

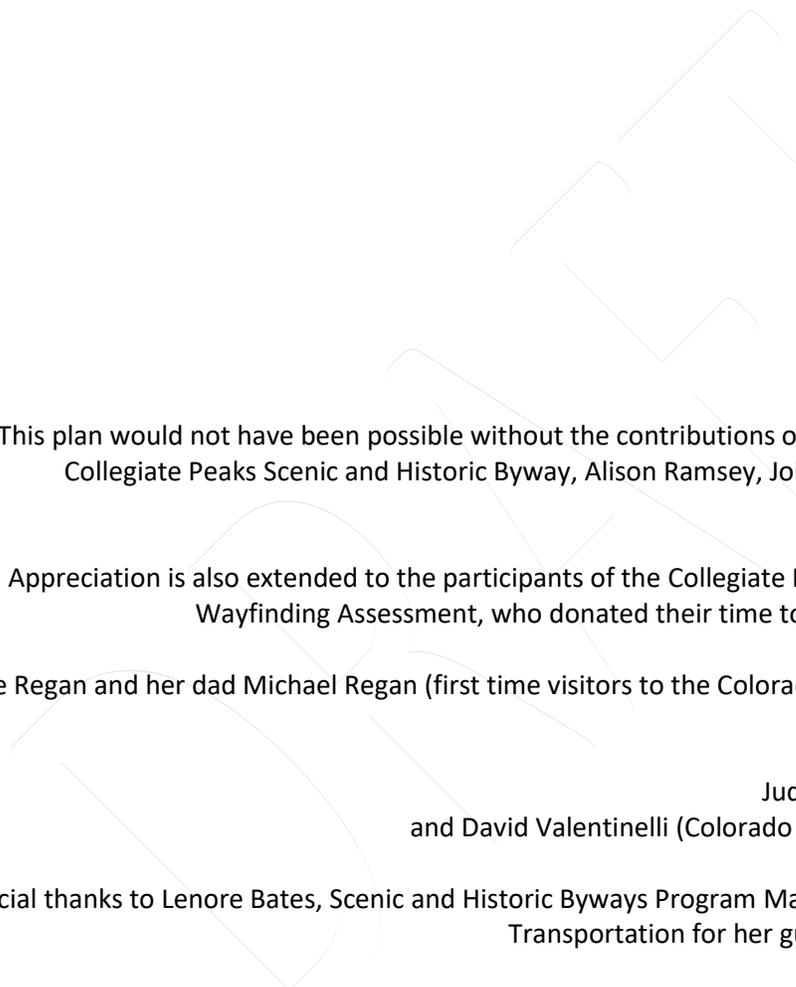
# **A Framework for Wayshowing:**

## ***Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway***

Chaffee County  
Colorado



August 2014



## Acknowledgments

This plan would not have been possible without the contributions of the Steering Committee of the Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway, Alison Ramsey, John McCarthy, Kathy Moore, and Melony Roth

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and David Valentinelli (Colorado Department of Transportation).

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### **Document Produced By:**

Walden Mills Group

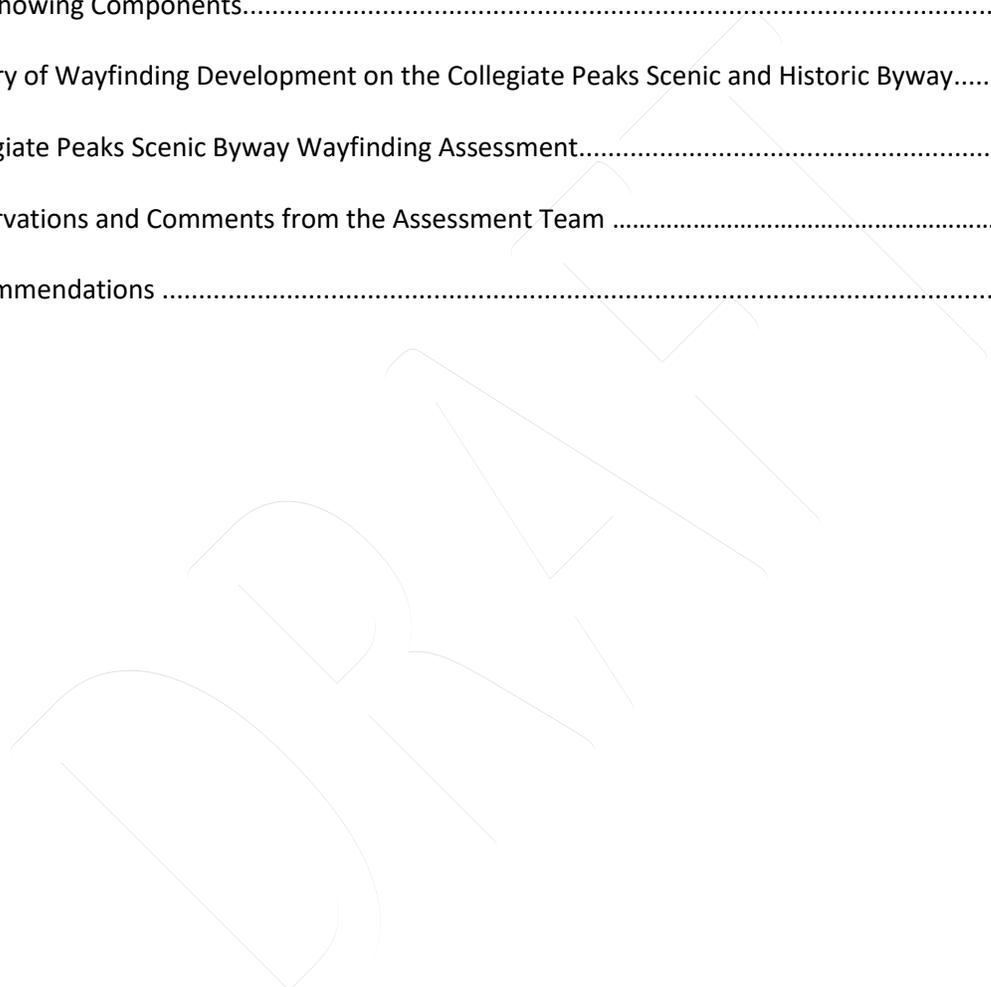
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August 2014

