by residents and local officials. A balanced development of new trails and resurrecting some of the old shall improve structured recreation for the future whilst perserving history
This is economic driver we need.
I am fully supportive of the trail plan, and excited to see this plan come through. As an avid mountain biker, I enjoy biking around Silverton, including trails such as Bear Creek, Columbine Lake, Boulder Gulch and Dive Basin. For biking and hiking, Silverton has a unique landscape to work with with massive vertical relief, more than any other area in Colorado, and excellent terrain. Having more trails would help increase user visits and create sustainable trail design increase traffic to the area which will help the economy. With the Hermosa Creek Fire, there was an influx of riding into Silverton this year which shows that the interest is there. Areas such as Crested Butte and Monarch show that high alpine biking and hiking are very popular and can support a summer economy. In order for this plan to succeed, there should be a full time employee that is brought in to lead all trail design efforts. Without this, it is left up to volunteer work, which while is cost effective, can be challenging to create sustainable trails and will likely mean years of additional upkeep if the trails are not outlined correctly. The outdoor leadership academy also could conduct trail design classes, which

<p>happened in Durango with Trails 2000 this year. As for the specific proposals, Projects 1-4 should be prioritized within the next 3 years for success, and then plan 7. Plan 6 should be modified to create a new trail alignment for the trail up from velocity basin. Also Boulder Gulch should be kept as a multi use trail and no bike specific trail is necessary as multi use has shown as possible in areas such as Crested Butte. I am not of the opinion project 5 will be sustainable for Silverton and should not be considered. Lift access on Kendall Mountain will not attract bikers, as areas such as Purgatory have already beat Silverton to the punch on this. Silverton should wait until Purgatory has established themselves as sustainable biker visits and a new area is possible. I would expect this should take 5-10 years to assess. Silverton should focus on pedal trails primarily and loop designs, including plans 1-4 and plan 7. Silverton should focus on the top two priorities, 1) create more blue level bike trails. This will increase the trail visits as it is accessible to all users. 2) Create sustainable climbing trails with < 10% gradient. This will allow users to access harder trails. Today, there are no trails that have <10 grade for climbing, which is the ideal for biking. These should be considered and prioritized as they will allow the best access for bikers, as well as hikers. It will also make trails more attainable for users, as Silverton is high alpine and steep gradients are not for all users.</p>
<p>I would prefer less motorized vehicles on trails. I like the wilderness atmosphere</p>
<p>I believe sustainable and appropriate trail building will not only increase and improve local revenues but also enhance opportunity for quality of life in and around Silverton. Recreational tourism is growing across the state and considering the lack of any defined single track trail networks in the Silverton area and also considering an almost detrimental over population of side-by-side and off-road vehicle presence that often in conflicts with people looking for non-motorized recreation , creation of single track trails could decrease such conflict while creating tourism opportunities and bolstering the local economy .</p>
<p>Sounds sweet!</p>
<p>Like the plan</p>
<p>Yay trails! I am thrilled about the progress on this project and the direction Silverton is headed for trail enhancement, development, signage and marketing. Outdoor recreation is a huge, largely untapped resource in our community. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS SUBMITTED VIA EMAIL 1/7/19 Dear Town of Silverton and San Juan County representatives, I would like to express my enthusiastic support for the trails project trying to "get off the ground" in our community and encourage all of us to find a way to work together in support of community outdoor recreation. Improving, enhancing and expanding our trail network is a great idea! Trail users are not only people who come to town, but they are US, the residents of Silverton and our children. We live in this remote and challenging location in order to have access to our stunning mountains, rivers, and high alpine lakes. Trails systems, with signage and outreach education, not only provide access to these beautiful natural areas, but they also make that access safer, easier for the young and old, more enjoyable AND it creates opportunities for our community to share our wonderful outdoor spaces with others. Trail usage is good! People who are outside together enjoying physical activities are happy, healthy, and resilient. That's what we want for our community. A lot of people on trails, well, that's a challenge, but not a bad one! And the more trails we offer, the more people will disperse. The more people who visit Silverton, the more likely a few of them might decide to stay, enroll their children in our small</p>

and underfunded school, coach a team, volunteer on the trails effort or start a business here. The San Juan Mountains do not belong to a handful of individuals. They are not personal property or someone's own backyard. Their wildness is for everyone to enjoy, even though that may mean that I never hike up to Ice Lakes in July or August any more. In the past few years, I have had also had to make many compromises for the ATV's who clog up some of my favorite places on the river road, the Cunningham Gultch road and even on town streets. I opposed their presence in our town, and I have made adjustments to accommodate their dominating force in our summer community. I think it is very appropriate that we now turn some of our collective attention and resources to providing peaceful alternatives for people who want to enjoy nature in a quieter way but may not be willing or able to track down an old elk trail up Ohio Peak. I do agree that there are issues and challenges to resolve and overcome. Yes, there will be an impact on animals (as I'm sure all of the backcountry, high alpine roads with ATV's have on animals and plants as well). There will be policies, procedures and protocols to consider when planning usage and mapping routes. We will need to consider how to manage the increased usage (should that prove to be a problem) as well as how to manage the trails themselves for long term sustainability. But I do not, and we should not, consider those challenges dead ends. Foreseeable and unforeseeable problems are not a reason to debate and divide the people who are most effective and creative when they are working together to SOLVE those problems. Yes, there are a lot of questions left to ponder and possibly answer: What compromises can we make? How can we share some of what we love for more of what we love? How can we manage the inevitable population growth (and dare I say, encourage some population growth?) in our area to make the most of what's here for the people who actually live here? What is the appropriate balance for the different users-- motorized, nonmotorized, bikers, riders, walkers and strollers? How will we keep some of our favorite spots a secret? But before we trample the idea of more trails for our community for fear of all the problems that may arise, let's build some and embrace the interesting and healthy problems together. Thank you for your service,

I am in support of the trails plan!

Keep up the good work

I utilize the Alpine Loop/OHV roads in the summer and am NOT against OHV, it is an important part of our culture and economy. However, I ALSO hike, backpack, and mountain bike on the non-motorized trails in our county. I would like to see more financial investment and commitment to non-motorized trails (especially mountain bike trails) because it would greatly improve quality of life and recreation opportunities for us locals, and if marketed correctly, could make Silverton and San Juan County a mountain bike destination for tourists. Mountain biking is a growing activity and has more participants than ever! Our OHV trails/roads are world class and I would like to see our mountain bike trails and other non-motorized trails grow and reach that world class status as well. Thank you all for your hard work !

Wow, I am very impressed with quality of this trails plan and am grateful for all the time the committee and other interested constituents have put into it. It's future forward, but in a way that shows significant respect for the region's amazing natural and cultural features and multiple nonmotorized user groups. My comments are mostly focused on overarching, big-picture ethos 'stuff:' 1. Protection and preservation of the region's natural and cultural features should be at the forefront of all trails planning and development, and should preclude all recreation development. These features should be preserved based on their inherent value alone and additionally they are the reasons people come to the San Juans/Silverton. If the quality of the natural and cultural resources are sacrificed, then the reason d'etre of their existence and recreation focused on them is gone. It's a very difficult catch 22 situation, I realize, but so important. The 'can' versus 'should' ethical dilemma should be thoughtfully considered in all development plans. 2. The proposed trails seem to exist largely at one end of the ruggedness/extremeness spectrum or the other, but less trails exist in the middle of the spectrum. Very rugged/extreme trails present the greatest challenges for mitigating user conflicts and preventing trail/environment degradation. Many of the trails described in this plan would be dangerous places for user groups of different kinds to interact, namely bikers and pedestrians. Also, the steepness of many of the trails, that their substrates easily erode, that they are not currently made with features that prevent erosion make them poor places for mountain biking. I highly suggest trail-by-trail assessment of whether a trail can support mountain biking while equitably providing for safety of other users and without degrading the trail. Specifically, downhill mountain biking on extremely steep trails should only be permitted on trails developed specifically for the sport so that the trail can be made sustainable and kept off limits to other user types for safety reasons. I'm not opposed to the development of downhill mountain biking specific trails, but I am opposed to mountain biking being allowed on many of the current very steep trails/routes proposed or shutting off pedestrian access to a significant amount of areas for the purpose of allowing downhill mountain biking. 3. A large land area is under consideration for trails development in this plan, what would represent the 'reopening of' a lot of areas to lots more use than they have seen in 50 to 120 years, or perhaps ever, depending on the area. An inherent value and a value to recreators of many of these areas is that not many people are in them, that they are quiet, that it's a challenge to get to them. This should be preserved. I would like to see specific areas be managed as low-use areas and others as high-use areas, specifically to concentrate users in some areas while keeping other areas less developed and less used. Along this line, I am opposed to the Hardrock 100 route being considered for National Scenic Trail designation. While I very much agree with the descriptions in the trail plan of the route's special natural and historical features, NST status will bring a large increase of users onto the route, as demonstrated by the huge user increases on the 11 other NSTs around the nation. One of the inherent, primary values of the Hardrock 100 route is that there are few people along it in many places/its quiet. NST would change the very nature of the route to its core, eliminating one of its core values. Thank you again to the many people who have put significant time into this plan. I look forward to a progressive, protection-focused future for Silverton that welcomes residents and visitors interested in nonmotorized recreation in the region.

Absolutely in favor of a great diversity of trails around in the area

In favor of the plan! Great work you guys!

