A Framework for Wayshowing:

Alpine Loop Scenic & Historic Byway

Hinsdale, San Juan and Ouray Counties
Colorado

June 2019

Acknowledgments

Document Produced By
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Cover photo by Jennifer Loshaw

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Executive Summary: Alpine Loop Scenic & Historic Byway

Wayshowing is a collection of signs, maps, brochures and electronic media that have been developed to aid travelers in their journey. A system of this kind of information is critical to help guide 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 envisioned.

The following assessment describes the conditions that existed from July 30 – August 1, 2018 on the 65-mile backcountry Alpine Loop which traverses the rugged high country of the remote San Juan Mountains. Four travelers volunteered to record and evaluate their experience, and a fifth drove the rental Jeep. The team traveled to Yankee Boy Basin the first day, from Ouray to Silverton to Lake City and back to Ouray the second day, and returned to Silverton on the third day.

On the day-long Jeep trip, the team met 193 other vehicles driving the Loop counterclockwise; the number of other vehicles driving clockwise (our direction) is unknown. Discussions with local stakeholders in all three communities described dramatic changes in the way the byway is being used. Consider the following marketing description of the Alpine Loop offered on www.aztecnm.com :

> *These rocky roads were first used by 19th century miners who carted their ore off to Silverton, Ouray and Lake City in mule-drawn wagons. One can easily spend an entire day exploring ghost towns, abandoned mining camps, and mining structures that were built from the mid 1870s to early 1900s."*

For many years, descriptions like this have attracted people who took pleasure in the exploration of nature and history through hiking, climbing, and a scenic drive. Today, the majority of travelers who arrive on this very same road are seeking a very different pleasure, one of driving all terrain vehicles at considerable speed in a spectacular visual setting.

Tourism businesses and byway groups note that as gateway communities gain a higher number of recreationists coming for the motorized vehicle experience, they are steadily losing the earlier type of travelers who came for hiking, fishing, wildlife, wildflowers and history.

Byway leaders are steady in their determination to hold onto the values of stewardship, of historic preservation, of conservation and undisturbed nature. They are equally sensitive to the fragility of their local tourism-based economies. This balancing act dominates public and private discourse in all three communities.

Uncertainty reigns as extreme weather events keep impacting regional transportation corridors. At the time of the on-the-road Wayfinding Assessment in July 2018, the Durango Silverton Railroad had suspended operations due to extreme drought and wild fires. Business in Silverton dropped 95% from the year before, and a plea went out to residents in neighboring communities asking them to bring any personal business they could to the merchants of Silverton.

The winter of 2019 then delivered exceptionally heavy snows, and a March avalanche closed U.S. Highway 550 for two weeks. In late June the Loop was not yet opened to travel, delaying the opening of the summer travel season for all three communities. Byway leaders did not yet know how many historic structures on the Alpine Loop had survived the winter's dramatic snow load, but do know that the Rosa Lime Kiln, an historic 40-foot structure on the Loop above Lake City, was destroyed by avalanche. Under these serious circumstances, what role can wayshowing play?

> "*Wayfinding and visitor management go hand in hand. We are concerned about the sustainability of our resources and our road. We have to teach people how to be responsible. Roads need to be reclassified for the degree of difficulty. We need to make state laws about the legality of OHVs on state roads. We need to see how snow impacts our resources this year, and we may need to do public land reassessments.*"
>
> Heidi Pankow, Director
> Alpine Loop Governing Committee

