

# A Framework for Wayshowing:

## *Trail of the Ancients National Scenic Byway*

Montezuma County  
Colorado



June 2019

## Acknowledgments

This plan would not have been possible without the contributions of Susan Thomas, Coordinator, Trail of the Ancients National Scenic Byway.

Thanks to those who participated in the exit interview:  
Kelly Kirkpatrick, Mesa Verde Country; Candace Brantner, Mesa Verde Country;  
Veronica Cuthair, Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Park;  
and Susan Thomas.

Appreciation is also extended to the participants of the Wayfinding Assessment Team who donated their time to spend a day behind the wheel. Front Seaters: Terise Slotkin, photographer, New York City; Beth Malecki, volunteer. Back Seaters: Heidi Pankow, Tourism Professional; and Shaylyn Hatch, Colorado Department of Transportation.

Special thanks to Lenore Bates, Scenic Byways Program Manager, Colorado Department of Transportation, for her guidance throughout the project.

The project was designed using concepts based on the work of David Dahlquist and the America's Byways® Resource Center.

**Assessment Produced by:**  
Walden Mills Group

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Cover photo by Terise Slotkin

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## Executive Summary: Trail of the Ancients Wayfinding Assessment

Wayshowing is a collection of signs, maps, brochures and electronic media that have been developed to aid travelers in their journey. This kind of information system is critical to travelers as they first choose a destination, then preplan their itineraries, and finally connect directly with the with the places and people that can help them realize the experience they have envisioned.

The following wayshowing assessment describes the conditions that existed on August 23, 2018 on the Colorado section of the Trail of the Ancients Scenic and Historic Byway (other segments pass through New Mexico, Arizona, and Colorado). This Four Corners region of the Southwest United States contains archaeological assets so significant that the four-state byway has been designated a National Scenic Byway. The 176,000 acres that fall within the Canyon of the Ancients National Monument contains the highest density of archaeological sites in the United States.

National Geographic's Four Corners Geotourism Map alludes to the rich possibilities it reads "If you've got a week's vacation and the desire to see where the ancient Puebloan peoples once rooted their communities, follow the 114-mile segment of this National Byway to sites such as Mesa Verde National Park, Ute Mountain Tribal Park, and the Canyon of the Ancients National Monument."

This Wayfinding Assessment evaluated how easily visitors who were new to the region could locate the mosaic of archaeological sites, cultural artifacts, contemporary Indian culture, and modern agricultural communities. The assessment also evaluates how well interpretive materials helped travelers understand the significance of the region, and the meaning of individual archeological sites.

The assessment team was comprised of travelers who volunteered to record and evaluate their day-long experience, and the end of the assessment exercise, participate in an exit interview with stakeholders in Cortez. Mesa Verde National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, sets a very high bar for quality signage. One member of our assessment team, a first time visitor from New York City, was astonished by the cliff dwellings themselves, and in awe of how effectively interpretation delivered by the NPS Ranger at Cliff House set the stage for the remainder of the byway touring.

Recommended Action Plan :

- A. Rebuild a new governing committee. As none of the other recommendations in this wayfinding assessment can be accomplished without a functioning byway organization, these organizational actions are critical:
  - 1) Improve collaboration between the volunteer coordinator of TOTA, the Colorado Welcome Center in Cortez, Mesa Verde Country, and the newly appointed Colorado Byways Commissioner for the Western Slope.
  - 2) Reengage with public agencies who have been byway partners in the past and with any individuals who previously participated and are still passionate about the mission of byway.
  - 3) Recruit new members who understand that a new governing committee must now be built from the ground up.
  - 4) Identify an organization that will serve as the home for byway as it makes a fresh start.
- B. Inform staff of visitor centers throughout the byway that The Trail of the Ancients has a continuing relationship with National Geographic. This includes the National Park Service staff at Mesa Verde

National Park, the United States Forest Service staff at Canyon of the Ancients Visitor Center and Museum, and the volunteer staff at the Colorado Welcome Center in Cortez. Maintain and nurture this established relationship with a world-class organization.