I am in favor of the proposed changes. This is a great opportunity for San Juan county and the town of Silverton.
I am in favor
Let's start building trails please, I am an avid user. I would like to enjoy these trail before I grow old! Come on Silverton get with it!
Would love to see more mountain bike trails in the area. Would be good for everyone
Development of this resource is sorely needed and a win win for the community and visitors.
<p>I am happy to see that there is talk of an alternate MTB route in Boulder Gulch. I'm not so concern with in-the-moment use conflicts, as I've never had one in my many trips in Boulder Gulch. Rather, I hope that the current steep, existing trail will be kept/maintained rather than abandoning it in favor of a gentler MTB-friendly grade. On the other hand, MTB braking on the lower, mineral soils of the current trail very quickly erodes the trail tread as well as making it treacherous. I am concerned about downhill mountain bike use on R11. During the early summer of 2018, a downhill ramp/jump was built with many stones behind a blown down conifer. Downhill braking also enhanced erosion during the prolonged dry spell in June and early July 2018. I would suggest discouraging mountain bike use on C04 and C05. These very steep routes hold up well enough under moderate pedestrian use, but even light mountain bike use leads to destructive, erosional braking, as well as cutting of tight switchbacks. I saw repeated evidence (and took photos) of this last summer. I suppose my common points in the above is to avoid downhill mountain bike use on the existing steep historic trails, while keeping such trails open. At times, this may mean two trails one steep, historic trail for pedestrian traffic and another made with mountain biking in mind that will hold up to that sports rigors. I would strongly oppose what is increasingly happening in many communities around Colorado and the mountain west where existing steep trails are entirely decommissioned in favor of "mountain bike" friendly trails. Where possible, let's have both! :-)</p> <p>I do love the talk centered around Project 7 during a trails meeting this autumn. I am, in fact, in favor of the development of trails that are more rideable/runnable. These are great! I hope they will be open to all users! While I enjoy the steps of Anvil and Boulder and Cunningham and beyond, it'd be nice to have runnable grades from town other than the Rainbow Trail and the Soda Gulch Trail. Of the proposed projects, I may be the least enthusiastic about Project 8. As someone who frequently runs CR110 out toward Gladstone, the road itself is low enough traffic and scenic enough to do the job of accessing Gladstone and beyond. It's not that a singletrack loop here wouldn't be nice—it'd be awesome—it's just that I'd prioritize other connectors and systems ahead of this one. :-)</p> <p>With regard to Project 5, I would again encourage the development of singletrack paralleling Kendall Mountain Rd. Especially, the lower portions (even just half a mile!). There's a high potential for significant injury to the many pedestrians who use this road from the frequent (and sometimes out of control) OHV use on this road. This lowest section issue might also be addressed in the southwestern portion of Project 1. It would be awesome if Projects 1, 2, and 3 included information and directions for the wider network of trails that spider out from town. I'm amazed how many folks in town don't know about the Soda Gulch Trail. Where as I'm not so eager to prioritize Project 8, Project 9 does remove the much more direct user conflict of pedestrians/biker with motorized traffic on CR 2. Having finally "discovered" CR2A was a big find for pedestrian trail heading up the Animas. (Fortunately, the river-side road from the power plant to</p>

Cunningham Gulch, avoids most of the traffic to this location the start of CR2A.) While I doubt I'd use the full extent of Project 11, it would be nice if there was an official extension... as the existing grade is certainly in use past the Hardrock 100 course turnoff. Project 13 looks great! I hope it's a priority! In combination with Project 12 (less of a priority in my mind), it would make a great loop from town! I'm ambivalent at best (at the moment) about Project 14's designation of the Hardrock Hundred route as a National Scenic Trail. I'd be in favor if it made it more possible for certain portions of the route to receive grant funding (cribbing work on the Bear Creek Trail!)... while at the same time discouraging formal development of many of the off trail sections of the route. Put another way, portions of the route should remain a "route" rather than established trail tread. :-) That said, I would be in favor of an engineered trail solution on the north side of Grant-Swamp Pass, where the race's attention has led to erosional damage. Similarly, a few stretches of well-established, but degraded trail between the Arrastra Gulch Rd and Dives-Little Giant Pass (part of C4) could use some work.

ADDITIONAL COMMENT SUBMITTED VIA EMAIL 1/1/19: I filed comments via Survey Monkey earlier today, but had a few additional thoughts that I'd like to share via email (since I can't add more via the survey). Additional comments: I would strongly discourage development of the intermittent trail up the South Fork of the Animas from Eureka Gulch as considered in Project 6. This is one of the only undeveloped large basin bottoms that remains undeveloped within the Alpine Loop. As such, it should be left as a refuge for wildlife (and solitude). I would strongly hope that this trail not be developed without an EA or equivalent study addressing potential wildlife issues. This isn't building a trail along side or above an existing road or rehabilitating an already well used trail. The "intermittent trail" is hardly that. During an outing in that direction this year, there was no sign of recent human activity and perhaps that one basin in the core of the Alpine Loop could remain that way? Overall, I'm really impressed with the care and detail that have gone into developing the Silverton Area Trails plan. If largely implemented (with some tweaks), it will be a boon to many user groups across a wide range of abilities and, no doubt, benefit Silverton's economy and resident community at the same time. I look forward to seeing what comes next and look forward to working with volunteer teams to help build out the projects! Ps. Sorry about the two-part comment!

Yes! Please add more mountain biking trails!!! We try to visit Silverton 1-2 times per year. The addition of mountain biking trails will make Silverton more appealing for me as a destination vacation area.

Prefer more primitive, less machine built trails. Good luck & try not to make it too popular

Especially supportive of the dedicated mountain bike trail network and the town loop

Project 1- Silverton Perimeter trail This would be a good trail project to start with as most of it is in place. You don't need facilities for this trail, you have them in town. This isn't an all day experience and most people will walk from their house or rental to use this trail. Project 2 – Seems like the streets of Silverton for trails? Project 3 – River Walk is the 1st trail that needs to be completed. All the people in Silverton, walkers, dog walkers, bikes could use this flat trail and it is scenic and can tell many stories. Riparian info, mining info, head waters info. Project 4 – Anvil Mountain – The density of trails proposed in this pod is way too much. Much of this country has old trails in it that local bikers are pushing and fixing. The terrain is too steep for bikes and this trail system would require a lot of public lands input as it is all on Forest Service or BLM lands. There would be wildlife issues in this country that currently gets little use. The only trail I think would be good is the Soda Gulch trail to Niagara Road and then connect to the old County Road on the west side of cement creek. Project 5 Kendall Mountain Trail Network – this is a perfect place to make your mountain bike trails and hopefully some hiking trails. You have the facility and parking to accommodate the use. Can't tell the ownership from the map but work with the BLM and get a system of trails there. If bikers were here, I could hike other trails without fear of getting mowed down by bikes screaming downhill. Project 6 – Storm Peak Massif BAD IDEA. Currently Boulder Gulch does not allow for mountain bike use in it's management plan, although no one enforces that!! This trail is too steep for bikers and hikers to enjoy at the same time. You would make this trail be elite for a very few number of downhill fanatics. That is all they care about with no regard for other users or the resource. Erosion and loss of vegetation will occur when you allow this use. Provide for downhill riding at the ski areas where they can get a ride up because this user doesn't ride up hill. Essentially you would take this trail away from hikers which is so wrong on all levels. Project 7 – Storm Peak Massif – Your write-up indicates to me that this project is already happening. Where is the public input required by the BLM. Is this it? This also is a trails plan put forth from the county, town but really is all about mountain bikes. This type of planning and project construction is about displacement of the current users (non mountain bikers) which is not good management by any stretch of the imagination. Project 8 and 9 – Gladstone Loop , Arrastra Eureka – These are worthy projects. It would be great to walk or ride a bike on this loop away from the ATVs and other motors on Cement Creek Road and County Road to Eureka. Projects 10,11,12 – All on Forest Service land and maybe some private. A lot of work would need to be done. 1st need a comprehensive Environmental Assessment and lots of other input besides folks wanting everything for bikes. This is high alpine country that has a very short season for life of all species. Project 13 – Silverton Molas Lake to Andrews No connector trail is needed to Andrews lake. This is a heavily used fishing and hiking area where mountain bikes aren't allowed. Just go to Molas Lake and then you have the CT trail right there. Project 14 – Hardrock Hundred - Just say NO. Don't screw it up. It gets plenty of use now. The connector trails are Trails and need to be looked at carefully. There are way too many concerns with these and the Hardrock Hundred becoming a sanctioned trail system. This trail plan is basically about Mountain Bikes and not necessarily about all users, hikers, horse users. One should be careful what they wish for. And this plan is too extensive. Focus on the trails right around Silverton and Kendall Mtn.

Wildlife habitat fragmentation, connectivity, and the avoidance of migration routes and seasonal big game concentration areas are a major concern of mine. Big game populations are declining throughout Southwestern Colorado, in part due to human development and disturbance from recreation. There does not appear to be any early and meaningful involvement of your local CPW Area wildlife biologists and District Wildlife Manager in the group that formulated the trails master

<p>plan. Trails based recreation can have significant and long term impacts to wildlife populations without integrating habitat conservation with trail development. I think it is critical to include our local professional wildlife managers early in the planning process to determine the suitability for trails in the planning area.</p>
<p>Any new trails or serious improvement to existing trails in San Juan county would be a great addition to our community.</p>
<p>I am in favor of the plan that was recently proposed. I feel very excited to think that we could have more mountain biking specific trails. I also like the idea of improving hiking trails that could double as winter access for nordic skiers. I believe that this type of tourism will help to diversify Silverton's economy and compromise with all types of users.</p>
<p>I'm in favor of the plan as proposed and I think that more mountain bike specific trails would increase the quality of life for residents of Silverton.</p>
<p>I am fully supportive of the trails plan; thanks to all who put in the effort to create it! We need more trails for human-powered recreationists. We need trails that can accommodate different fitness levels, and we need to develop Silverton's image as a destination for outdoor recreationists (beyond the motorized crowd). I think the trails plan has captured appropriate values, including trying to find trail linkages and connections, creating bike-specific trails, and trying to spread users across a wider variety of trails to avoid over-concentration in a couple of popular areas. I think we need this for ourselves (why we live here) as well as to attract visitors who will value and help us sustain our natural environment. Good trails can be a huge draw for visitors, as we can see from other Colorado towns like Fruita, Steamboat, Durango. I think we've fallen behind a bit. I am concerned about public access being cut off in several areas that have been historically been used, and would like to see continued attention on this issue.</p>
<p>Fully support the initiative, wonderful and healthy addition to the community. Particularly excited at the prospect of the Hardrock route becoming designated as a National Scenic Trail. Yes!!</p>
<p>I have been visiting Silverton for several years. I am in support of more mountain bike trails here. If there are more trails here, I will visit more frequently to ride. There's nothing like post-ride beers and a feed at a local establishment!</p>
<p>I am in favor of the plan. It's needed to happen for many years. There are strong, educated, knowledgeable people in place to make the plan not only successful, but a plan that will be maintained. Silverton needs diversification from the economy to grow-- which includes: hiking, ATV's, Mountain Biking, Nordic Trails, etc... There is room for all!</p>
<p>Growing up in the Durango area and spending most of my life in or near the San Juan's, it would be a dream come true to see some more trails be added to these beautiful mountains. Some big day long epic trail rides that can be ridden from town would definitely be a draw for my wife and I to make Silverton an annual, multi-day destination as we already love the town and the mountains but without the developed trail inventory we haven't spent a significant amount of time there. Instead we often opt for trips to Crested Butte, Telluride or the high country trails closer to Purgatory, still in San Juan County but generally spending our time closer to the ski area south of the county line. As for</p>