Recommended Actions

- Focus actions on 1) the sustainability of the road itself, 2) the preservation of historic and natural resources of byway and 3) the livability of the three gateway communities.
- Construct itineraries that shift the marketing of the Alpine Loop as a one-day experience to the offering of multi-day trips. Travelers will thus have the opportunity to experience two or three of the gateway communities, and communities will benefit economically from lodging, food/drink, retail, etc.
- Create a heart connection. Change the language in all communication materials to steadily build a case that visitors must respect the fragility of the land and the fragility of the gateway communities.
- Improve visitor experience and safety by making the Loop one-way for everyone.
- Update the terrain difficulty rating scale for sections of the Loop to a system similar to the downhill skiing scale: 1) easy, 2) moderate, 3) difficult, 4) skilled only, and 5) extreme.
- Educate about the fragility of the tundra—repeatedly.
- Educate drivers on precisely what it means to be responsible while on the Loop. (Think driver education and gun safety training). Use multiple media channels to deliver this information to the public prior to their arrival, and while they are in the gateway communities.
- Use this same training to educate local front-line influencers.
- Use law enforcement to change behaviors, building on the success of the Ranger program cooperatively operated by sheriffs' offices in all three counties.
- Clarify access points to all jurisdictional boundaries and provide not only a map, but specifics of what behaviors are allowed, and which are forbidden in each jurisdiction.
- Press elected officials to pass statewide laws related to the use of OHV (off highway vehicles) on state roads.

Alpine Loop Scenic Byway

Photo by Jennifer Loshaw

Hinsdale County & Town of Lake City
OHV Ordinance Requirements sign

Photo by Jennifer Loshaw

Morning Rush Hour on the Alpine Loop Scenic and
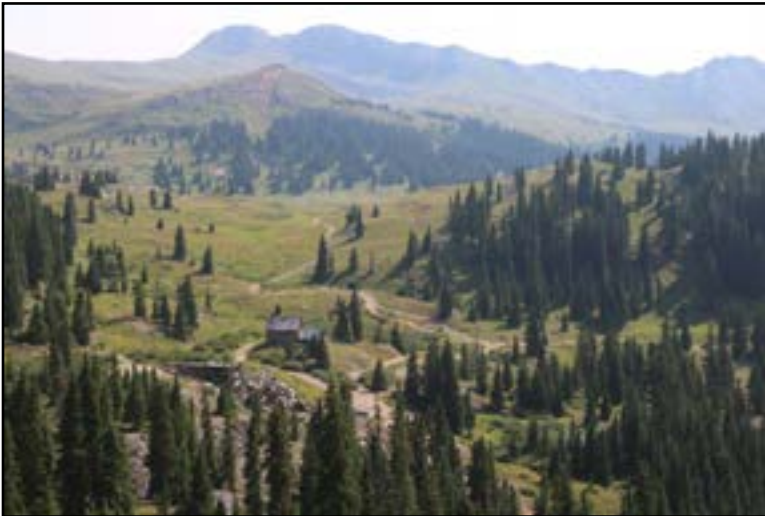Historic Byway

Photo by Jennifer Loshaw

Ghost Towns pepper the Alpine Loop Scenic and Historic
Byway

Photo by Jennifer Loshaw

Bureau of Land Management
Alpine Loop sign

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

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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.*

The Components of Wayshowing

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 Jennifer Loshaw

Alpine Loop Scenic & Historic Byway Sign, as well as direction signage to featured stops and attractions along the byway

Method of Assessment

Often the difficulty in providing effective wayshowing lies in understanding where travelers require assistance and in what form. In June 2018 an on-the-road experience was conducted along the Alpine Loop Scenic & Historic Byway to answer some of these questions. Specifically, the experience 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 travelers see through the windshield and what they read on maps, brochures, mobile devices, and web sites in their laps.

Detailed "never ever" traveler reactions to specific locations are found in Appendix A.

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 byway leadership on the Alpine Loop and with additions from a primary stakeholder group—vehicle rental companies.

The twenty-eight (28) attractions listed below comprised the sites and attractions for assessment.