- C. Work with CDOT to install the 30 blue columbine signs that are in storage. These signs give confirmation to travelers that they are still on the byway, and effectively mark intersections where there is some question of the byway's direction of travel.
- D. Consult with CDOT Region 5 to improve navigational signage at the entry to the Canyon of the Ancients Visitor Center and Museum, to aid both arriving and departing travelers.
- E. Add directional signage at the intersection of US 184 and US 491. Also add directional signage from Lowry Pueblo on Road 10 to Painted Hand Pueblo.
- F. Support the Ute Tribal Park in raising funds to improve both the sign and landscaping at the junction of 160 and 491.
- G. Replace sun-faded McElmo signage
- H. Consider replacing NPS signage in Cortez, east intersection, NPS signage is too small and unreadable
- I. Consider designing an information piece that communicates to travelers the distinction between Canyon of the Ancients and Trail of the Ancients.

## Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway



Hovenweep National Monument

Photo by Terise Slotkin



Mesa Verde National Park entrance sign

Photo by Terise Slotkin



Trail of the Ancients  
America's Byway sign

Photo by Judy Walden



Canyon of the Ancients National Monument

Photo by Terise Slotkin

## Introduction

The deployment of an effective system of wayshowing is an essential component of successful regional tourism strategies. Wayfinding and wayshowing are related but distinct concepts. **Wayfinding** is the mental process performed by travelers in identifying and locating their travel destinations. **Wayshowing**, on the other hand, is the communication in the form of maps, signs, and other media intended to aid the traveler in their wayfinding.

The purpose of this document is to provide a preliminary plan for an enhanced wayshowing system along the Los Caminos Scenic Byway. In achieving this purpose, the plan aims to:

- Provide an outline of key concepts of wayshowing and wayfinding
- Assess the inventory of existing directional signage to key sites along designated routes.
- Provide recommendations for enhancing directional signage to key sites.
- Provide an outline for subsequent action.

## Keys to Effective Wayshowing

An effective system of wayshowing responds to the needs of travelers at all stages in their journey. At a minimum, effective wayshowing for the traveler must:

- Support how people find their way in unfamiliar travel environments
- Provide a guidance system of reliable and consistent components on the Byway
- Respond to the unique characteristics of the Byway
- Integrate pre-visit, visit, and post-visit stages of the Byway experience
- Contribute to a safe roadway and travel environment
- Become a widely practiced body of knowledge among Byway providers

With the assistance of an effective wayshowing system, successful travelers should be able to:

1. Identify origin and destination
2. Determine turn angles
3. Identify segment links and directions of movement
4. Recognize on-route and distant landmarks
5. Mentally embed or visualize the route in a larger reference frame: a cognitive map

### Stages of Wayshowing

Effective wayshowing is essential not only to ensuring good experiences for the visitor, but also in attracting that visitor in the first place. While wayshowing may seem to begin and end with the traveler on the road, it also plays an important role in attracting visitors, assisting in their trip planning, and in enhancing their recollections with others after their trip is complete. Consider the travel experience as five distinct stages:

#### **Choose**

The point at which the traveler decides his or her travel destination or destinations. *Wayfinding Needs: What are the travel routes? What is there to see and do and where are these activities located? How much time is required for the trip?*

#### **Prepare**

This is the stage in which the prospective traveler plans and prepares for their trip, including making reservations or other advance travel arrangements. *Wayfinding Needs: How will we get there? Where will we stay, eat and stop? How much time should we allot to travel to and on the travel route? Where are the heritage, recreational, and cultural attractions of the area?*

#### **Go/Do**

This stage is the event itself as the visitor makes his or her way to or around their destination. *Wayfinding Needs: Where are the entry points to the route? How do we get back on track if we get off the route? Where are the attractions along the route? Where can we get information along the route? Where do we get gas, food, or lodging?*

#### **Recall**

This is the stage in which the memories of the trip extend its enjoyment beyond the time spent away from home. With travel completed, visitors typically want pictures, maps, souvenirs or other items to assist their recollection of a memorable trip. *Wayfinding Needs: What will help us recall the good times we had on the trip? Where were the sites we really enjoyed?*

#### **Do Again**

It is hoped that with an enjoyable and memorable trip, many visitors will return. *Wayfinding Needs: Where are those good maps from our last trip? We need to show our friends and family what they might like.*