<p>trail type, I'm all for natural, hand built or moto built trails. I generally enjoy multi-use (including some motorized) singletrack trails more than purpose built trails, especially in the primitive mountainous environments. While I understand motorized is a very popular activity in the area, a quality, challenging singletrack would be a great partnership with the motorized community and shouldn't be as heavily trafficked as the mountain passes are.</p>
<p>In favor of proposed plan.</p>
<p>I think that the trails group has done an excellent job in coming up with this plan. My primary concern is keeping the inertia going to actually move forward on several of the proposed trails. While Lisa has done an excellent job in coordinating things, I hope that others on the trails task force and in the community will all work to move things forward. I know that I would like to continue to get updates and to be involved with this effort going forward. My only other comment is the lack of consideration for winter trail users, specifically nordic skiing, but also fat biking etc. I realize that there is currently no organized nordic group in Silverton, but there are a significant number of residents and visitors who take advantage of groomed trails when available. I hope that there is a way to consider those users as well going forward, especially with the development of a town loop trail and moderate trails up towards Eureka.</p>
<p>I think the trails plan should focus on the perimeter trail around town, a river corridor trail & the mtn bike specific trail, all directly accessed from town, for now. I don't think the details of promoting all the other trails has been realistically considered as far as money to create parking lots, signage & maintenance of these outlier primitive trails. Many of these trailheads are already maxed out with little parking available now, meaning Columbine & Lime Creek trailheads. I'd rather not see those THs get even more congested. Consolidate the grant moneys to create trails around town instead. That way trail users are staying in town & spending their money in town rather than leaving town to explore other areas & be tempted to 'land' in another town for the weekend.</p>
<p>I feel any improvement or additions to trails in our area would be a positive thing for our community. I could sit here and nit pick this plan but why when anything that happens will be better than anything in the past 20 years. That being said I feel focusing on a local hiking loop and a mountain bike trail system should be top priority.</p>
<p>very highly in favor of a comprehensive travel management plan for the Silverton area trails!</p>
<p>I would love to see more mountain bike trails around Silverton, especially some modern purpose build mountain bike trail that has rocks, features and jumps.</p>
<p>I love coming to Silverton and would come more often if there were more opportunities to mountain bike. Motorized recreational users cause me to go else where at times</p>
<p>In favor of the plan! Bring on the MTB trails.</p>
<p>Looks good! Just please stay off private property. Thx.</p>
<p>Let's do this!</p>

Expanding Kendall could be great. It might afford the opportunity for seasonal businesses to stay open year round. I hope more lodging would become available so that visitors could stay in town. Hwy 550 might prevent people from coming if there is not ample places for them to stay.
No comment
A good plan to properly develop new trails is smart. Off roading is the fastest growing outdoor activity in the country. My wife and I rode many of your trails last summer in our OHV. We explore Ghost Towns and enjoy understanding Colorado's gold and silver industry of yesteryear. We camped in Silverton and spent a lot of money there. Heck we even rode the train to Durango. If this plan is a cleverly disguised effort to limit OHV riding on the trails or in the city I don't support it. We have camping reservations in Silverton in 2019. We will not drive all the way from Colorado Springs if we are not wanted.
It would be nice if we had some sort of river loop - walking/Nordic trail! Like Ouray or Buena Vista has. I wanted to start go fund me for this actually!
IN FAVOR OF THIS PLAN. I lived in Silverton from March of 2014 through October of 2017. I still keep a P.O. Box there. I believe even just a "Silverton Perimeter Trail" will bring more visitors off the highway and spend time in town. But with all the other terrain suggested by all the interested parties and agencies, this plan should broaden the consumer base to cover beginner, intermediate and advanced terrain FUN!
I'm in favor of expansion of trails as proposed in plan a
Build the trails and we will come. You have some amazing mountains in the area. If there were more Mountain Bike singletrack options I would visit in the summer.
In favor! I think this would provide positive growth to Silverton's economy and quality of life. I firmly believe the mountain biking/hiking/intermediate skiing/etc. opportunities would bring more families; younger, more educated individuals; environmental activists; and conscientious recreationalists. This is a demographic that Silverton needs in order to promote healthy, sustainable growth. Get the party rolling! This summer was a perfect example of Silverton's need to move away from the dependency of the train. Keep it local. Even a few easy targets (close to Silverton) achieved in the next couple years could change the economy drastically, especially mountain bike trails, as this recreational draw increases in popularity.
This plan looks good to me, hope it can be accomplished ASAP
I love the trail expansions and would be beyond excited for the expansion of trail networks. I feel like the top priority for trails are going to be the most easy to access from town serving the most people. Additionally I think that the expansion of bike parks, and biking specific trails would drastically improve biker/hiker/equestrian conflict. I would love to see both single track and "paved" or finished trail networks around the town of Silverton connecting restaurants, services, meeting zones, and interpretive areas with basic amenities. I am opposed to making the Hardrock 100 trail network "blow up" though am not opposed for doing work in areas of high erosion, riparian areas, and bridge development. I am extremely supportive of the expansion of Kendal Mountain Trail Network #5 for summer use as a world class scenic mountain bike destination. This is an amazing opportunity for the

town to boost summer economy with great outdoor folks to enjoy and recreate with a common respect and love for mountains. We need easy and moderate trail networks with lift access and trail maintenance. This would hire hundreds in the community for these activities. I highly advocate for the expansion of Projects 4, 8, & 9 as they would provide a wide range of riding styles from horseback to single track catering to hiking, walking, and running. These trails would need to be signed and marked with appropriate trail ethics and information.
I like the initial proposed trails plans and interconnector loops in town to connect to outer trail network.
I'm in support of the Silverton area trails plan and look forward to participating in the trail building and maintenance process
Please keep as much as possible around Silverton non-motorized. The environment and visitors from all over CO and the world thank you for preserving your piece of the beautiful San Juans as exhaust and noise-free as possible.
Over all I am in support of the trails plan. I am also a private property owner in the priority area #7 Lackawanna and #8 Arrastra Loop trail area. Your proposed flume reroute is primarily on my property The Blair Mountain Placer and the Southside with the cabin. When is it you'll be discussing this reroute and other proposed impacts on the on private property in that area with owners? As mentioned I am mostly supportive of trails but also am completely disgusted with our San Juan County Commissioners. Basically there is a disconcerting loss of property rights along with rising property taxes. Will there be compensation offered if there are new trails built on our property? I am also annoyed by the someone that has been building a renegade bike trail on our property without permission. I look forward to further discussion. Regards,
I support the work of the committee and the plans that are currently in development. Please keep involving the Hardrock Run in the process. Keep up the good work!
I am in favor of the plan and would love to help!
the link in this survey to the trails overview does not work. I would like the plan sent to me so I can review it. I have concern with how the mountain bike access has evolved without proper trail markings. Especially in Bear Creek, Putnam Basin and Boulder Gulch.
I'd like to commend the Town of Silverton, San Juan County, and the Trails Task Force for this plan. By focusing on utilizing existing trails and building minimal new ones (and those only when there is noticeable economic benefit to the town as a sort of "home base"), you have set the town up for beneficial growth and managed user impacts, all without undue harm to the land itself. I would urge the Task Force to continue with this mindset moving forward: as environmental impact studies are done on particular trails, and specific details are sorted out, maintain this goal of land health above purely recreational benefits. And thanks for focusing on non-motorized use.
Very much in favor of the plan and interested in helping build trails.

Thank you for all of the work putting the trails plan together. I feel that advertising so many of the trails included in the plan as mountain biking trails is a mistake. There is a great demand for hiking in San Juan County as exemplified by the number of users at Ice Lakes, Highland Mary, Columbine Lake, Colorado Trail at Molas and Little Molas Lakes. Spill over from these locations is resulting in a continual increase in the number of hikers at Hematite Lake, Colorado Basin, Boulder Gulch, and Grouse Gulch which is great because it brings people through town and encourages them to spend time and money in Silverton. Opening everything up to mountain bikes jeopardizes this ever increasing number of foot powered users. I would suggest changing the plan by eliminating mountain bikes on existing trails at boulder gulch, colorado basin, and columbine lake, and instead creating new mb trails in these and other areas. The proposed loop from hancock gulch to illinois gulch has great potential as an mb trail. Initial focus should be limited to trails around town.

As an owner of undeveloped property in Silverton, I am generally in favor of the trails plan. However, I also strongly believe that resources need to be identified and earmarked for fixing all of the deteriorated and broken up sidewalks in town. I've been coming to Silverton since 1985 and have yet to see the sidewalks properly fixed and then maintained. It makes it very awkward for folks trying to walk around town, whether trying to get from one place to another or merely sightsee. So, while trails are nice, the sidewalks are truly essential if the town is to attract development dollars. I certainly want to see the improvements before I sink a lot of money into building in the town. Thank you for providing this opportunity to share my thoughts.

This is a really great initiative! Thank you so much for the support to improve upon the trail network in and around Silverton. It is very exciting as the trails and the adventure of the outdoors around Silverton is what keeps me coming back year after year.

Nice management plan!

Plan looks acceptable as someone who is only a visitor. Glad that etiquette is specifically addressed as this is an issue everywhere especially with respect to two-way traffic and persons with dogs.

The plan is probably good but the link to the plan was broken :- (But I generally believe that sustainable (i.e. long term maintenance plan) trail system are a good investment for the community.

I'm in favor of the proposed plan.

Although I am not a resident of Silverton, CO, I live seven months of the year in Ouray County and I frequent the silverton area on a weekly basis. I admire the time and effort that has been invested into this plan for the Silverton area. All in all, I believe it to be a quality plan and I am excited about having an opportunity to volunteer with the development stages. With that said, I have concern with the amount of area that is under consideration for mountain bike access. I believe cutting the total area of bike access to only one designated location would be of benefit for several reasons. 1) Preservation of the resource. Mountain bikes widen trails, create secondary trails, accelerate processes of erosion, more trees and tree branches must be removed, impact on wildlife and wildlife habitat. 2) wildlife will naturally be scared out of the mountain bike areas at a level that far exceeds what a hiker's impact would be. Areas where mountain biking has been developed have resulted in wildlife being forced out of their habitats, and unfortunately many of these animals have succumbed to starvation. I sincerely hope that those who have explored this plan have researched