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## Executive Summary: Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway

Utilizing a “front-seat back-seat” approach, travelers unfamiliar with the Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway (Collegiate Peaks Byway) area took to the road with a list of significant historical, cultural and recreational sites to locate. Neophytes in the front seat searched for signs, used digital devices, studied maps and ask for directions. Meanwhile, transportation and tourism specialists in the back seat recorded the navigational challenges of those “new to the byway” travelers in the front. The front seaters were in search of historical, recreational and cultural attractions that had been identified by the local byway organization as key attractions for travelers.

An analysis of this formal assessment exercise combined with the input of local officials, transportation professionals, and tourism specialists resulted in recommendations that can improve the ease of navigation for visitors and better capitalize on the potential for increasing travel-related revenues for the communities along the byway.

Recommendations include:

- A. Update the [collegiatepeaksbyway.org](http://collegiatepeaksbyway.org) website to provide navigational, historical, and interpretive information for mobile devices. The website needs to be optimized to function on mobile devices in order to be useful to most travelers. The website should assist visitors in planning a trip (should tie in directly to local businesses that can enhance traveler experiences) as well as for on-site interpretation. Currently the downloadable brochure found on the website will not open without Adobe Flash which is not supported on the iPhone or other Apple devices. The brochure should be reconfigured to operate across a wider array of mobile devices. Consider a downloadable “short list” of top sites along the Byway that visitors can save to their mobile devices and reference without cellular service.
- B. Continue to address the issues of inconsistent signage, lack of signage promoting visitor attractions, and signage clutter. Interpretive waysides along the Byway should all be clearly identified as part of the Byway’s story. Some waysides have a blue columbine sign indicating their significance to the scenic byway but some waysides do not. Visitor Center signage needs to be more easily recognized and should be the same design in every municipality along the Byway to maximize its recognizability. Buena Vista should continue its efforts to reduce the visual clutter of its signage and should continue to refine their signage hierarchy to direct visitors through town. Salida should consider conducting a signage inventory to identify, and eliminate where possible, unnecessary or repetitive signage. Salida should also attempt to more clearly define its signage hierarchy to guide visitors through different levels of detail to local attractions.
- C. Develop a signage program to guide visitors along with the hierarchy of interpretive sites outlined in the 2008 Collegiate Peaks Scenic Byway Management Plan. With so many significant sites (destination sites) located some distance away from the Byway it is important to have strong visual cues guiding visitors away from and back to the Byway. The adventure routes marked out on the brochure map are virtually invisible on the ground. There should be signage iconography specific to the adventure routes and utilized in a fashion similar to the blue columbine signage on the scenic byway.