Cultural Heritage Sites

- Mayflower Gold Mine
- Mayflower Mill
- Old Hundred Mine
- Walsh House (Duncan House)
- Town of Animas Forks Jail
- Cinnamon Pass Summit
- American Basin interpretive sign
- Burrows Park interpretive sign
- Burrows Park Ghost Town
- Sherman Overlook interpretive sign
- Hinsdale County Courthouse
- Susan B Anthony Speech on Women's Suffrage (Sept 1877)
- Dead Man's Gulch (Alfred Packer)
- Henson Kiosk
- Ute-Ulay Mine and Mill Complex
- Capital City (building)
- Rosa Lime Kiln
- Bonanza-Empire Chief Mill
- Engineer Pass

Recreation Sites

- Durango-Silverton Train
- Hinsdale County Museum
- Alfred Packer Trail
- Red Mountain Gulch Picnic Area
- Ouray Hot Springs Pool
- Box Canyon Waterfall and Park (Trail to Amphitheater)

Visitor Centers

- Town of Silverton Visitor Center
- San Juan County Mining Heritage Center
- Town of Ouray Visitor Center

Photo by Jennifer Loshaw

Engineer Pass, Elevation 12,8000

A five-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 no knowledge of the area. They were given the list of stakeholder-identified 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 & confusion and note apparent reasons
- Quiz "front seaters" on effectiveness of signs, maps and other driving instructions
- Note which wayshowing tools "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"

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 those comments and observations regarding each location is found in Appendix A.

Recommendations

Organization: Findings
The Alpine Loop Byway organization has worked with the BLM and other public land agencies to build a comprehensive wayfinding infrastructure that includes maps, brochures, electronic information, navigational and interpretive signage that stretches throughout this backcountry byway. The byway has also has also helped fund infrastructure that supports visitors including restroom facilities and restoration of historic buildings in the ghost town of Las Animas. The organization has been very successful in competing for funds from the Federal Highways Administration's National Scenic Byway Program, as reflected in the following list of successful awards, granted over a period of fourteen years, many supporting wayfinding and interpretation projects:

1992	Alpine Loop: Hinsdale County Turnouts & Improvements	SB-1992-CO-06	$96,136
1992	Alpine Loop: Visitor facilities	SB-1992-CO-07	$32,000
1996	Alpine Loop: Management/ Interpretive Plan	SB-1996-CO-08	$76,000
1999	Alpine Loop Interpretation	SB-1999-CO-11	$44,800
2000	Alpine Loop - Silver Thread & Alpine Loop Interpretive Cntr	SB-2000-CO-01	$239,246
2000	Alpine Loop Rest Room Facilities	SB-2000-CO-03	$10,000
2001	Alpine Loop - Implement Alpine Loop Corridor Mgt Plan	SB-2001-CO-10	$32,000
2005	Alpine Loop Scenic Byway Travel Management Plan	SB-2005-CO-07	$55,000
2006	Alpine Loop Interpretive Initiative	SB-2006-CO-17	$59,000

The committee that governs the Alpine Loop Scenic and Historic Byway is comprised of representatives from the Bureau of Land Management and the three gateway communities. Heidi Pankow (chair), Jim Lovelace (BLM), Kat Papenbrock (Ouray), Deanne Gallegos (Silverton), Bev Rich (Silverton), Kristie Borchers (Lake City). The committee works together with a strong sense of collaboration and participation, gained through regular planning and marketing with two other regional organizations: 1) The Southwest Travel Region, and (2) The Mountains and Mesas travel region (which includes Grand Junction) which is newly designated by the Colorado Tourism Office.

Organization: Recommendations

This byway organization functions extremely well. Because all of the partners are coping with natural disasters (avalanche, rock slide, fire, flood), we recommend that the governing committee focus on just two key actions:

1. Research what the States of Washington and Oregon have accomplished in Visitor Management in the area of motorized and non-motorized vehicles.
2. Work to get Colorado legislation passed that addresses the legality of UTV's and ATV's on state roads. Due to 16in 16, this is currently being addressed through a pilot study in Lake City through local government, with guidance from the Colorado State Patrol and the Colorado Department of Transportation. As of March 2019, the laws have not changed. Current programs are addressing of safety; seatbelts, speed, and driver knowledge.

Gateways: Findings

The three communities of Ouray, Silverton, and Lake City anchor the byway, and serve as the three gateways to the Alpine Loop Scenic and Historic Byway. Each gateway community provides a visitor center that carries comprehensive regional travel information, and each county maintains the roadways that comprise their section of the Alpine Loop. In addition, Sheriff's departments in Hinsdale and San Juan Counties share the expense of a Ranger who patrols the byway between Lake City and Silverton.