<p>this phenomena with association to mountain bike impact. 3) Large, secluded areas become small, congested areas quickly. Imagine Ridgway Reservoir with 100 row boats on it on a Saturday afternoon. Most would say that this would be no big deal because the lake would still be peaceful and plenty of room for everyone. Now, instead of row boats, there are 100 motor boats. An area the size of Ridgway Reservoir gets small extremely quick when that happens. If you take a place such as Columbine Lake, and add a much larger mountain bike culture to the area, the Columbine Lake will become a cluster, which will deteriorate the experience that the resource offers to its human visitors. 3) quality visitor experience. By expanding mountain bike access, the door will be open to have an area culture shift. What this means is that, although more bikers may visit the area, hikers may begin to avoid the area, making it a wash. More accidents will occur on the trails, placing a financial burden on county rescue resources, which will also affect the overall economic benefit of the area. Thank you for your time on this project, and for the consideration of these potential issues. Sincerely, Long-time area visitor</p>
X
I think it's a great idea to continue to grow and preserve public trails in and around Silverton.
As a Colorado resident and frequent visitor to the San Juans, including the Ouray-Silverton-Durango corridor, I applaud the plans to add more accessible family focused recreation to the Silverton area. While I and my friends enjoy the expert-level skiing at Silverton Mountain and atop Red Mountain Pass, there's not as much for families with younger kids to enjoy together. Summer hiking is awesome, but I would love to see maybe some progressive-skills trails for mountain biking that could help introduce the love of outdoors to younger generations in the beautiful and unique setting that only a town like Silverton can offer.
100% in for all trail development
I'm in favor of the plan
In favor of the proposed plan and mountain bike friendly trail systems. With an increased number of trails I know my wife and I would visit more often. They seem like a really great way to recreate in the silverton area.
In favor!
I would like to see both mountain biking and dirt biking trail development in the area. Considering the impact of the #416 fire, we need more options to get out and enjoy nature. What's more, both dirt bikers and mountain bikers need gear to pursue their activities. That gear is expensive, and requires shopping at a local business in case of damage. Different from the normal train tourist, the dirt biker and mountain biker culture enjoys eating at local restaurants and spending other capital. Silverton needs to adopt a more progressive stance on opening trails to more users, or risk further depression of the local economy.
Great effort. Please keep trails for non-motorized use.
I fully support the trails plan. As the plan is refined, I suspect I will agree that some trail should be left to foot traffic only if this is what the majority of the community wants. Personally I am indifferent but

I will support a modification in that way if its sufficiently desired. Whoever is in charge of this project should be promoted or given a 50% raise is my only other thought.
We feel we desperately need more non motorized trails in and around Silverton. Biking, hiking, skiing etc. The ATV traffic is overwhelming and the alpine loop is no longer enjoyable because it is overrun so we need quiet non motorized options. People in town need a place to walk and get exercise around town.
I would love to see more trails designed for mountain bikes, especially intermediate level trails. Left served mountain biking on Kendall would be amazing.
No comment received.
Think it's great what you folks are doing. A trail from town to the CT would be awesome. I also think a network of town trails would help bring more people into town in the summer months for riding.
No comment received.
I am for all of the hiking trails but we need some trails for dirt bikes. Jeep roads are for 4 wheel vehicles mainly
I think that the trails plan has been a fine idea and am encouraged that the community is moving forward in this direction of exploring other ways to broaden the opportunities in the Silverton and San Juan County region. Most of the projects included in the Trails Plan are subject to the BLM and USFS planning processes so the completion of those projects will have a longer timeline towards official completion. In the mean time I would encourage the Town and County in pursuing the trail networks around town, along the river corridors, and in the adjoining valley floors. These would benefit the widest range of non-motorized users and provide convenient trails for many visitors to the area. These proposed trails would dovetail well with existing facilities such as the KMRC and existing trails. There may even be an opportunity to use portions of the alignments for winter nordic trails as well. Let's keep this Trails Plan in the forefront of the planning process as the Town and County review and approve the various upcoming public and private projects. Negotiating easements for trails and access during project review stages is far better than asking for them later or paying inflated prices. Keep up the good work!!
No comment received.
No comment received.
Please do not use this process to close down, or manage away winter OSV, or summer motorized backcountry trail and terrain/landscape access.
Nice work!
I am fully in support of the trails plan and of more mountain biking friendly trails in San Juan County.



Silverton Area Trails Plan

Adopted by San Juan County June 9, 2004

San Juan County
Town of Silverton

4Corners
Planning & Design Group
Durango, Colorado

SILVERTON AREA TRAILS PLAN

Table of Contents

Purpose and Background	3
Previously Adopted Plans Goals, and Objectives	3
Developing this plan	4
Defining a “Trail”	5
Recognizing existing trails.....	5
Public Trails on Private Property	6
Recreational Immunity.....	6
Why trails exist	6
Trail Standards in Mining Country	6
Trail Maintenance	7
Historic Landscape Features	7
Trails & Economic Development	7
Trails as Linear Parks.....	8
Moving the Trails Plan Forward.....	8
Proposed Trail Projects	
Kendall Mountain Interpretive Trail	11
Silverton Northern Trail	12
Cemetery to Boulder Creek Trail	13
Bear Creek Trail	14
Gladstone Trail	15
Rainbow Trail	16
Lackawanna Trail	17
Arrastra Loop	18
Town to Molas Trail	19
Appendix.....	20

Silverton Area Trails Plan

Purpose and Background

The purpose for this planning effort is to help in the implementation of the trail-related goals and objectives as outlined in the San Juan County-Town of Silverton Master Plan as updated and approved in 1998.

Specifically, this plan will serve as a tool in the decision-making process for local officials, as well as in the effort to seek funding for trail projects.

The geographic scope of this planning effort has been the area within approximately five miles from the Town of Silverton.

Given the extensive opportunities available in San Juan County for the use and enjoyment of motorized vehicles, this plan is primarily focused on the needs of the wide range of non-motorized users that includes **walkers, hikers, runners, equestrians, mountain bikers, and cross country skiers**. This will result in a lessening of conflicts between various recreational user groups and ensure that the trails identified in this plan can be used safely. Furthermore, this plan recognizes that it is extremely important for both community relations and the long term economic viability that everyone be able to enjoy the recreational benefits of Silverton and San Juan County. Additionally, this plan addresses some important links for the snowmobile community.

The Silverton Area Trails Plan was funded by Great Outdoors Colorado and San Juan County, with additional funding from the Town of Silverton. The intent of this trails plan is as follows:

- To assist in the actualization of a “County-wide pathway system” as set forth in the Master Plan. The Master Plan has recognized that the primary trail system and the one that is likely to be the most heavily used will begin at and be adjacent to the town of Silverton.
- To be a significant first step toward meeting local trail needs.
- To benefit the state by promoting the creation of links with existing trails (including the Continental Divide Trail and the Colorado Trail), furthering the concept of a statewide trails system.
- To create marked and formally established trails within or adjacent to the Town limits.
- To begin a formal process to recognize long-used trails. The lack of an established trail system is resulting in increased foot, bicycle, ATV, snowmobile, backcountry/cross-country skiing, and snowshoe traffic on the highways and informal trails that cross private property surrounding Town.
- To provide a foundation upon which the locals and visitors can build support for the promotion and protection of trails.
- To help identify additional routes that will ultimately disperse people more evenly throughout the County.

Previously Adopted Plans Goals, and Objectives

A trails-advocacy group, The High Country Pathfinders, was the driving force for the funding and creation of this plan. Formed in 1999, this local group was officially recognized by the San Juan Regional Planning Commission as the entity responsible for making recommendations for trail development and use designation to the Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners.

Trails are a part of adopted planning documents. The following language has been excerpted from the San Juan County-Town of Silverton Master Plan, updated and approved on June 23, 1998.

Page 15:

- We who call Silverton/San Juan County home want to attract a greater year-round economic activity while maintaining existing social, economic and cultural traditions and values. We want to expand economic activities in ways that ensure the community can keep its historical character, its traditional values and natural beauty, while we protect our preferred way of life from negative outside influences. We hope to preserve the unique and historic mining sites, and protect and preserve ecological, aesthetic qualities of the area, enhancing natural vegetation, wildlife, views air and water quality...

Page 21:

- Protect and preserve existing historic structures and sites.
- Provide recreational, educational, and cultural facilities.
- Develop linear parks along streams and rivers.

Page 22:

- Develop recreation facilities, such as campgrounds and trails, which would attract non-residents.

Page 23:

- Goal: To preserve and improve the cultural environment and enhance the quality of life in San Juan County.

Page 30:

- Pathway System – The plan includes the concept of a county wide pathway system. The system will include paths that are used for a single purpose and some that are used for multiple purposes. The users of the system will include walkers, joggers, hikers, mountain bikers, horseback riders, cross-country skiers, and snowmobilers. The primary trail system and the one that will most likely be the most heavily used will begin at and be adjacent to Silverton.
- Former railroad beds should be considered as prime trail locations.

Page 33:

- The floodable areas along the Animas River, Cement Creek, and Mineral Creek will be developed as a park. Part of the park area will be in the natural state and some will be developed. The park will also contain segments of the county-wide trail system.
- Improvement of pedestrian access within the community is encouraged and included as an item that needs further study.
- A linear park containing part of the county-wide trail system will parallel the Animas River. Historic sites and structures will be protected.

The BLM has had a Resource Area Management Plan (RAMP) in place since October, 1986 for the Silverton area. Because the majority of trails included in this planning effort are at least partially located on BLM lands, this BLM document governs the kind of uses that will be allowed and restricted on trails in the area. See Appendix for map and excerpt.

San Juan National Forest, in a similar fashion, has designated Travel Management Areas (TMAs) that determine the uses that are allowed in each TMA. See Appendix for map.

Developing this plan

This plan was developed with the assistance of the Silverton Trails Advisory Group that included the following individuals:

Elly Cote

Carolyn Erdman

Beverly Rich

Don Gurule

Larry Perino

Lisa Richardson

Cliff Pohlman

Terry Rhoades

Chris Smith

This group held a series of meeting to provide direction and feedback to the consultants from Four Corners Planning and Design.

The following goals are recommended by the advisory group. They are the basis for the layout of the overall trail system.

- **Safety** - Develop a trail system that is safe for all users. This involves good design and layout, keeping grades to a minimum where practical, ongoing maintenance, separation of conflicting uses where possible, and development of trails that are separated from the public road system.
- **Access to existing trails** from town itself. Identify links to existing trails so that they can be reached from town without the need to drive. Bear Creek Trail, Boulder Gulch Trail, Whitehead Trail, etc.
- **Access to Colorado Trail and Continental Divide Trail** from town. These two nationally recognized trails are of particular importance to the Silverton Area.

- **Link destinations with trails.** Establish and/or improve trails to places where people want to go. These may include:
 - Scenic overlooks – shrine;
 - Historic structures and sites - Lackawana Mill, Mayflower Mill;
 - Visitor Facilities - Visitor Center, Train;
 - Recreation facilities – Kendall Mountain Recreation Area, Memorial Park; and
 - Rivers and creeks.
- **Loop Trails** - Build loops in the trail system that allow for a variety of experiences for many users and ability levels.
 - **Short** and easy - loops under 2 miles. Loops along the river or up to the Shrine would serve visitors with little time to spare. Snowshoeing and nordic skiing as well.
 - **Medium** - 2-5 miles. These would make for easy day hikes as well as short mountain bike rides.
 - **Long** - over 5 miles. Long day hikes, overnight backpacking, and mountain biking.
 - **Mega** - over 100. Hard Rock 100

Defining a “Trail”

Early in the planning process, the issue came up of what constitutes a “trail”. In San Juan County, the difference between a road and a trail is more blurred than other areas. This is due partly to the steep terrain and many miles of pack trails and mine roads that are used by all sorts of users. Below are definitions that were agreed upon by the Silverton Trails Advisory Group:

- **Highway**

Road under the jurisdiction of CDOT. Open to licensed motorized vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists.