- D. Consider a self-guided tour with around six stops along the Byway that collectively tell the story of Chaffee County and hint at more detailed stories to be found at destination sites located off adventure routes on the periphery of the Byway. This location based tour could be available online to correspond with on site interpretive panels or it could simply be a labeling mechanism on maps (i.e., tour stops 1-6) and it could be used as a tool to draw visitors from one site to the next.
- E. Consider adding signage explaining the significance of the Arkansas River’s recent designation (2014) as a Gold Medal Stream by the Colorado Wildlife Commission.
- F. Consider expanding the collection of icons used to direct visitors to attractions off of the Byway. Icons are already in use with some recreation signs and they reduce the need for numerous signs. The iconography program could be expanded to include icons for visitor centers, interpretive sites, different types of destination sites, and museums. Icons should be explained at gateway kiosk signage and on the Byway website with a map of all sites corresponding to icons.
- G. Add blue columbine directional signs to the intersection of US 24 and US 285 for all travel directions. There should be directional signage added to the T-intersections of CO291 & US 50, US 50 & US 285, and CO 82 & US 24 (for eastbound travelers on CO 82 sign should read “TO Collegiate Peaks Scenic Byway”).
- H. Provide printed copies of the Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway at visitor centers in Buena Vista, Poncha Springs, and Salida. The assessment team found maps of the Byway and historical information about the area but there was no print material available that was specific to the Byway.
- I. Currently the only bicycle signage alerting drivers to the presence of cyclists bears the “Share the Road” message. This type of signage has lead to user conflicts due to different interpretations by cyclists and drivers. Delaware DOT recently began replacing their “share the road” signage with “bicycles may use full lane” signage. Experimenting with updated bicycle signage along the Collegiate Peaks byway could help avoid conflict over sign interpretation and would reinforce Colorado’s bicycle friendly culture. Consider experimenting with one of the “share the road alternatives” pictured below.



- J. Intersection that presented navigational challenges was located just off the Byway, coming from CO 82 eastbound onto US 24.
- K. Design a system to guide visitors from the official corridor to and from heritage and recreational sites located at some distance off the Byway. This is the biggest navigational challenge on this corridor.

- L. Add signage for assurance that the correct turn has been made at T-intersections. Prenotification signage is excellent at all T-intersections.

Interpretive sites varied in quality but this Byway did have some of the best interpretive waysides in the Colorado statewide program with pre-notification signs (Point of Interest) and blue columbine signs to identify the significance of the site to the scenic byway experience. Six recurring interpretive themes help to organize the interpretive materials into a cohesive story.



Excellent quality interpretive wayside with a clear connection to Byway through columbine signage

Enhancing the existing wayshowing system can help to guide visitors along the byway in a meaningful and memorable way. A strong wayshowing system can result in greater safety and a deeper understanding of the historic and recreational assets that make the Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway special.

## 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 Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic 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
- Provide recommendations for related wayfinding tools
- 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

### 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.*

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.

## 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, Exits 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.

## History of Wayfinding Development on the Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway

This byway gets its name from the collection of fourteen thousand foot mountain peaks named after the Ivy League universities of Oxford, Harvard, Columbia, Yale, and Princeton. These mountains rise up on the western edge of the byway as it traverses the Upper Arkansas River Valley. The 57 mile byway route connects three highways (US 24/ US 285, US 50 and CO 291) that parallel the Continental Divide and the Arkansas River. It also connects the three largest heritage areas in Chaffee County, Buena Vista, Poncha Springs, and Salida. With the exception of the northern terminus of the byway, where it reaches into Lake County to meet the “Top of the Rockies” Scenic Byway, Collegiate Peaks Byway is a showcase of Chaffee County.

In 2004 Chaffee County Commissioners passed a resolution establishing the entire county as the Chaffee County Heritage Area. Shortly thereafter the advisory board for the Chaffee County Heritage Area successfully nominated the county’s major travel corridor as a scenic byway. In 2005 this corridor was

officially designated as the Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway based on its intrinsic qualities of scenic, historic, and recreational significance.

Chaffee County is more than 80 percent public land and includes several wilderness areas, recreation areas and national forest. It also boasts more fourteen thousand foot peaks than any other county in America. Elk, antelope, deer, and cattle are common sights along the Byway and there are many ghost towns and several hot springs in the surrounding areas. Hiking and climbing opportunities abound, as do river sport activities.

The Arkansas River is the most commercially rafted river in the United States and a large section of it was recently designated a Gold Medal Stream by the Colorado Wildlife Commission. The entire length of the Arkansas River that runs adjacent to the Collegiate Peaks Byway was officially granted Gold Medal status in January of 2014, which means it is able to produce 60 pounds of trout per acre with at least twelve 14-inch or larger trout per acre. This Gold Medal designation is the longest reach of gold medal waters in the state, 102 miles, and stretches from Leadville north of the Byway to Parkdale south of the Byway. This means great fishing is available steps away from any point along the Byway. But before the Byway or the Gold Medal Waters were officially recognized the upper Arkansas River was defined more by the mining drainage it carried off than for the fish it produced.

Like so many of the mountain areas in Colorado, Lake and Chaffee counties have a strong legacy of mining. These counties were once the home of the Ute Indians but starting in the 1800s they became the hunting grounds of fur trappers. And in the mid-1800s, as a result of the Pikes Peak Gold Rush, miners moved into the area to seek their fortunes. Their mining activities eventually made the Arkansas inhospitable to fish, and few trout survived past three years of age. However, mining promoted further settlement to the area. Agriculture and ranching followed the appetites of the miners to the fertile bottomlands of the Arkansas River Valley and the high country grasslands. In the late 1800s the railroad came through, founded Salida, and solidified permanent settlements in the valley.