The evolution of recreational vehicles from Jeeps to All Terrain Vehicles and now to Razors has impacted the backcountry roads in dramatic ways.

> Razors are small and fast, and their suspensions can take a bump way faster than a Jeep.   They go two or three times the speed limit. This is why everything is dust covered.
>
> (Bev Rich, Silverton)

The assessment team traveled in a Jeep from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, and kept a count of the number and type of vehicles on the Alpine Loop that at one time was known as the ATV Capital of the World."

OHV and ATV's	24
Razors	111
Motorcycles	23
Jeeps	34
Kids driving ATVs	2
TOTAL	192

Photo by Jennifer Loshaw

Various types of vehicles can be seen on the Alpine Loop Scenic Byway

Bev Rich of the San Juan Historical Society in Silverton, describes the current impact of motorized recreational vehicles on San Juan County: "I was the County Treasurer and took in money for the fines when we first hired a Ranger to manage traffic on the tundra. We took in huge money the first few years, then it tapered off. The word is out…the Ranger program has worked! Be sure to talk with our city administrator in Silverton. He's the one that has to find money for fill and gravel. The ATV's are ruining the roads. This is a real budget problem for this small county."

Navigation: Findings

> "I've been telling people for years that we don't have enough signage. Last week we had two elderly men who rented a Jeep and got completely lost while driving the Alpine Loop. Many visitors don't realize they need to prepare themselves ahead of the drive with maps, and extra supplies for emergency situations.   (Brandy, American Jeep Rentals)

Ouray:
- There is a specialized group that comes to hike the 14ers. They rent Jeeps to get to the trailheads. You can also find hikers in Yankee Boy Basin. They've walked in trying to get to a trailhead for Mount Sneffels.
- There are great scenic views from the Yankee Boy Basin just above Ouray
- Hot Springs Pool in Ouray was not hot enough – concerns with how much it would cost to take a family
- Visitor Center – Excellent maps of Alpine Loop and Perimeter Trail; Extremely well informed staff
- Ouray Jeep group is proposing a $2 per vehicle fee to help fund a Loop Coordinator
- Trail to get to SH550 to the Animas Forks ghost town is hard to find

> "Engineer Pass is the worst stretch of road I've ever ridden through and I've even been to the Urals in Russia…It would take very special equipment to ride that!"
>   A motorcycle rider from Denmark who has been riding for thirty years

Silverton:
- Turn off for Old Hundred Mine, couldn't find signage for the tour
- Town of Eureka speed limit drops to 15 MPH. Eureka Lodge B & B on the byway
- In Silverton, We cherish our heritage sites. The Heritage program is really important to us.
- The Y coming into town at the Visitor Center is a huge point of contention with CDOT. It is part of the RV park.
- Our Wayfinding Assessment team searched for the location where the Durango-Silverton Train boarded and disembarked passengers. There were no signs in the middle of town to give us a clue, no displayed schedule, no "you are here" on the map.
- Starting two years ago, ATV's were permitted to drive on certain streets in Silverton. This is because motorized vehicle people are keeping us alive financially.
- Alpine Ranger is paid by two counties, carries a gun and gives tickets, and is overseen by San Juan County Sheriff
- What's the cost? Peace and Quiet. You can't hear yourself think any day in July. The other cost—a loss of long time friends who can't tolerate the environmental damage. Those who like the quiet get ostracized.
- BLM region just recently acquired Silverton. They have a full scale travel management plan for Silverton and hope to replicate the same planning effort for Lake City.
- After Train interruption of service during fires in 2018, Business in Silverton was down 95%. We are way too dependent on the train.
- San Juan County Mining Heritage Center has signage in town and Alpine Loop signage at the Center itself.