- **County Road**

Any road identified on the San Juan County, Colorado road map. Open to licensed motorized vehicles and all forms of non-motorized use.

- **OHV Route**

County or town roads that have been designated for use by San Juan County or the Town of Silverton for OHVs (ATVs and unlicensed dirt bikes).

- **Groomed Snowmobile Route**

Unplowed roads and other routes that are groomed by San Juan **Snowmobile Club**. According to state statutes, all county roads not plowed are open to snowmobile use.

- **Trail**

A dirt track, typically less than 30" in width, primarily used for walking. Other users may include mountain bikes, equestrians, skiers, and snowshoers.

Recognizing existing trails

The issue of continuing access to long-used trails and roads that cross claims and other private holdings is a concern for San Juan County. Under Colorado law and the federal statute, Revised Statute 2477 (RS 2477), a foot path constitutes a recognized public way. Trails in San Juan County cross both public and private land. By adopting this trails plan, San Juan County Commissioners are establishing the right to use existing trails mentioned in the plan. The right to cross federal lands is authorized under federal law, specifically, RS 2477. Under Colorado law, the right comes from twenty-year continuous use that establishes public use by adverse possession.

Colorado Revised Statutes (CRS) 43-1-202, declares what constitutes public roads, and CRS 43-2-201 states how a road can become a public road. Two court cases in Colorado, BOCC of Saguache County v. Flickinger, and the Zahourek case (which holds that a horse path or trail constitutes a road under Colorado law) are included in the appendix.

Public Trails on Private Property

The users of public trails that cross private property (as well as trails on public lands) should respect the land and its owners. **It is the desire of San Juan County and the Town of Silverton to work with property owners on issues including trail alignment, rerouting and signage.** It's important that steps are taken to emphasize the positive impact that trails have for a community, while minimizing the effects that may occur for individual owners. All efforts will be made to minimize any adverse impacts on individual property owners.

Recreational Immunity

In addition to defining what constitutes a public trail, the state of Colorado specifically protects owners of private land from liability from recreational use on that land. CRS 33-41-103 is known as the recreational immunity statute. If there is public recreational use on private land without charge the owner of that land is not liable.

Why trails exist

Trails exist and are valued for a variety of reasons. They provide access to and traverse scenic and natural areas, providing trail users with a visual and aesthetic experience, often removed from traffic. Trails provide a safe corridor for various forms of exercise and movement separated from motorized traffic. Trails also provide a route to travel to and from various destinations.

Given these and other reasons for the existence of trails and their increasing popularity, various criteria have been established to determine where trails should be located in Silverton and the surrounding area. In some cases, the criteria relate to location of trails in existing or proposed street right-of-ways. The criteria include:

- Activity centers, such as the school, shrine, park, visitor center, train station, museum, etc.
- River and streams.
- U.S. Forest Service and BLM land
- Existing trailheads.
- New links to existing trails.
- Scenic and natural areas, such as overlooks and opportunities to view wildlife.
- Existing highway and town street rights-of-way.
- Abandoned railroad grades.
- Recreational loops, of varying lengths that originate from town

Trail Standards in Mining Country

Typically trails are laid out so that grades are kept to a minimum and steep sections avoided. Two conditions in San Juan County make it difficult to work in this usual fashion: The extremely rugged terrain is difficult for laying out gentle trails. Just about every gulch and draw has some sort of old mine road or pack trail. The presence of miles of existing mine roads, pack trails, railroad grades, and flume lines means that in many cases there is an existing route that could work adequately rather than building a new trail. Their steep grades and lack of maintenance are the main drawback.

The web of existing trails is so extensive and in most cases in such a useable condition that a lot of new trails are not required.

It is a goal of this plan to provide a variety of trails that will appeal to users of differing ability and levels. It will be important to use signage and/or mapping to identify trails by relative ease or difficulty.

Trail Maintenance

Maintenance of existing and proposed trails is an important issue. The large majority of trails discussed in this plan are existing trails. But in most cases their condition is quite poor. The large number of existing trails that are in need of maintenance could be overwhelming in the absence of clear priorities.

The resources exist for funding and manpower to get the job done on a regular basis. Existing trails receive varying degrees of use. Some, such as the Lackawanna, are heavily used year round. Others, particularly those that are disconnected or isolated from other trail sections, get little use. All are in need of maintenance.

Improper drainage is a trail's worst enemy. Without regular maintenance, water will run along the length of the trail rather than across it. Good trail construction at the onset can help to minimize the need for maintenance later on. The preferred method for removing water from trails surface is "rolling dips".

Vegetation is another concern of trail maintenance. Many of the best trails in San Juan County have become overgrown.

The development and maintenance of trails can be very similar to road maintenance work. This is particularly true with major trails and trailheads that require heavy equipment for hauling and spreading gravel, grading, setting culverts. Signs need to be fabricated, installed, and maintained. Bridges and other trail structures require construction expertise as well.

The Town's Public Works Department and the County's Road Department have the expertise, skill and equipment to develop and maintain public streets and roadways and are a potential resource for the development and maintenance of trails.

Volunteers are a vital component to any trails plan. The development and continued maintenance of a trails system will depend almost exclusively on a volunteer work force.

Historic Landscape Features

Structures and dumps from the mining era receive a great deal of attention and efforts have been made to preserve these historic sites. However, less obvious features such as railroad grades, mine roads, flumes, pack trails, trestles, and others receive little or no attention. These features are gradually disappearing due to vegetation growth, rot, rockslides and will eventually be lost to the elements.

Trail development can help to slow, and in some cases, reverse the deterioration. Railroad grades and flume lines can be cleared of vegetation, exposing them once again to the light of day while making for a desirable trail alignment. Trestles and mine buildings can be made more accessible, and funds for stabilization and interpretation can add to the trail experience. Trail development presents an opportunity to stabilize, preserve, and interpret additional historic features that otherwise may receive little attention.

Trails & Economic Development

A well-developed trail system will provide an economic benefit to the community. A diverse trail system that takes advantage of the areas natural beauty and mining heritage increase the number of hikers, bikers and other trail users that visit the community as well as lengthening their stay. Silverton has the potential to become more of a destination for all types of trail users.

Trails as Linear Parks

The 1998 Master Plan states:

- *“A linear park containing part of the county-wide trail system will parallel the Animas River.”, and*
- *“Develop linear parks along streams and rivers.”*

Often trails are routed along streams and rivers in areas that have been neglected, disturbed, or damaged and where fill has been placed in an attempt to control flooding. It is in these areas that a “linear park” should be developed. A “linear park” allows for more than just the development of a narrow pathway. It provides an opportunity to improve the terrain on each side of the trail. In areas along the river the landscape would be improved. Improvements would include replanting to simulate patterns of native vegetation, reseeding barren areas, and the cleanup of debris and other fill material.

Moving the Trails Plan Forward

The adoption and implementation of this trails plan includes the following items:

- **Adopt trails plan** – The adoption of the Silverton Area Trails Plan will require formal approval from San Juan County and the Town of Silverton and should include the incorporation of this plan into the San Juan County-Town of Silverton Master Plan as updated and approved in 1998.
- **Use of plan** – trails included as potential action items represent a wide variety of projects to begin the implementation of this plan.
- **Clear brush** – all the trails need some degree of clearing.
- **Trail grading** – all the trails in the area are in need of varying degrees of maintenance work. “Rolling dips”(dirt bumps that divert water off the trail) are needed.
- **Grant Funding** – Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) & State Trails Funds are potential sources for funding trails. Grant funding is very competitive and requires a well-prepared project, knowledge of the process including application dates, and local matching funds.
- **Print a Trails Map** – Print a map of the existing trails that you want to encourage visitors to use. The map should rate the difficulty of the trails. The map should not include trails that enter the Town’s watersheds. The map could be expanded and updated as trail development warrants.
- **Trail Signs** – Develop a system of interpretive signs at appropriate locations on the trail network that describe the following aspects of the trails:
 - Historic features
 - Natural features
 - Trail length
 - Trail ease/difficulty
 - Allowed uses
 - Etiquette
 - Share the trails message
 - Looped trails

The design and use of trail signs should be integrated with existing interpretive signage.

- **Intergovernmental Agreement** – develop and approve an intergovernmental agreement that includes the Town of Silverton, San Juan County, BLM, and the Forest Service that acknowledges that these jurisdictions will work together to implement the Plan.

Priority Trails Projects-Silverton Area Trails Plan					
Trail Name	Location	Description	Comments	Ownership	Mileage
1.Kendall Mtn. Interpretive	Kendall Mtn. Lodge to looping trail at base of Kendall Mtn.	Starts at Kendall Mtn. lodge; loops along existing road cuts	opportunity for environmental education, short easy trail from Town	Town, BLM	0.5
2.Silverton Northern	Lackawanna Bridge to Mayflower Mill	Follows northeastern side of Animas River and, where possible, historic alignment of Silverton Northern Railroad	Riparian habitat, wildlife viewing, possible loop to the Mayflower Mill when combined with the Cemetery-Boulder Cr. Trail	Town, San Juan Co. Historical Society	1.5
3.Cemetery to Boulder Creek	Hillside Cemetery to Mayflower Mill	Trail connects Silverton to Mayflower Mill by following existing jeep road from Hillside Cemetery to Boulder Gulch and connects to segment of maintenance road behind tailings to Mayflower Mill	Makes attractive pedestrian linkage between the Mayflower Mill and Town	Town of Silverton, Hist. Society, Sunnyside	1.9
4.Bear Creek	Bear Creek across Mineral Cr. to Rainbow Route	Connection from Rainbow Route to Bear Creek trail. Bridge needed over Mineral Cr.	Connector to Colorado Trail from Town	BLM	0.4
5.Gladstone	Memorial Park to Gladstone	Trail follows railroad grade of Silverton, Gladstone, and Northerly Railroad as much as possible. Clearing of vegetation, new bridges needed. Suitable for cross-country skiing	Historic alignment along railroad grade. Ruins of trestles, stone walls, bridge abutments, rails and ties along routes	BLM, Private	7
6.Rainbow Trail	On Rainbow Railroad route grade from Town to Red. Mtn. Pass	Existing trail on historic railroad grade. Easy grade. Suitable for cross-country skiing	Historic alignment on grade of the Silverton Railroad.Viewing of rock walls, ties, etc.	San Juan Co., Forest Service, Private	7.5
7.Lackawanna	Kendall Mtn. Ski Lodge to Arrastra Gulch	Existing trail extends from Kendall Mountain Recreation Center to Arrastra Gulch on northeast side of Animas River	Trail passes an interesting variety of forest and meadow	Town, Private, BLM	3.2
8.Arrastra Loop	Arrastra Gulch	Loop trail starting near the base of Arrastra Gulch; utilizes historic flumes along south side of Gulch and historic road cuts on north side Suitable for cross-country skiing	Trail follows routes of historical interest including flumes, mine roads, tram tower road, and dams. Gentle grade	BLM, Private	3.2
9.Town to Molas	Visitor Center to Molas Lake	Lower section of the trail would follow Mineral Creek, mid-section upslope from U.S. 550, upper section along an historic road located below the highway	Would provide a desirable and very scenic link between Silverton, Molas Lake and the Colorado Trail	BLM, Town, Private	6.8

Proposed Trail Project #1:

Kendall Mountain Interpretive Trail

Project Description

This loop trail would be developed for an easy and handy short trail from town, and to provide environmental education and would make use of some sections of old mine roads upslope from the recreation center.