Today the Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway is the main artery through the heart of Chaffee County and it provides travelers the main access to the areas rich history and scenic and recreational attractions. Several plans have been made over the years to help enhance the visitor experience along the Byway corridor. Most notable of these are the 2008 Chaffee County Heritage Area and Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway Management Plan, the 2011 Plan for Development of Wayside Interpretive Media, and the 2013 Buena Vista Wayfinding Plan.

The 2008 Collegiate Peaks Management Plan identifies agricultural, natural, historical and cultural resources that shape the unique character of Chaffee County. Its main goal was to preserve these unique qualities and promote them in a way that encouraged economic development with minimal impact on the rural and agricultural landscapes, scenic river and mountain views, natural areas, cultural traditions and historic places that define Chaffee County.

The management plan identified existing wayfinding issues along the Byway as inconsistent application of CDOT signs, a lack of signs to promote visitor attractions, and clutter in some of the commercial signs.

In an effort to streamline the interpretive messages along the Collegiate Peaks Byway the management plan of 2008 identified six interpretive themes to convey the stories that relate to the entire Chaffee County Heritage Area. The themes are: 1) Finding our Roots, 2) Pushing Cattle, 3) Recreation and

Adventure, 4) Making a Living: Mining, Transportation, and Industry, 5) Exploring the Valley: the Earliest Days, and 6) Tapping the Water: the lifeline of the west. These themes are meant to identify the historical development of the county and are utilized at interpretive sites to tell the stories of Chaffee County. The plan established a hierarchy of interpretive sites throughout the county at Visitor Centers, Historic Downtowns, Interpretive Waysides, Destination Sites (significant places not located adjacent to the Collegiate Peaks Scenic Byway), Museums, and Adventure Routes (scenic routes that access destination sites).

Along the Collegiate Peaks Scenic Byway the management plan recommended interpretive waysides located at Old Stage Road, "Christmas 1806" (CDOT facility at mile marker 132), Smelertown (at smelter site in Salida), and Hutchinson Ranch (off of US 50). There was also a fifth wayside location recommended at an existing pull-out on Poncha Pass; however, this location is not located off the official Byway.

The 2011 *Plan for Development of Wayside Interpretive Media: Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway* developed a framework for the installation of interpretive media on the Byway. This plan suggested three different levels of wayside media development, gateway, kiosk, and wayside.

Gateways are developments at points where visitors will first experience the Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway. The plan recommended each gateway be clearly identified as a Colorado scenic byway by prominent display of the columbine logo. Sites identified by the media plan as being under consideration for gateway development (only one site, South Granite Pullout, is actually on the byway):

- South Granite Pullout (north end of Byway)
- Collegiate Peaks Overlook (east of Buena Vista and east of the Byway off US 285)
- Salida East Pullout (east of Salida and east of the Byway off US 50)
- Poncha Pass Summit (south of Poncha Springs and south of the Byway off US 285)
- Monarch Pass (west of Poncha Springs and west of the Byway off US 50)

Kiosks are described as structures somewhat more elaborate than gateways with the potential to provide in-depth interpretation. The media plan deployed kiosks at points where visitors were likely to spend time in a pedestrian mode. Locations in the plan under consideration for kiosk development include:

- McPhelemy Park in Buena Vista
- Riverside Park in Salida
- Collegiate Peaks Interpretive Center at Poncha Springs