Lake City:

- Debra at Matterhorn Hotel estimates that 85% of people in town are doing the Loop. We warn them about road conditions, she says.
- Lake City has more natural ice climbing…there is a lifetime of climbing here
- Alpine Loop speed limit is 25 MPH. Lake City and Silverton move traffic in a clockwise direction.
- Four different maps of the Alpine Loop are currently distributed to travelers, including Lake City's, The Silverton Standard Newspaper Center fold, a CDOT map, and stand-alone Alpine Loop map. This does not include maps in 4-wheeling books.
- Neighboring states (Utah and Arizona) have driver licenses that allow ATV's to drive on all roads. Also, riders who come from a distance think that our terrain is just like the desert they are used to driving. Drivers are used to flat, dry terrain. They just don't realize how rain, snow, wind, and cold change the roadbed itself. Conditions can change fast and we end up pulling vehicles out of all kinds of trouble.

Navigation: Recommendations

Ouray:

- Safety comes first
- Reinforce requirements for helmets and speed limits for children
- Update the difficulty rating scale to a rating system similar to downhill skiing ratings: 1) easy, 2) moderate, 3) difficult, 4) skilled only, and 5) extreme
- Be directive and firm in the language of wayfinding. The soft language we use now is ineffective
- Recommend educational programs along byway for front desk personnel and visitors. Examine Leave No Trace Program that CTO now sponsors. Is the language interactive enough to meet BLM recommendations for stronger language regarding back country ethics
- Post road conditions
- Install "stay on the road" signs
- Replace the logs that signal "go no further " with more directive signs, that read "Stay off the Tundra!"
- Use more 2-sided signs (people are turning around to reread signs they have passed, creating a safety hazard)
- Post travel times for different kinds of vehicles
- Clarify access across all jurisdictional boundaries
- Develop a wayfinding system within the town of Ouray itself (an in town wayfinding plan is waiting for funding)
- Examine how vehicle rental policies seem to drive visitor itineraries. Our group pushed to get the rental Jeep back in time, just when we were encountering extreme conditions on Engineer Pass.

Photo by Jennifer Loshaw

Safety comes first.

Silverton:
- There is signage needed to guide travelers out of Silverton to the Loop itself.
- 3 main messages: Be prepared. Stay on the Trail. Respect the Tundra.
- Most of our riders are from Texas, Louisiana and Oklahoma. Somehow we need to create a heart connect, and work to teach them to interact with the loop in a more respectful way.

Lake City:
- If all three communities (Ouray, Silverton and Lake City) moved traffic in one direction, it would improve safety and also improve the quality of the visitor experience
- Reinforce requirements for helmets and speed limits for children
- No columbine navigation signs every 10 miles

Interpretation: Findings
The Assessment Team easily located the historic sites and interpretive signs listed on the assessment exercise, but commented on very few. The tourism professional in the back seat noted that the two "never-evers" shifted their attention from searching for understanding the uniqueness of place to getting from point to point on the trail, and really stopped engaging much with the history and stories of the byway.

- Many of the interpretive signs are sun faded
- In 2018, the tundra was damaged due to drought, and in 2019 there is concern for potential damage to historic buildings under severe snow loads.
- Burrows Park Red Cloud was a great interpretive sign
- At Maggie's Gulch there is great signage for Loop information for 4-wheelers
- Duncan House has good interpretive information
- Numbered stops guide the walking tour in Animas Forks ghost town
- Clean bathrooms were much appreciated
- Cinnamon Pass Summit sign is poor and faded
- Burrows Park Red Cloud was a great interpretive sign
- This was the Ute's sacred hunting ground.
- Good safety sign: Do Not Head up to Top after Noon! (Sherman Overlook & Red Cloud 14er)
- Encountered a lost driver going from Lake City to Silverton, driving a small jeep with 2 parents and child. Late afternoon and traveling with no supplies.

Many of the BLM interpretive signs are faded by the sun.

BLM interpretive signage achieves consistency through the same design "look and feel" on all panels.