Opportunities:

Existing road cuts.

Potential Funding Partners:

Town of Silverton, Colorado State Trails Program, BLM

Volunteer/Youth Corps Potential: High

Tasks:

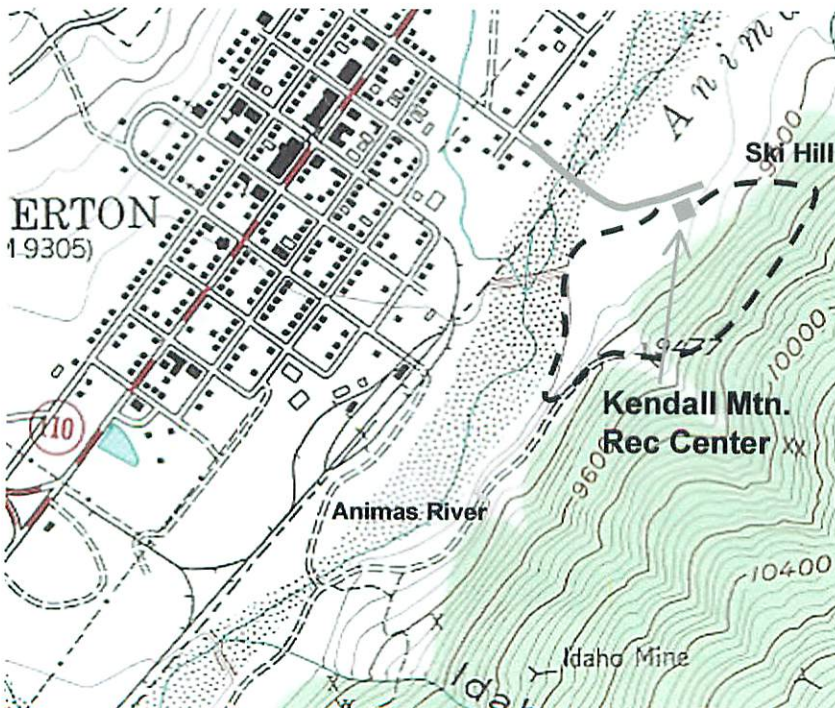
Determine alignment and whether or not it will be located entirely on Ski Hill Property. If the route ends up partially on BLM, start the Environmental Assessment work asap.

Ownership: Town of Silverton, BLM

Length of Segment: 0.5

Trail Type: 3' dirt

Special Features: Excellent access from Visitor Center and Ski Area.



Proposed Trail Project #2:

Silverton Northern Trail

Opportunities:

Interpretation of both natural and historic features since the trail follows the route of the Silverton Northern Railroad as well as the Animas River. It also makes for a new trail access to the Mayflower Mill and, when combined with the Cemetary-Mayflower Trail, creates a loop between town and the Mayflower Mill.

Challenges:

Narrow section will require grading

Potential Partners:

San Juan County Historical Society, Colorado State Trails Program, BLM

Project Description

Trail follows north bank of Animas River and, where possible, historic alignment of the *Silverton Northern Railroad*. Extends from Lackawanna Bridge to Arrastra Gulch.

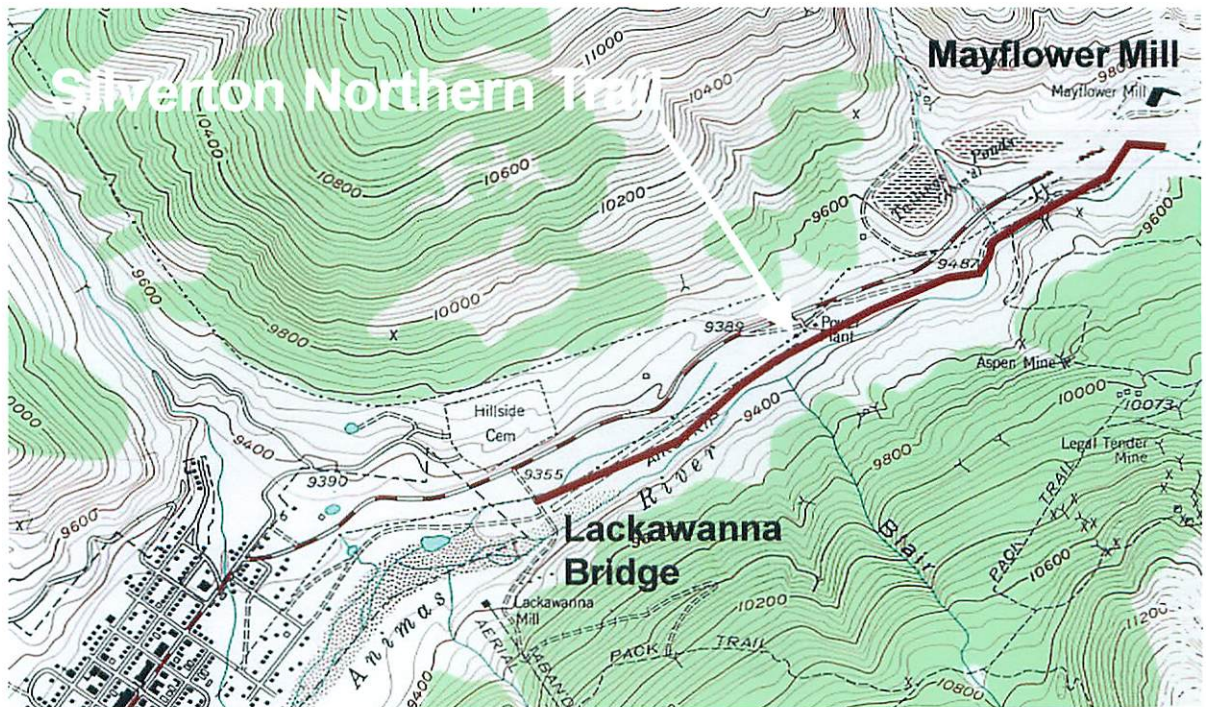
Ownership: Town of Silverton, San Juan County Historical Society, BLM.

Length of Segment: 1.5 miles

Trail Type: 5' wide

Special Features: Power Plant

Structures: none required



Proposed Trail Project #3:



Existing trail behind tailings near Mayflower Mill

Cemetery to Boulder Creek Trail

Volunteer/Youth Corps Potential:
High

Tasks:

- Work with BLM to start the EA work.
- Work with Sunnyside Gold

Project Description

This trail project will link town with the Boulder Creek Trail.

Ownership: BLM, Sunnyside, Town

Length of Segment: 1.9 miles

Trail Type: 5' wide

Special Features: Historic mine roads, outstanding views

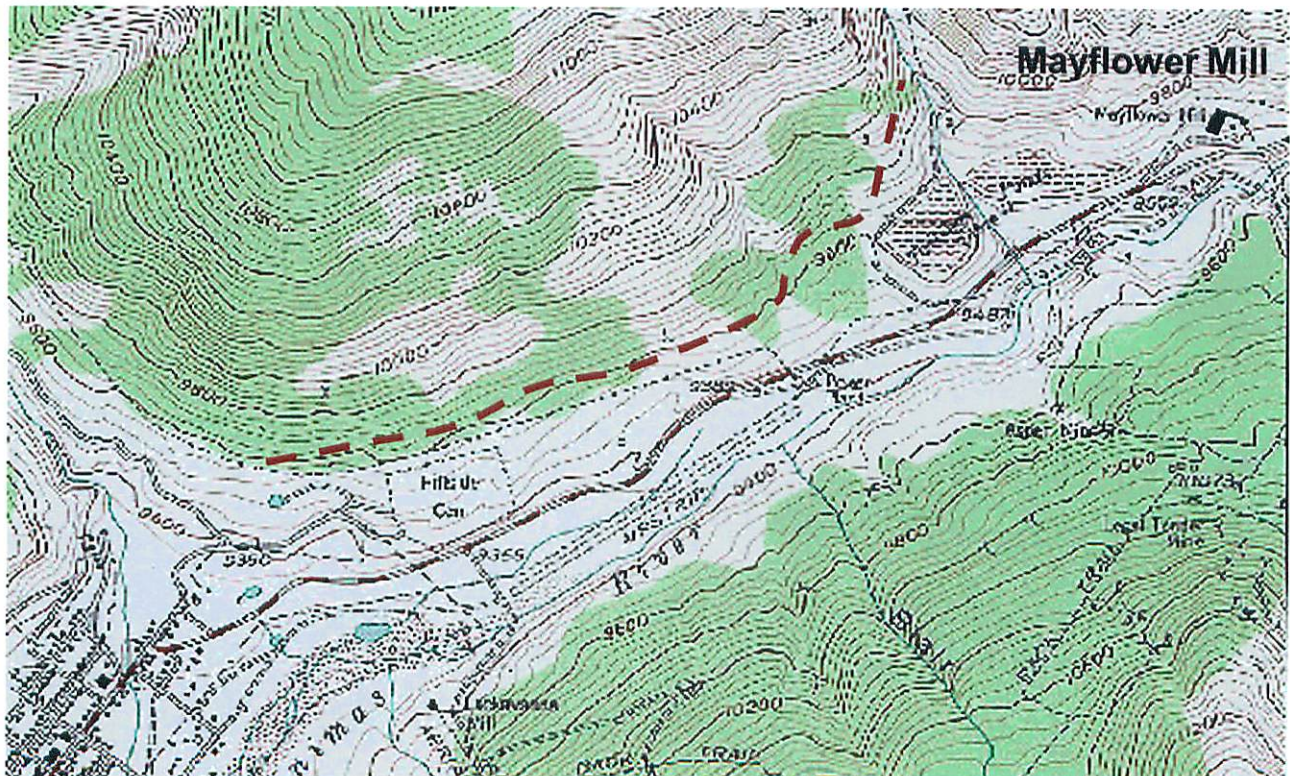
Structures: none required

Opportunities:

Trail route follows a 2-mile section of historic road and creates a new trail access to the Mayflower Mill.