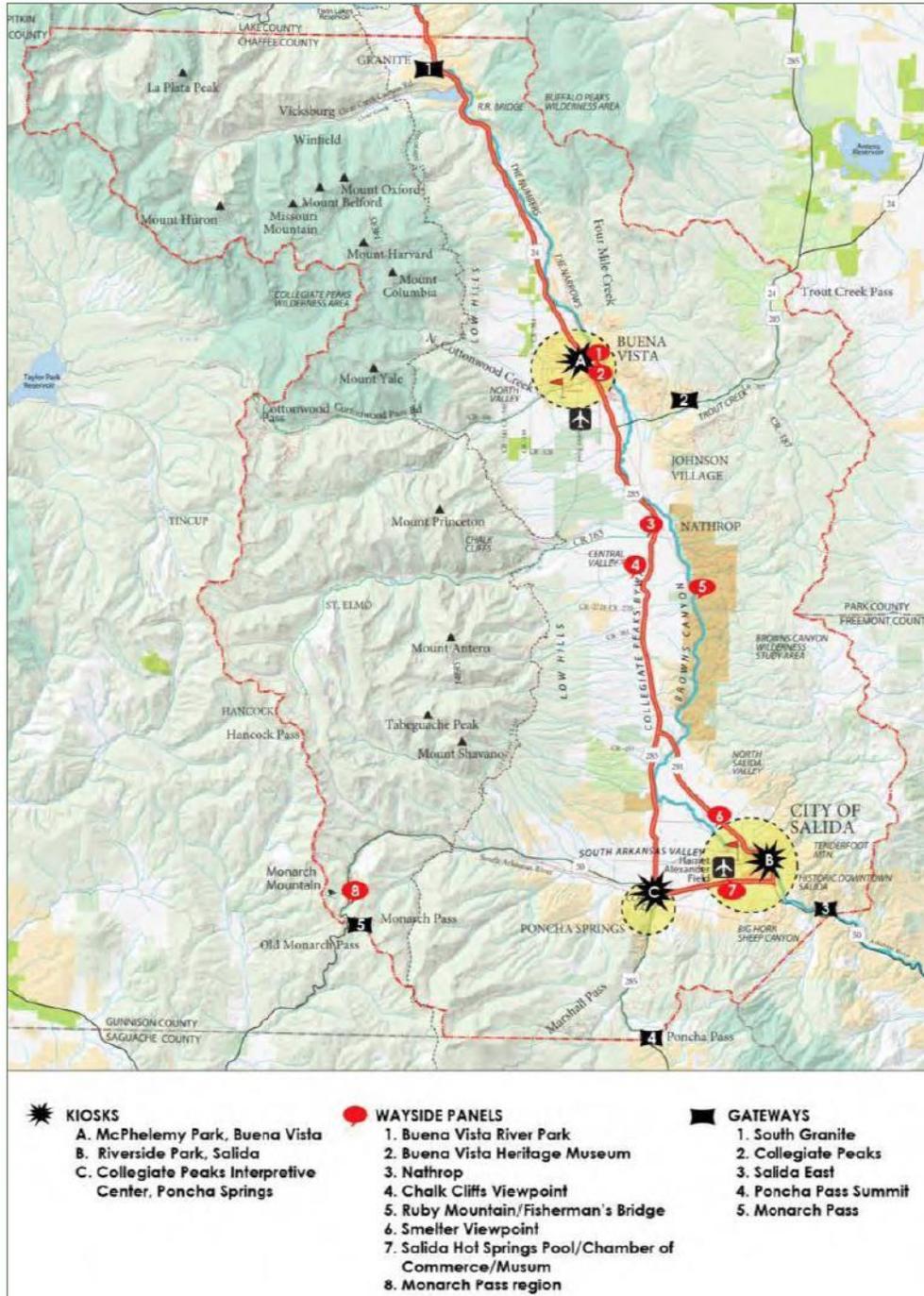
Wayside developments consist of the three-panel arrays already in use at Byway waysides before 2011. The plan recommended including a more prominent sign that identifies the wayside as part of the Byway. At the time the media report was written wayside displays were in place at three locations, Leadville Stage Coach Road, Christmas 1806, and Smelertown. The plan identified the following locations as under consideration for wayside development:

- Buena Vista River Park
- Buena Vista Heritage Museum
- Chalk Cliffs Viewpoint
- Ruby Mountain/Fisherman's Bridge

- Nathrop
- Smelter Viewpoint
- Salida Hot Springs Pool/Chamber of Commerce/Museum
- Monarch Mountain Region (ski area, Monarch Pass, Madonna Mine)

Plan for Wayside Interpretive Media  
 Collegiate Peaks Scenic & Historic Byway  
 Site Analyses

### Locations of Proposed Interpretive Developments



The 2013 Buena Vista Wayfinding Plan attempts to create a cohesive, iconic wayfinding system to direct visitors through downtown Buena Vista. The two main suggestions of the plan are to add directional signage from US-285 (to attract more visitors to Buena Vista) and remove excess signage along US 24 to reduce visual clutter and clarify where key attractions are located.

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) is ultimately responsible for signage along the Collegiate Peaks Byway but federal, state, and municipal entities have also contributed signage.



Recreation signs using iconography to minimize signage



Inconsistent visitor center signage

## Collegiate Peaks Scenic Byway Wayfinding 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 from multiple sources can often provide conflicting information. In June 2014 an on-the-road experiment was conducted along the Collegiate Peaks Scenic and 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 a traveler sees through the windshield and what they read from maps, brochures, mobile devices, web sites in their laps.

A list of significant historical, cultural, and recreational sites along the byway was developed for use during the Wayfinding Assessment. Many of these sites were identified by members of the Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway Committee at a meeting in Salida. A signage assessment survey of Committee members was also conducted. Representatives were asked to list the top heritage, cultural, and/or recreational sites in their respective counties and provide an assessment of the existing directional signage. Twenty four sites were chosen for the Wayfinding Assessment. The attractions and sites chosen for inclusion in this exercise appear in the following Table.