## Wayshowing Components

A successful wayshowing system includes multiple components that not only direct the traveler, but also provide interpretive information. Wayshowing does not start and stop on the road, but exists to provide the traveler with information to plan their trip and assist in the recollection of it afterwards through maps, websites and other media that can be accessed away from the physical roadway. Essential elements of a wayshowing system include the following:

- Entrances, Exit and Gateway Signage. Identification of where to enter and exit a route or Byway so that travelers know their position relative to accessing and leaving a Byway or other route.
- Orientation Stops. Pull-offs, turn-outs and other places for motorists to stop and help them create, refresh, and expand their mental maps of a Byway or other route, its intrinsic qualities, and overarching interpretive theme with exhibits, maps, and other means of communication.
- Repetitive Route Markers. A sequence of visual cues for motorists to follow along a Byway or other route.
- Direction Signage to Planned Destinations. Signs that alert and guide motorists to featured stops and attractions along or near a Byway or other route.
- A Portable Map. A carry-on map of a Byway corridor or travel region and its various attractions and amenities.

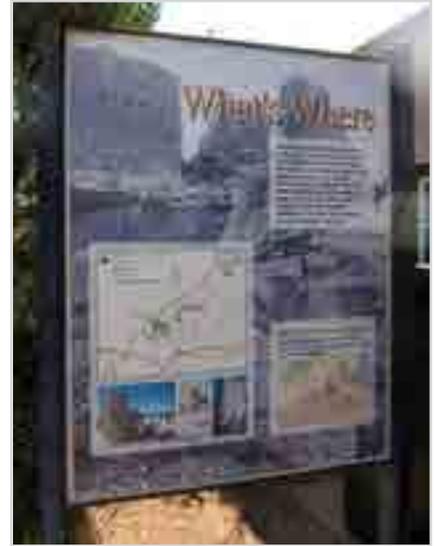


Photo by Terise Slotkin

Orientation sign with map and service information at Hovenweep National Monument gateway

## Method of Assessment

Often the difficulty in providing effective wayshowing lies in understanding where travelers require assistance and in what form. Additionally, maps, signs, brochures and other media sometimes present conflicting information. In June 2018 an on-the-road experiment was conducted along the Trail of the Ancients Scenic & Historic Byway to answer some of these questions. Specifically, the experiment sought to:

- Identify gaps in navigational clues for travelers by identifying points of certainty, and points of confusion; and
- Identify points of disconnect between what travelers see through the windshield and what they read on maps, brochures, mobile devices, and a web site in their laps.

Detailed “Never ever” traveler reactions to specific locations are found in the Appendix.



Photo by Terise Slotkin

Excessive signs can be a point of confusion

### Identifying Sites for Evaluation

The Assessment Team was given the following List of “Top Attractions” to find on the byway. The list was compiled with the recommendations of Susan Thomas, Byway Coordinator and Lenore Bates, Program Director, Colorado Scenic Byway Program.

The eleven (11) attractions listed below comprised the sites and attractions that were targeted for wayfinding assessment.

#### Cultural Heritage Sites

- Mesa Verde National Park
- Canyon of the Ancients National Monument
- Lowry Pueblo
- Painted Hand Pueblo
- Hovenweep National Monument
- Cortez Cultural Center
- Galloping Goose Railcar and Museum

#### Visitor Centers

- Mesa Verde National Park Visitor and Research Center
- Hovenweep National Monument Visitor Center
- Anasazi Heritage Center and Museum
- Colorado Welcome Center, Cortez



Mesa Verde National Park Visitor and Research Center

Photo by Terise Slotkin

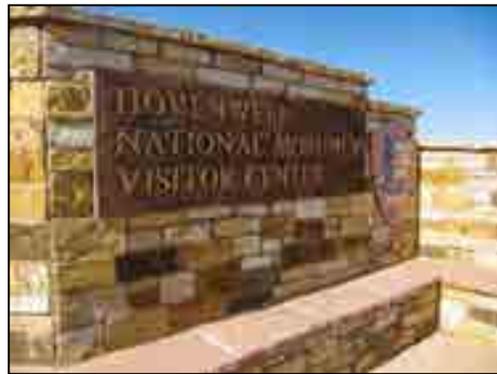


Photo by Terise Slotkin

Hovenweep National Monument includes six prehistoric villages built between A.D. 1200 and 1300.