Potential Partners:

Colorado State Trails, BLM, Sunnyside



Proposed Trail Project #4:



View of Bear Creek Drainage
from the Silverton Railroad Grade

Bear Creek Trail

Project Description

This project will connect the Bear Creek Trail with town via the RainBow Trail. It's a short but very important link that will create a good access to the Bear Creek drainage and the Colorado Trail.

Ownership: BLM, Nat. Forest

Length of Segment: 0.4 miles

Trail Type: 3' footpath

Structures Required:

Mineral Creek Bridge

Opportunities:

Possible loop with trail through the North Star Mine property on mine road.

Challenges:

Environmental Assessment work required for bridge and trail approaches. Bear Creek Trail may need to be redesignated as a recognized system trail on the National Forest.

Tasks:

Work with Forest Service to move forward with environmental assessment process.



Potential Funding Partners:

GOCO, state trails program Local government

Volunteer Potential: High

Bear Creek Trail needs general maintenance which lends itself to volunteer efforts.

Proposed Trail Project #5:



Cement Creek with Highway 110 on left, railroad grade on right.

Gladstone Trail



Project Description

The Gladstone Trail will stretch from the Animas River to Gladstone. It follow the grade of the Silverton, Gladstone, & Northernly wherever possible. Most is currently in use by hikers. Most of the route through town is in public ownership.

Ownership: County/Town/Historical Society/BLM/other private

Length of Segment: 7.0 miles

Trail Type: 3' dirt/6' crusher fines

Special Features: Creek/Historic

Structures Required:

At least two bridges will be needed as well as the reconstruction of the trestle.

Opportunities:

Historic bridge abutments in place. Improvements to stream channel in conjunction with trail development. Flood capacity could be increased. Greenway improvements could include planting of trees and shrubs, revegetation, benches and rest areas.

Challenges:

Replacement of washed-out bridges.

Potential Funding Partners:

Local government, Historical Society

Volunteer Potential: High

Tasks:

Work with BLM and other owners

Proposed Trail Project #6:



View of the Silverton Railroad grade just west of town.

Rainbow Trail



Overgrown section on the Rainbow Route that will require tree removal

Project Description

The Rainbow Trail follows the grade of the Silverton Railroad over Red Mountain Pass to Ironton, also known as the 'Rainbow Route'. The property was deeded to San Juan County in 1926. Alternate routes are also a possibility at Chatanooga and the Silver Ledge Mine. This trail project would extend from town, 7.5 miles towards Red Mountain Pass. It could then continue on towards Ouray.

Ownership: San Juan County & Town of Silverton

Length of Segment: 7.5

Trail Type: 5' gravel/dirt

Special Features: Railroad grade

Opportunities:

Tree and vegetation removal could generate funds through the sale of firewood, mulch, or other wood products. Interpretation potential. It also would provide a new trail access from Mineral Creek to town.

Challenges:

Overgrown with large trees in some areas. Rockfall areas also, and a steep area known as Nute's Chute.

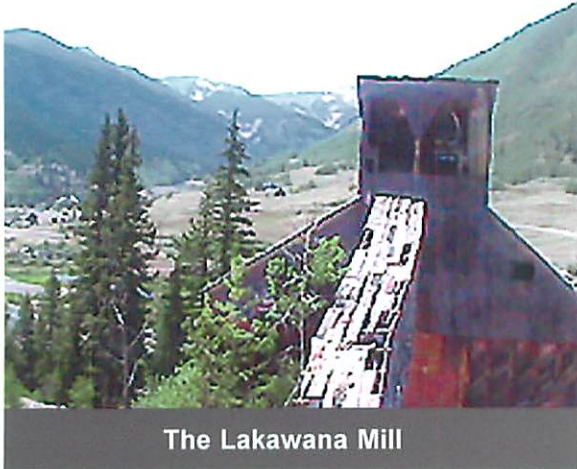
Potential Partners:

BLM, Forest Service, Colorado State Trails Program

Tasks:

- San Juan County owns the old grade so work can proceed with this project without the extra steps that would be required for other trails.
- Work with Forest Service on providing connector trails to Mineral Creek and other destinations.

Proposed Trail Project #7:



The Lakawana Mill

Lackawanna Trail



Trailside structure

Project Description

The Lakawana Trail is one of the more well-used trails in the area. This is primarily a maintenance project that involves the construction on rolling dips for drainage, a couple of short bridges, etc.

Ownership: BLM, Town of Silverton, private

Length of Segment: 3.2

Trail Type: 3' dirt

Special Features: Mine road, flume line

Structures: short bridge

Opportunities:

Interpretation of historic features.

Challenges:

One residence close by at north end of trail. A reroute on an abandoned flume would solve the problem.

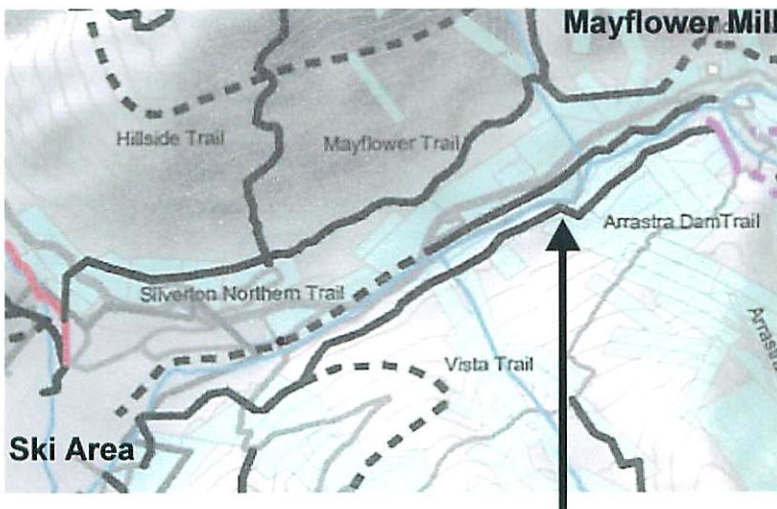
Potential Funding Partners:

BLM, Colorado State Trails Program

Volunteer/Youth Corps Potential: High

Tasks:

- Work with BLM.
- Maintenance & Signage
- Come up with a location for reroute work.



Lackawanna Trail



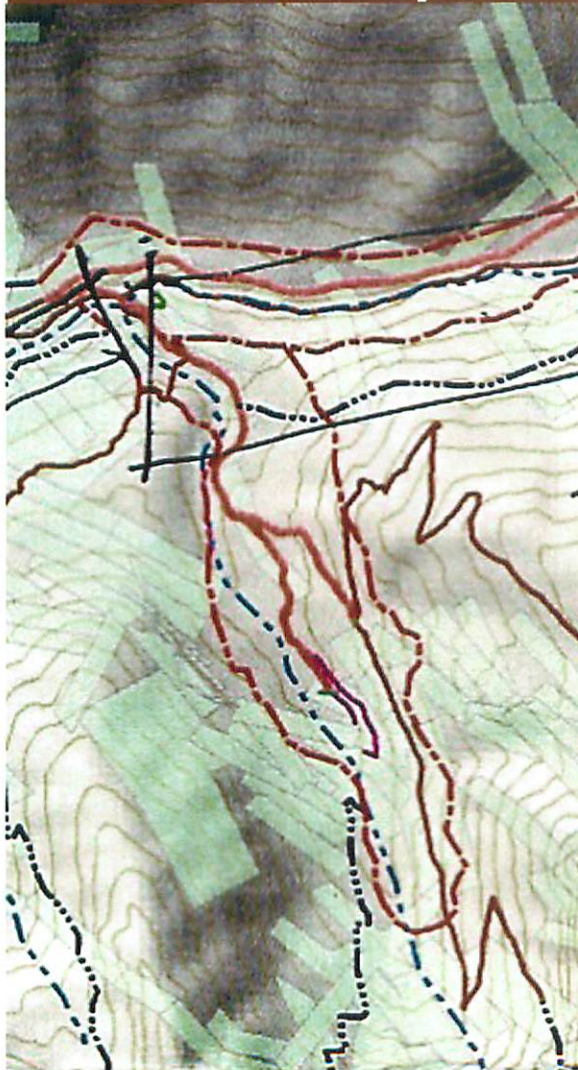
View of beaver ponds from Lakawana Trail

Proposed Trail Project #8:



Ruins of wooden flume in
Arrastra Gulch

Arrastra Loop



Project Description

The Arrastra Loop incorporates historic mine roads and flume lines for the majority of its route. The gentle grades would work well for winter use by cross country skiing and snowshoeing.

Ownership: BLM/Asarco

Length of Segment: 3.2

Trail Type: 3' dirt

Special Features: Wooden dam, flumes, tram towers, etc.

Structures needed:

New stream crossing.

Opportunities:

Interpretation of historic landscape features.

Challenges:

Private ownership.

Potential Partners:

Colorado State Trails Program, BLM, Asarco

Volunteer/Youth Corps Potential: High

Tasks:

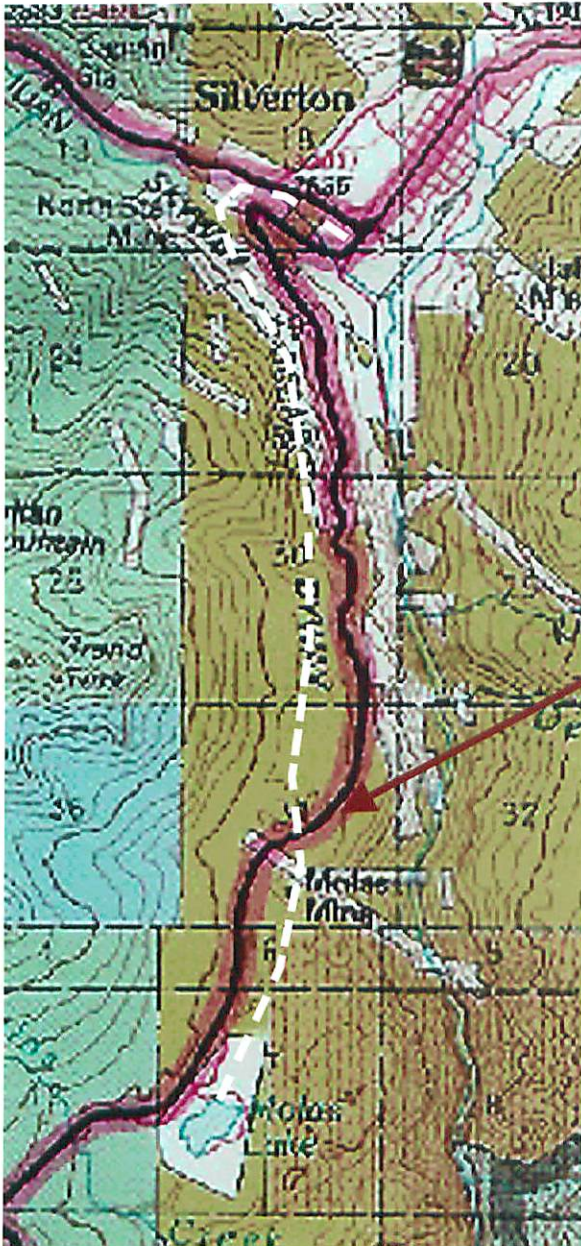
- Work with federal agencies & Private.