Table 1: Collegiate Peaks Scenic Wayfinding Assessment Route (Granite to Salida)

Cultural Heritage Sites	Recreation Sites	Waysides
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Granite</li> <li>• Colorado Midland Railroad Tunnels</li> <li>• Buena Vista Heritage Museum</li> <li>• Buena Vista Visitor Information</li> <li>• Buena Vista Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• Comanche Drive-In</li> <li>• Poncha Springs Welcome Center</li> <li>• Poncha Springs Town Hall</li> <li>• Hutchinson Homestead and Learning Center</li> <li>• Salida Museum</li> <li>• Salida Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• Salida Historic District</li> <li>• Steamplant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ruby Mountain Mineralogical Area / Fisherman’s Bridge</li> <li>• Mt Princeton Hot Springs</li> <li>• Salida Hot Springs</li> <li>• Salida Riverside Park</li> <li>• Salida Whitewater Park</li> <li>• Mt Shavano Fish Hatchery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadville Stage Road Wayside</li> <li>• Collegiate Peaks Scenic Overlook</li> <li>• Chalk Creek Overlook</li> <li>• Zebulon Pike Wayside</li> <li>• Smelter Historic Wayside</li> </ul>

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 also allowed 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”

After the conclusion of the wayfinding exercise, participants were asked to record observations and make recommendations based on their on-the-road experience. A full list of the comments and observations by the two teams is found in the Appendix.

## **Observations and Comments from the Assessment Team**

- The entire 24/285 drive from Granite to Salida is incredibly scenic with mountains, ranches, forests, and river
- Collegiate Peaks Scenic Overlook: stunning view coming down Trout Creek Pass with a great overview of the county. As I recall great interpretive display
- I’d also encourage them to notice the geology of the upper Rio Grande Rift with granite peaks to the west dominated by lodgepole and spruce, and the volcanic cones to the east with piñon and juniper forest. As stark a contrast as anywhere in Colorado.
- Cottonwood Pass: Drive into alpine zone above timberline. Only Telluride or Silverton can match this
- Chalk Creek Canyon: further mountain scenery along Chaulk Creek with St. Elmo a historic destination
- Stop at Mount Princeton Hot Springs, lunch?
- Chalk Creek Overlook: outstanding view and good interpretive signs.
- Hecla Junction/Brown’s Canyon: my favorite site along the river, and the drive towards the proposed Brown’s Canyon Wilderness provides great contrast to the west side mountains

- Smelter Historic Wayside: rare and dramatic remnant of our industrial past. Good interpretive signs
- Steamplant/Riverwalk: much better than the South Platte in Denver
- Town of Granite is “big rotting place, a store, old cabins”
- Leadville Stage Road Wayside not good
- No info on Colorado Midland Railroad Tunnels
- Buena Vista Heritage Museum easy to find, big building
- Some Buena Vista Visitor Information was found
- Why is there not a sign on US 285 for Ruby Mountain?
- Heard about Comanche Drive-In on local radio
- Bought map in Twin Lakes but it did not direct them
- Lost!
- Front seaters totally lost leaving Twin Lakes. Turned wrong direction (towards Leadville). No byway sign at intersection
- “We’ve lost valuable time.”
- “You’re not good at asking – are you?” “No I’m a millennial - we use our phones!”
- Interest in bicycle traffic which is increasing- bike/ped facilities becoming a priority
- “We know we are not visitor ready, lacking interpretation.”
- Virtual brochure is online but website is not updated. Missing key sites.
- “At our end we want to bring more attention to the byway.”
- Salida and Buena Vista are both engaged in wayfinding
- Buena Vista is concentrating on reducing sign clutter
- Salida is concentrating on tying together US 50 and the downtown business district
- Eggers Mountain School Museum was only found because staff at Arrowhead Lodge speculated where it might be located.

**Inconsistencies in attraction identification: signs, printed materials such as maps and brochures, and mobile devices**

- There is a great Collegiate Peaks Scenic Byway brochure available online but printed copies were not available at Visitor Center
- No printed materials specific to the Byway were found along the route
- Many of the attractions in Chaffee County are located some distance from the Byway and their accessibility from the Byway was seldom clear.
- Collegiate Peaks Overlook and Collegiate Peaks Wilderness are listed on TripAdvisor.com but not Collegiate Peaks Scenic Byway

Scenic Byway signs south to north:



1<sup>st</sup> sign on CO 291 before intersection w/ US 50, No sign at T-intersection w/ US 50



2<sup>nd</sup> sign on US 50 before intersection with US 285, No sign at T-intersection w/ US 285



3<sup>rd</sup> sign before US 285 and US 50 split

4<sup>th</sup> sign before US 285 and CO 291 intersection



No sign at US 285 and US 24 intersection



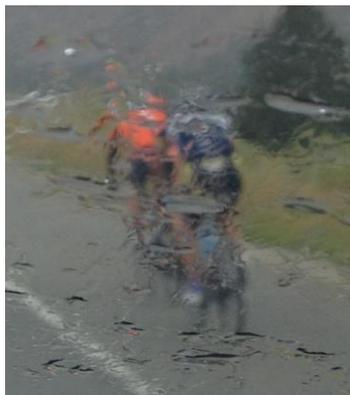
4<sup>th</sup> sign south of Granite



5<sup>th</sup> and final sign just before intersection with CO 82



No sign directing travelers towards Byway from eastbound CO 82



Bicycle signage and cyclists on Byway Buena Vista and Granite



Signage for Mt. Princeton and St. Elmo without any indication of hot springs or ghost town



Consolidated business signage minimizes sign clutter with the exception of Santa



Variety of signs in Salida

## Recommendations

An analysis of this formal assessment exercise combined with the input of local officials, transportation professionals, and tourism specialists resulted in recommendations that can improve the ease of navigation for visitors and better capitalize on the potential for increasing travel-related revenues for the communities along the Byway.