A four-member team was assembled to travel the Byway using a “front seat, back seat” approach. In the front seat were neophytes, new to the region with limited knowledge of the area. They were given the list of attractions and sites to locate using highway signage, verbal directions and printed materials such as brochures and maps available at Visitor Centers and other public outlets. The “front seaters” were encouraged to use any mobile devices available to them.

Transportation and tourism specialists occupied the backseat. The “back seaters” recorded the experience of the “front seaters” in detail. “Back seaters” recorded the exact locations where the “front

seaters” encountered confusion or uncertainty in navigating the region. They also recorded any disparities between written information in maps, brochures and other media and actual conditions as observed through the windshield.

While the neophytes in the front seat navigated their way through unfamiliar territory, the specialists in the back seat were given the following assignment:

- Observe the actions and discussions of the front seaters
- Record locations where front seaters expressed uncertainties and confusion and note apparent reasons
- Quiz front seaters on effectiveness of signs, maps and other driving instructions
- Note which wayshowing devices front seaters are using most often and which they are not
- Resist giving any travel or driving advice unless an immediate safety issue warrants
- Conduct post-trip discussion with front seaters
- They also recorded any disparities between written information in maps, brochures and other media and actual conditions on the road (front-seaters).

On-the-road and again at the conclusion of the wayfinding exercise, participants were asked to record observations and make recommendations based on their on-the-road experience. A list of the comments and observations regarding each location is found in the Appendix.

## Recommendations

### Organizational Development

The Trail of the Ancients (TOTA) was designated a Colorado Scenic Byway in 1994. It has been guided thereafter by a Corridor Management Plan (CMP) defined by the Federal Highways Commission as a “community-based strategy to balance the conservation of the byway corridors’ intrinsic qualities with the use and enjoyment of those same resources.” It was written to guide TOTA partners, local governments and affiliated organizations in planning and managing the byway corridor. A first update to the plan was written on 2001. In 2005 the byway applied for, and was granted National Scenic Byway designation.

During this exuberant time of strong organizational capacity and expanding partnerships, the coordinating byway was Mesa Verde Country. The organization was awarded a series of grants from the National Scenic Byway program that supported improvements all across the byway, including many that were wayfinding and interpretation.

1996	Trails of the Ancients: Corridor Management Plan	SB-1996-CO-02	\$48,000
1997	Trail of the Ancients: Interpretation	SB-1997-CO-02	\$68,800
2005	Trail of the Ancients Marketing Plan	SB-2005-CO-04	\$32,000
2006	Trail of the Ancients – Corr Mgt Plan Implementation-Year 1	SB-2006-CO-11	\$25,000
2007	Trail of the Ancients: Organization Management	SB-2007-CO-10	\$25,800
2010	Trail of the Ancients CO: Interpretation, Marketing, & Wayfinding	SB-2010-CO-01	\$84,000
2012	Trail of the Ancients McElmo Flume Overlook	SB-2012-CO-02	\$252,631

Susan Thomas was hired in 2008 to coordinate the Trail of the Ancients. Then in 2012, Congress defunded the National Scenic Byways Program within 3 years money to fund the position of byway coordinator was no longer available. For three years Thomas has carried on as the byway's one and only volunteer. She still meets with the 4 state group that manages the NatGeo map, engages in a grassroots process of building a new NatGeo website with suggested travel itineraries. No Board meeting has been held for over two years, thirty columbine byway signs are stored needing installation, and there is no plan for succession development. What then is the status of the other partners who were so effective in building the byway?

Thomas points out that there are still lots of good people that care about the byway; however, the majority of the byway's working partners represent public land agencies. Since federal agencies do not allow their employees to hold voting positions on boards, it is difficult to take action. "We worked so hard for all those years to develop this byway, I would love to see the Trail find a good home," said Thomas. Mesa Verde Country, previously the lead organization, currently conducts marketing partnership activities with the Colorado Tourism Office and other regional organizations.