Stabilized wooden dam will provide a
stream crossing for trail

Proposed Trail Project #9:

Town to Molas Trail



Project Description

This trail project would link Silverton to Molas Lake and the Colorado Trail. The route would be located upslope from US 550 for all of the way with the exception of the lower portion which would be near Mineral Creek. An historic road would serve as the alignment for approximately half the distance. It may be possible to build this trail wide enough to accommodate snowmobiles. The BLM management plan, however, limits motorized uses to designated trails.

Ownership: BLM, North Star Mine, Town of Silverton

Length of Segment: 6.8 miles

Trail Type: 3'- 5' wide

Special Features: Historic wagon (toll?) road, outstanding views

Structures: underpass @ US 550

A highway underpass north of Molas Lake would be the ideal situation that would allow for safe crossing of U.S. 550.

Opportunities:

Trail route follows a 2-mile section of historic road and near the Molas Mine which could be interpreted.

Challenges:

Environmental assessment work needed for BLM/ Forest Service section. Location for crossing of US 550 needs CDOT cooperation and approval.

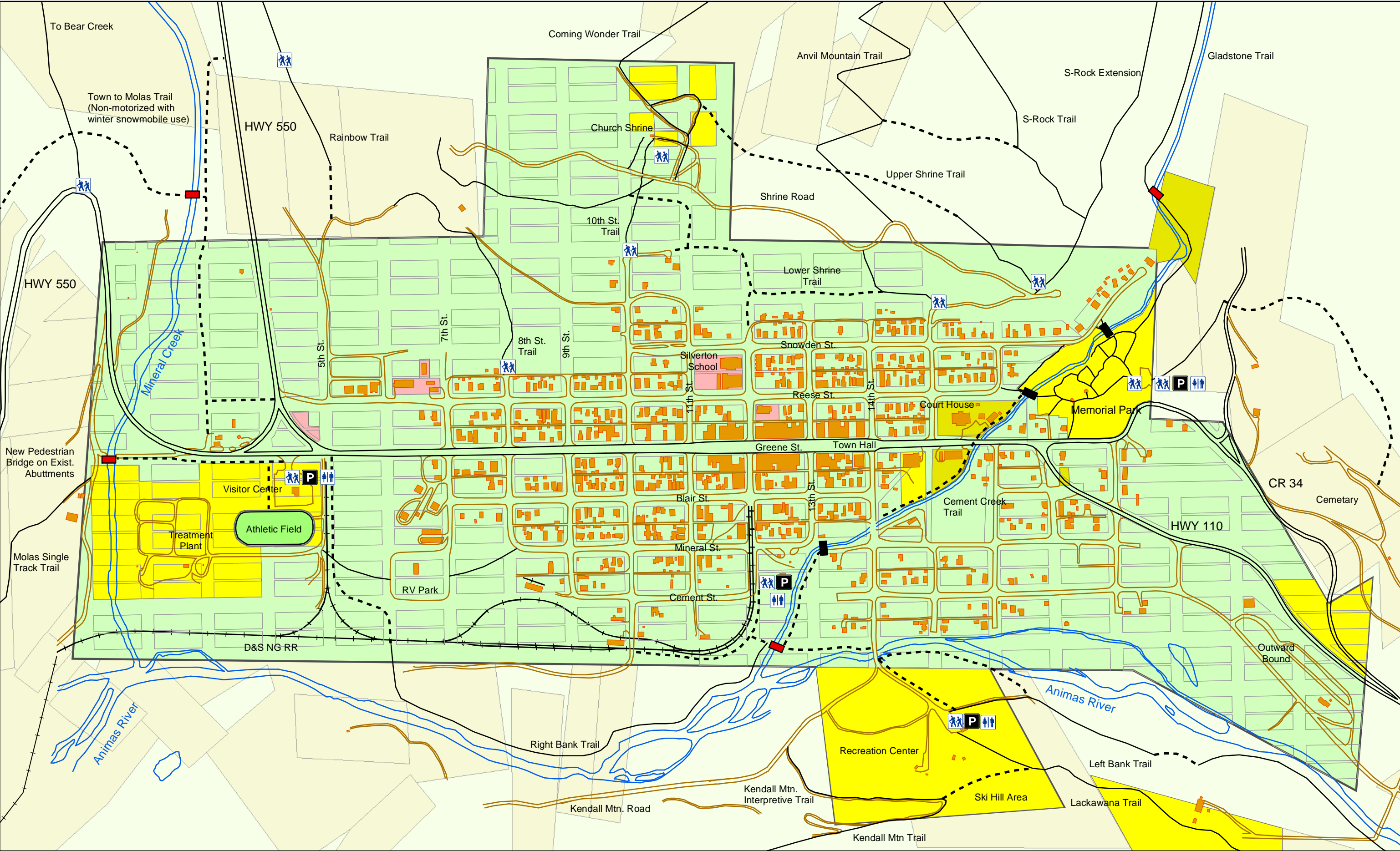
Potential Funding Partners:

BLM, Snowmobile Clubs, Colorado State Trails Program OHV Fund

Volunteer/Youth Corps Potential: High

Tasks:

- Work with BLM to start the Environmental Assessment work.



Ownership

- Other Public
- San Juan County
- Town of Silverton
- BLM
- Claims

Trails

- Existing Trail
- Proposed Trail

Bridges

- Existing Bridge
- Proposed Bridge

Trailheads

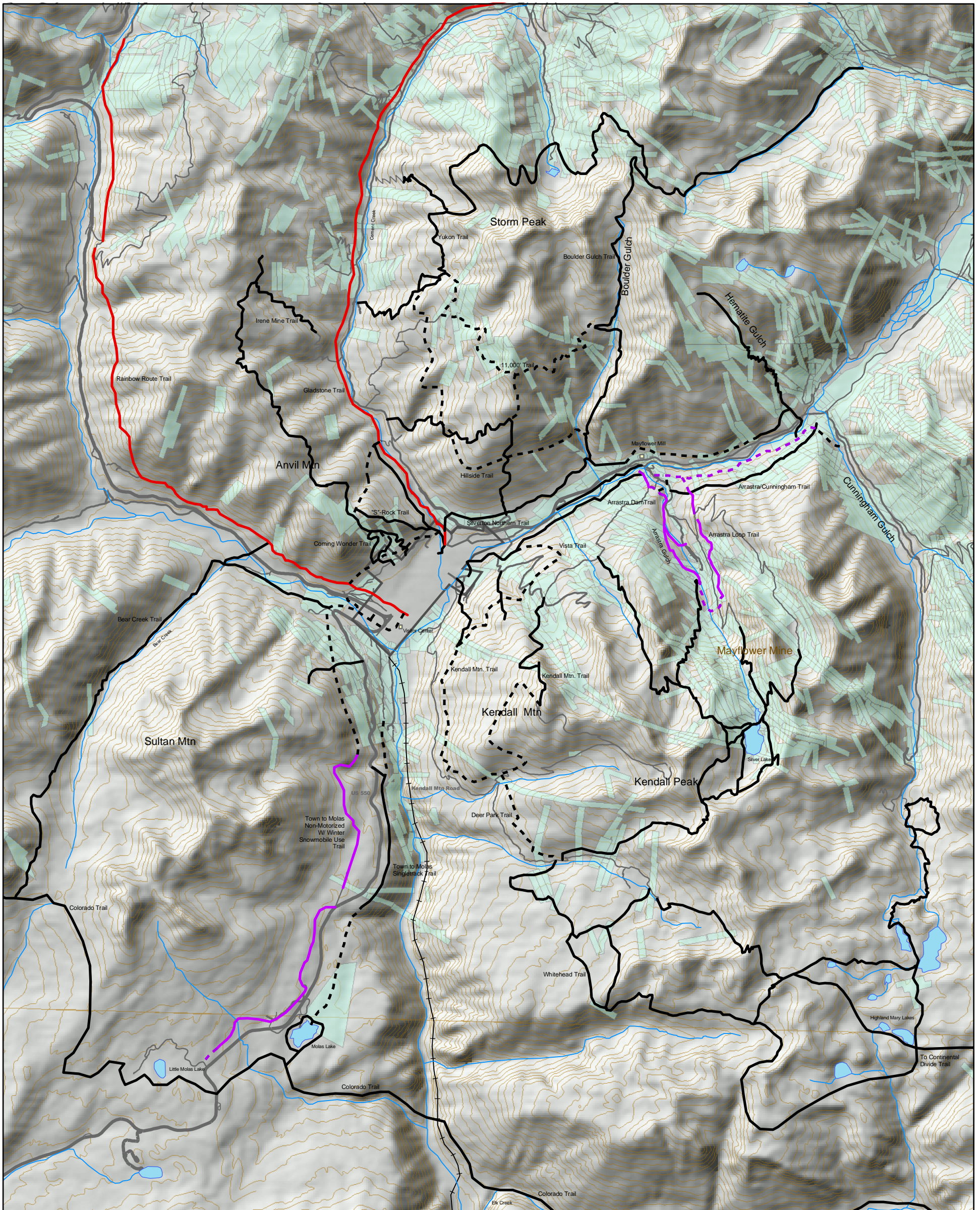
- Trailhead W/Parking and Restrooms
- Minor Trailhead

Silverton Area Trails Plan - Town Area

1 inch equals 0.103051 miles
0 0.05 0.1 0.2 Miles

Map Prepared By
Electrical Systems Consultants, Inc.
For
Four Corners Planning and Design

x:\projects\fourcornersplanningdesign\silverton area plan.mxd

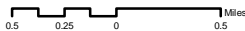


Legend

Existing Trails	Roads By Surface	Streams
Existing Trails	Paved	Claims
Railroad Grade Trail	Gravel	Rail Road
Historic Alignment	Dirt	
Proposed Trails	Link	
4 New Alignment	Lakes	
1 New Trail, Historic Alignment		

Silverton Area Trails Plan

1 inch equals 4,864.003616 feet



Map Prepared By
Electrical Systems Consultants, Inc.
For
Four Corners Planning and Design