### Summary of Key Recommendations from the Assessment Team

#### Navigational Signs Overview

- A. Continue to address the issues of inconsistent signage, lack of signage promoting visitor attractions, and signage clutter. Interpretive waysides along the Byway should all be clearly identified as part of the Byway's story. Some waysides have a blue columbine sign indicating their significance to the scenic byway but some waysides do not. Visitor Center signage needs to be more easily recognized and should be the same design in every municipality along the Byway to maximize its recognizability.
- B. Buena Vista is currently working to reduce the visual clutter of its gateway signage and refine the signage hierarchy to help direct visitors through town. Salida is conducting a signage inventory to identify, and eliminate where possible, unnecessary or repetitive signage especially in the U.S. 50 corridor.
- C. Develop a signage program to help visitors navigate; with so many significant sites (destination sites) located some distance away from the byway corridor it is important to have strong visual cues guiding visitors away from and back to the byway. The adventure routes marked out on the brochure map are virtually invisible on the ground. There should be signage iconography specific to the adventure route that is utilized in a fashion similar to the blue columbine signage on the scenic byway.
- D. Consider a self-guided tour with around six stops along the byway that collectively tell the story of Chaffee County and hint at more detailed stories to be found at destination sites located off adventure routes on the periphery of the byway. This location based tour could be available online to correspond with on site interpretive panels or it could simply be a labeling mechanism on maps (i.e. tour stops 1-6) and it could be used as a tool to draw visitors from one site to the next.
- E. Add blue columbine directional signs to the intersection of US 24 and US 285 for all travel directions. There should be directional signage added to the T-intersections of CO 291 & US 50, US 50 & US 285, and CO 82 & US 24 (for eastbound travelers on CO 82 sign should read "TO Collegiate Peaks Scenic Byway").

#### Interpretive Tools

- A. Update the [collegiatepeaksbyway.org](http://collegiatepeaksbyway.org) website to provide navigational, historical, and interpretive information for mobile devices. The website needs to be optimized to function on mobile devices in order to be useful to most travelers. The website should assist visitors in planning a trip (should tie in directly to local businesses that can enhance traveler experiences) as well as for on-site

interpretation. Currently the downloadable brochure found on the website will not open without Adobe Flash which is not supported on the iPhone or other Apple devices. The brochure should be reconfigured to operate across a wider array of mobile devices. Consider a downloadable “short list” of top sites along the byway that visitors can save to their mobile devices and reference without cellular service.

- B. Consider expanding the collection of icons used to direct visitors to attractions off of the Byway. Icons are being selectively used with recreation signs are working well. The iconography program could be expanded to include icons for visitor centers, interpretive sites, different types of destination sites, and museums. Legends for icons should be provided on gateway kiosks and on the Byway website.
- C. Consider adding signage explaining the significance of the Arkansas River’s recent designation (2014) as a Gold Medal Stream by the Colorado Wildlife Commission.
- D. Provide printed copies of the Collegiate Peaks Scenic and Historic Byway at visitor centers in Buena Vista, Poncha Springs, and Salida. The assessment team found maps of the Byway and historical information about the area but there was no print material available that was specific to the Byway.

### **Bicycle Safety**

- A. Currently the only bicycle signage alerting drivers to the presence of cyclists bears the “Share the Road” message. This type of signage has led to some user conflicts due to different interpretations by cyclists and drivers. Experimenting with updated bicycle signage along the Collegiate Peaks Byway could help avoid conflict over sign interpretation and would reinforce Colorado’s bicycle friendly culture.
- B. Consider partnering with CDOT to test one of the “share the road alternatives” pictured below. Delaware DOT recently began replacing their “share the road” signage with “bicycles may use full lane” signage. A broader CDOT research project could include other byways with heavy bicycle traffic – Peak to Peak and Cache la Poudre are candidates.



The recommendations included in this document represent only the first steps in the process of developing a more effective system of wayshowing. Recommendations concerning directional signage and interpretive signage can be acted upon in the short term by bringing together relevant stakeholders and CDOT officials. Representatives from the Collegiate Peaks Byway Committee can play a valuable role in working with relevant stakeholders and CDOT officials. Recommendations concerning orientation and interpretive kiosks, clustered signage, and training programs will require additional effort to secure funding and achieve consensus on placement.



► This map is for your preliminary trip planning. Before taking these routes and trails, please obtain detailed maps and area information from the local resources on the back page.