### **Organizational Recommendations**

- Improve collaboration between the volunteer coordinator of TOTA, the Colorado Welcome Center in Cortez, Mesa Verde Country, and the, newly appointed Colorado Byways Commissioner for the Western Slope.
- Reengage representatives of the past governing committee that are still passionate about the byway, and recruit new members that can revivify a reconstituted committee
- Find a new home for the byway organization

### **Gateways**

*The Trail of the Ancients takes you in the footsteps of the Ancestral Puebloans, often using the same roads that they plotted for their extensive trade and agricultural network. Consequently, this byway does not follow a consistent path. It makes detours and doubles back in some places, and it leaves the main roads in others.*

-Joe Verrengia, Touring Guide to Colorado's  
Scenic and Historic Byways, 1998

As Verrengia points out, travelers can indeed enter and exit the Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway at multiple locations. The new Visitor and Research Center at Mesa Verde National Park is superb, providing a most distinctive gateway to this distinguished place that is designated both a National Park and UNESCO World Heritage Site. Printed maps and brochures are readily available at the Visitor Center for Mesa Verde Park itself, and for the larger archaeological region. Staff here and at other visitor centers and historic sites along the way generally make it easy for travelers to stay well oriented.

For this wayfinding assessment team, only the Canyon of the Ancients Visitor Center and Museum failed to meet their gateway and wayfinding expectations. The team missed the sign to enter, realized that they had arrived an hour before the visitor center opened, then decided to jump onto the byway and navigate using highway signage only until they could find a map. As they tried to exit and drive to their next stop, they found the signage at the museum exit to be contradictory. They noted that signage said different things on the two different sides of the road, and they saw no indication about how to rejoin the byway.

The BLM changed the name of the visitor center April 18, 2018. It had previously been called the Anasazi Heritage Center and Museum. Locals still use its original name out of habit and most certainly the new name change will continue to cause some confusion for byway travelers. Two of our assessment team members repeatedly asked the difference between the Canyon of the Ancients National Monument and The Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway. That question may best be answered with National Geographic's Geotourism map.

## **Navigation**

After initial confusion in both entering and exiting the Canyons of the Ancients Visitor Center and Museum, they had no trouble locating the last ten sites specified for the assessment. The out-of-state member of the assessment team had several questions about what she was looking for. "What is a National Monument?" she asked, and "Is the Canyons of the Ancients a region?" The language "Point of Interest" on signs keep them confused in its lack of specificity, and the "Historic Right of Way" sign near Hovenweep National Monument was unclear. Did it refer to Indian lands, they wondered, or to some private property issue?

At the Lowry Pueblo, the team found that the stone-lined roadway made it easy to navigate the unattended archaeological site. Likewise, they found navigation signage at Hovenweep to be sparse, but effective. "Just basic information, just what we wanted," wrote one. At turns to both Lowry and Hovenweep, there was pre-notification signage, ie., Lowry Pueblo one mile.

Two members of the assessment team visited the offices of the Ute Mountain Tribal Park located at the junction of highways 160 and 491, and excellent location for tourism traffic from both the south and west. The tribe offers half day guided tours of cliff dwellings on tribal lands, as well as camping and RV overnight facilities. The interpretive tours are highly rated on social media sites, and the junction itself provides an excellent location to inform the public about the tours. Currently, the signage for the office is hand written. The team recommends professionally produced signage on both 160 and 491 and landscaping both around the new sign and on the adjacent lot, especially in the area next to the highway.

When the exit interview for the assessment team was conducted at the Colorado Welcome Center in Cortez, they found that wayshowing signage inside the town of Cortez was an excellent navigational aid.

## **Interpretation**

The organization has accomplished two major projects and 1) the installation of the McElmo Flume Overlook. 2) The printing National Geographic's Four Corners Geotourism map in coordination with byways in Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico.

The McElmo Flume Overlook is located just east of Cortez just off highway 160. It includes an educational kiosk in large pull-off, with a restored section of the wooden flume reached by walking a short path that leads to the river. The flume was built in 1890 for as an irrigation trough to deliver water to the Montezuma Valley and the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe. It is on the Register of Historic Places, the only one of 104 wooden flumes in the Montezuma Valley that still exists.

The publication of National Geographic's Geotourism Mapguide of the Four Corners Region is the most recent accomplishment of the Trail of the Ancients Byway, a culmination of a joint funding project

among byways in four states: Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona and Utah. The power of the project is derived from the byways' association with National Geographic, arguably one of the most widely recognized brands in the world in the fields of travel, culture, and conservation. They define geotourism as defined as tourism that sustains and enhances the geographical character of a place-its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage and the well-being of its residents. The concept of geotourism emphasizes local culture, products and traditions and offers visitors multiple opportunities to explore an area's natural beauty and human connections.

National Geographic's values of sustainability fit hand-in-glove with the mission and goals of the Colorado Scenic Byways Program and with the Federal Highway Administration's collection of National Scenic Byways. The byway core purpose is preserving and experiencing extraordinary places, with attention centering on six intrinsic resources: cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational, natural and scenic. The scenic byways share a core mission to balance the conservation of these intrinsic qualities with the use and enjoyment of the same resources.

The National Geographic Four Corners Region Trail of the Ancients Destination Guide Map is now for sale at visitor centers and retail stores throughout the four-state byway region. It can also be purchased on National Geographic's Geotourism website that offers maps for twenty-one worldwide geotourism destinations. Byway programs in the four states still provide regular updates to National Geographic as opportunities for travelers change on the ground.

### **Interpretation on the Drive**

The assessment team was generally very happy with the quality of interpretive information at what one traveler called "canyon and rock exhibits." The group liked the minimalist botanical information along the trails at Lowry, and the walking tour with photos along Montezuma Avenue in the historic district of Cortez.

At the end of the day, what else did the travelers wonder about? Their notes reflected an interest in additional interpretive information on the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, geology, agriculture, trees, and on the Old Spanish Trail. They seemed well satisfied with the amount of new information they too in during the day and seemed to expect that, to understand more deeply what the region has to teach, they would have to schedule a return visit. Their interest in agriculture and agritourism was roused by a local road that had a vineyard with a Bed and Breakfast where they had learned about restaurants in Cortez that served farm-to-table food.

A 2009 Visitor Study (now 10 years old) shows an interesting pattern of visitation, indicating that a majority of travelers visit Mesa Verde National Park, the Canyon of the Ancients National Landmark, and the small towns that are very near these nationally known sites. The pattern of visitation follows:

Mesa Verde National Park	77%
Town of Cortez	60%
Town of Dolores	21%
Anasazi Heritage Center	21%
Hovenweep National Monument	15%
Town of Mancos	14%
Dolores River	12%
San Juan/Rio Grande National Forest	9%

Cortez Cultural Center	5%
Ute Mountain Casino	5%
Mancos State Park	4%
Ute Mountain Tribal Park	4%
Crow Canyon	3%

The byway might distinguish their mission from partner organizations by becoming the organization that connects travelers with lesser know destinations, with cultural connections and with the life of local communities.

## Action Plan

- A. Rebuild a new governing committee. As none of the other recommendations in this wayfinding assessment can be accomplished without a functioning byway organization, these organizational actions are critical: Improve collaboration between the volunteer coordinator of TOTA, the Colorado Welcome Center in Cortez, Mesa Verde Country, and the newly appointed Colorado Byways Commissioner for the Western Slope. Reengage with public agencies who have been byway partners in the past and with any individuals who are still passionate about the byway. Recruit new members who understand that a new governing committee must now be built from the ground up. Identify an organization that will serve as the organizational home for byway as it makes a fresh start.
- B. Inform staff of visitor centers throughout the byway that The Trail of the Ancients has a continuing relationship with National Geographic. This includes the National Park Service staff at Mesa Verde National Park, the United States Forest Service staff at Canyon of the Ancients Visitor Center and Museum, and the volunteer staff at the Colorado Welcome Center in Cortez.
- C. Work with CDOT to install the 30 blue columbine signs that are in storage to give confirmation to travelers that they are still on the byway, and to mark intersections where there is some question of the direction to turn.
- D. Consult with CDOT to improve signage at the entry to the Canyon of the Ancients Visitor Center and Museum, to aid both arriving and departing travelers. Consult also about adding directional signage at the intersection of US 184 and US 491 and directional signage from Lowry Pueblo on Road 10 to Painted Hand Pueblo.
- E. Add directional signage at the intersection of US 184 and US 491. Also add directional signage from Lowry Pueblo on Road 10 to Painted Hand Pueblo.
- F. Support the Ute Tribal Park in raising funds to improve both the sign and landscaping at the junction of 160 and 491.
- G. Replace sun-faded signage in McElmo Canyon