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|--|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Agnes Vail Falls</li> <li>2 Allie Belle and Flora Belle Ore Tipples</li> <li>3 Alpine</li> <li>4 Alpine Tunnel Entrance (road to traffic)</li> <li>5 <b>Arkansas Headwaters Visitor Center</b></li> <li>6 Arkansas Hills (USFS Roadless Area)</li> <li>7 Aspen Ridge</li> <li>8 Barbara Whipple Trail</li> <li>9 Bascom Park</li> <li>10 Big Bend Motorcross Track</li> <li>11 Browns Canyon/Hecia Junction take-out</li> <li>12 Browns Canyon Wilderness Study Area</li> <li>13 <b>Buena Vista Chamber of Commerce</b></li> <li>14 Buena Vista Heritage Museum</li> <li>15 Buena Vista Whitewater Park</li> <li>16 Buffalo Peaks Wilderness Area</li> <li>17 Cache Creek placer mining sites</li> <li>18 Cache Creek Cemetery</li> <li>19 Cantonville Cemetery</li> <li>20 Chaffee County Courthouse</li> <li>21 Chaffee County Fairgrounds</li> <li>22 Chalk Cliffs</li> <li>23 Chalk Creek Fish Hatchery</li> <li>24 Chubb Park State Wildlife Area</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>25 Clemens Cemetery</li> <li>26 <b>Collegiate Peaks Scenic Overlook</b></li> <li>27 Collegiate Peaks Stampede Rodeogrunds</li> <li>28 Collegiate Peaks Wilderness Area</li> <li>29 Colorado Farm to Table</li> <li>30 Colorado Midland Railroad Tunnels</li> <li>31 Colorado Trail</li> <li>32 Continental Divide Trail</li> <li>33 Cottonwood Hot Springs</li> <li>34 Cottonwood Pass</li> <li>35 <b>Crossroads of the Rockies Visitor Center</b></li> <li>36 Denny Creek Trailhead</li> <li>37 Denver, Leadville &amp; Gunnison Depot</li> <li>38 DSP&amp;P Railroad Grade</li> <li>39 Elephant Rock</li> <li>40 Fairview Cemetery</li> <li>41 Frontview Travel Management Area</li> <li>42 Gas Creek Schoolhouse</li> <li>43 Granite</li> <li>44 Hancock</li> <li>45 Heckenlofer State Wildlife Area</li> <li>46 Hutchinson Homestead</li> <li>47 Iron City, Iron City Cemetery</li> <li>48 Jackson Hotel</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>49 <b>Leadville Stage Road Historic Wayside</b></li> <li>50 Lenthury Cut-off Trail Road</li> <li>51 Love Meadow State Wildlife Viewing Area</li> <li>52 MSS Quarry</li> <li>53 Marshall Pass</li> <li>54 Mary Murphy Mine</li> <li>55 Maysville, Maysville Schoolhouse</li> <li>56 Maxwell Park Schoolhouse</li> <li>57 Maxwell Park State Wildlife Area</li> <li>58 Midland Bike Trail</li> <li>59 Midland Hill</li> <li>60 Monarch Crest Trail</li> <li>61 Monarch Mountain Ski Area</li> <li>62 Monarch Pass Parking/Trailhead</li> <li>63 Monarch Spur Trail</li> <li>64 Morley Bridge</li> <li>65 Mt. Aneto mineralogical area</li> <li>66 Mt. Aneto Road</li> <li>67 Mt. Princeton</li> <li>68 Mt. Princeton Hot Springs</li> <li>69 Mt. Shawano Fish Hatchery</li> <li>70 North Cottonwood Creek Trailhead</li> <li>71 Poncha Pass</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>72 Poncha Springs Schoolhouse</li> <li>73 Pottminger Lake Trailhead</li> <li>74 Rainbow Trail</li> <li>75 Ruby Mountain mineralogical area</li> <li>76 <b>Salida Heart of the Rockies Chamber of Commerce</b></li> <li>77 Salida Hot Springs Aquatic Center</li> <li>78 Salida Museum</li> <li>79 Salida Whitewater Park</li> <li>80 <b>San Isabel National Forest Visitor Center</b></li> <li>81 Shawano</li> <li>82 <b>Smelter Historic Wayside</b></li> <li>83 St. Elmo Schoolhouse</li> <li>84 SteamPlant Theater &amp; Event Center</li> <li>85 Tenderfoot Mountain</li> <li>86 The Numbers put-in</li> <li>87 Trout Creek Pass</li> <li>88 Turner Farm</li> <li>89 Turnet, Turnet Cemetery</li> <li>90 Ute Trail</li> <li>91 Valley View Schoolhouse</li> <li>92 Vickburg</li> <li>93 Wetheravane Farm</li> <li>94 Winfield, Winfield Cemetery</li> <li>95 <b>Zebulon Pike Historic Wayside</b></li> </ul> |
|--|--|---|---|

Map from [collegiatepeaksbyway.org](http://collegiatepeaksbyway.org)