- H. Consider designing an information piece that communicates to travelers the distinction between the Canyon of the Ancients and Trail of the Ancients.
- I. Consider replacing NPS signage in Cortez, east intersection, NPS signage is too small and unreadable
- J. Work with CDOT to consolidate byways sign clutter at the Cortez intersection of 160 and 145. (photo below)



Roadway marked at Hovenweep

Photo by Terise Slotkin



Byway signs clutter the intersection of 160 and 145 east of Cortez

Photo by Judy

## APPENDIX

Byway notes and observations from the Wayfinding Assessment Teams during their on-the-road tour of the Trail of the Ancients Scenic and Historic Byway on August 23, 2018.

### Observations by Individual Assessment Team Members

Volunteer, Terise Slotkin

- No trouble navigating from place to place using a little line drawing in the Painted Hand brochure
- “Canyons of the Ancients” – Hand painted sign on beautiful road
- Vineyard tasting
- Mesa Verde with people in Cliff Palace
  - o 2 ladders shot – artistic
- “Point of Interest” – Threw us off. Who put that there? Was it CDOT?
- Hovenweep National Monument – What does “Historic Right of Way” mean? Indian land – What does this mean?
- “Canyon of Ancients, Lowry Pueblo” sign – 1 mile before turn
- Is “Canyon of the Ancients” a region or a trail?
- What is a national monument?
- Lowry Pueblo:
  - o Clean bathrooms
  - o Pueblo - Contained Area, 40 rooms
  - o Signage decent enough
  - o Built into boulders
  - o How did they last so long?
  - o Range of colors so beautiful
  - o Stonework amazing
  - o Giant kiva there
  - o Roads marked by stones – easy to find our way
  - o Walls built into boulders!!!! Baffles engineers!
- Hovenweep:
  - o “It was fine” intersection – local color
  - o Hovenweep to: Bluff – 41 miles, Blanding – 45 miles, Cortez – 42 miles sign. Worked just fine.
  - o Interpretive signage good – canyon and rock exhibits
  - o Liked botanical signage next to trail:
    - Not overdone
    - Informative
    - Just basic information
    - Just what we wanted

#### Volunteer, Shaylyn Hatch – CDOT

- Missed sign. “Anasazi Heritage Center and Museum”
- Arrived at Anasazi Heritage Center and Museum at 8:20 AM, does not open until 9:00 AM
- Where do we go from here?
  - o Using National Geographic map.
  - o Decided to head to Lowry Pueblo
- No directional sign at intersection of US 184 and US 491
- Good signage for the turn to Lowry Pueblo
- No signage for Painted Hand Pueblo from Lowry Pueblo on Road 10
- Used a map Teri Slotkin had. We didn’t have a map because we didn’t wait for the Anasazi Heritage Center to open.

#### Volunteer, Heidi Pankow

- Missed turn for signage different on each side of the road
- Used National Geographic map that Teri Slotkin found – no byway signage from Visitor Center to direct driving
- Arrived at Anasazi Heritage Center and Museum at 8:20 AM (Closed, doesn’t open until 9:00 am)
- Lowry Pueblo: first Byway sign before US 491
- Historical sign Hovenweep/Lowry – 1 mile before turn
- Byway sign at turn to Hovenweep
- Ran into grading operations 1.8 mile out – No warning
- Lowry Pueblo had clean bathroom facility
- Cool nuns
- Used map and brochure for directions to Painted Hand Pueblo
- No GPS to Painted Hand Pueblo
- Hovenweep sign – one sided only
- Historic Right of Way sign/not Scenic Byway sign
- Didn’t find road to Painted Hand Pueblo
- Painted Hand Pueblo site closed – BLM
- Hovenweep National Monument, asked for directions at the Visitor Center
- Returned from Hovenweep National Monument via McElmo Canyon – Beautiful
- Sutcliffe Winery
- Canyon of the Ancients Guest Ranch

#### Observations and Notes from Lenore Bates, CDOT, Denver

- Ute Mountain Visitor Center (converted gas station) needs professional signage
- History Colorado Sign at center facing road
- 2 guides are available for ½ day tours to cliff dwellings. Must be accompanied.
- Climate is changing

- Spanish Trail
- National GEO Map for sale
- AAA has Indian County Map
- Cortez City Sign location
- Cortez Welcome Center
- Good Cortez Wayfinding Sign System
- Sutcliffe Wine TODS
- Agriculture Questions (Agriculture Itinerary?)
- Canyon of the Ancients Guest Ranch
- Tribal Center/Visitor Center
- Four Corners (no ashes spread, no drones on tribal lands)
- Old Billboards coming into Cortez. Improve the signage at this Gateway
- Ancient Voices Pod Cast/Tent cards in restaurants about podcast
- Southern Ute
- Geology & Trees
- Signage, Photos, walking tour of historic district on Montezuma Avenue
- Sleeping Ute Rest Stop – Signs pet, trail, trucking, correct local map orientation
- Designed – respect environment, nature, good maintenance, ADA picnic table with shade
- TOTA Sign represents (NPS), color and font are small
- In some locations sign can share a post with San Juan Skyway
- SH160 Hovenweep & Guy Drew TODS Sign (Both Large)
- *Improve collaboration between Welcome Center, Mesa Verde Country, Susan/TOTA, and new connection with Heidi (San Juan Skyway and new Colorado Byways Commissioner for the Western Slope)*

TripAdvisor reviews of attractions on the Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway, not visited by wayfinding assessment team.

#### **Town of Dolores (Top attractions in Dolores)**

1. The Anasazi Heritage Center (5/5; 269 reviews)
  - Outstanding visitor’s center
  - Staff was very friendly and helpful with information
  - Very well-run and well-kept museum and Heritage Center
  - A must see if you are continuing to Hovenweep or Canyon of the Ancients
  - Wonderfully informative
  - A lot of interactive activities and interesting information
2. Rio Grande Southern Railroad Museum (4.5/5; 35 reviews)
  - Free museum
  - Operated by the local historical society
  - Many interesting displays sure to interest railroading fans
  - A must-see for train fans and fans of Colorado history
  - Excellent place to learn the history of different types of railroad vehicles
  - Very interesting info about the Galloping Goose trains and the Rio Grande Southern line

3. McPhee Reservoir (4/5; 57 reviews)
  - Excellent lake for numerous activities
  - Beautiful place for kayaking, SUPing, canoeing
  - The extreme drought in this area has nearly dried up this water storage and playground
  - Not designed for ease of launching human-powered vessels
  - Water level is quite low, however water is clear and pretty
  - Public access has become extremely limited with blocked roads, be prepared to walk
  - Spectacular views
4. Dolores Visitors Center (4.5/5; 6 reviews)
  - Great customer service
  - Informed staff with lots of good information about Dolores and the surrounding area
  - The staff was incredibly helpful with information about just about everything
  - This was a great place to stop and get information about the area

#### **Cortez Cultural Center (4.5/5; 94 reviews)**

- Came to see the Native American dancing
- Heard Sam Sandoval speak here (WWII Navajo Codetalker), unbelievable experience we appreciate them setting up such an event
- A wonderful place to visit, thoughtful displays of artifacts
- Best part (of the museum) was the Native American dancers
- Don't miss this
- Center has interesting tidbits of the weather
- Very friendly atmosphere

#### **Colorado Welcome Center in Cortez (4.5/5; 234 reviews)**

- Friendly and helpful
- Great resource of all the regions tourist sites
- Excellent assistance got personal suggestions about the best ways to see the local sights and attractions
- We picked up maps and brochures
- There were lots of brochures and nice restrooms
- Staff was very nice and helpful
- Located in the center of town, adjacent to a beautiful city park
- We make a habit of visiting information centers and ranked the information we received among our top 5 and excellent (excellent maps and much local knowledge)

- Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway (116 miles)

Colorado Byway communities include Yellow Jacket, Dolores, and Cortez and the Four Corners Area



<http://www.coloradodot.info/travel/scenic-Byways/assets/scenic-Byways-maps>