Interpretation: Recommendations

> Address behavior and ethics. The tone of all our communications has to change. Set a new mood. Evaluate how the BLMs pilot project on the Silver Thread model tried to expand thematic elements in interpretive materials to "interlink morals". BLM experimented with this model on Silver Thread to address the same behaviors and attitudes that are problematic on the Alpine Loop.
>
> (Jim Lovelace, BLM)

- Shift the perception of the Loop from a one-day experience to Ouray's notion that byway resources should be offered as a multi-day trip with overnights in different gateway towns.
- Include churches and cemeteries for historical and cultural backdrop. What about the Miners Saints in Silverton?
- Replace numbered signs that guide walking tour of Town of Animas Forks
- The sign at Cinnamon Pass needs to be replaced
- Add signage in Lake City to educate visitors about lakes, trails and mines in the immediate area
- Increase interpretive information about Watchable Wildlife
- People want to see moose and bear, and also information on large mountain lion population
- Streamline interpretive panels so they have a consistent design look and feel. Those produced by BLM have this consistency
- Use interpretive panels, apps, etc. to steadily build the message of the fragility of both the natural and built resources
- American Basin Interpretive sign is not obvious from both directions. It needs a second side
- In American Basin, interpretive content is needed on wildflowers, geology, the forest itself, and minerals

Action Plan for Wayshowing

Understanding that Wayshowing and Visitor Management go hand-in-hand

- Focus actions on 1) the sustainability of the road itself, 2) the preservation of historic and natural resources of byway and 3) the livability of the three gateway communities.
- Create a heart connection. Change the language in all communication materials to steadily build a case that visitors must respect the fragility of the land and the fragility of the gateway communities.
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- Update the terrain difficulty rating scale for sections of the Loop to a system similar to the downhill skiing scale: 1) easy, 2) moderate, 3) difficult, 4) skilled only, and 5) extreme.
- Educate about the fragility of the tundra—repeatedly.
- Educate drivers on precisely what it means to be responsible while on the Loop. (Think driver education and gun safety training). Use multiple media channels to deliver this information to the public prior to their arrival, and while they are in the gateway communities.
- Use this same training to educate local front-line influencers.
- Use law enforcement to change behaviors, building on the success of the Ranger program cooperatively operated by sheriffs' offices in all three counties.
- Clarify access points to all jurisdictional boundaries and provide not only a map, but specifics of what behaviors are allowed, and which are forbidden in each jurisdiction.
- Press elected officials to pass statewide laws related to the use of OHV (off highway vehicles) on state roads.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

Byway notes and observations from the Wayfinding Assessment Teams during their 3 days on-the-road tour of the Alpine Loop Scenic and Historic Byway on July 30 – August 1, 2018.

Observations by Individual Assessment Team Members

"Never-Ever" Volunteer, Merry Reimer

- Town of Silverton Visitor Center, Tourism information ½ mile sign
- Found skateboarding park
- At Visitor Center kiosk there is a San Juan Skyway logo (not Alpine Loop)
- First saw sign for Alpine Loop at Mayflower Mill
- 3 miles in Byway saw first signage for Alpine Loop welcome sign
- Howardsville sign right before turnoff for Old Hundred Mine
- First sign for Gold Mine right before turnoff for Old Hundred Mine
- 5 miles from town of Eureka there was a sign for Eureka Campground and a sign for Alpine Loop
- No sign for Town of Eureka
- Nice sign for Town of Animas Forks
- No mention of "Walsh House" in Town of Animas Forks
- Cinnamon Pass Summit sign is faded
- Saw interpretive sign for American Basin (mounted uphill from Lake City)
- Saw Burrows Park "A Town with Three Names" interpretive sign
- Saw interpretive sign for Sherman Overlook

Volunteer, Jennifer Loshaw , Montrose Tourism Professional

- Town of Silverton Visitor Center, no signage at intersection.
- Visitor Center parking lot entrance not easily noticeable.
- Only found porta-potties, not sure if they are off Hwy 550
- Unable to locate Durango-Silverton train places to board and disembark.
- Thought train tracks were "old"
- No signs to give a clue; displayed train schedule would be helpful
- Chamber information board by train disembark site was unclear
- Information street signs: Blaire was hard to find
- No real information on "You are Here" on map
- Used map on Chamber sign (at Durango-Silverton Train) to find San Juan County Mining Heritage Center
- Mayflower Gold Mine, 2 signs for the tour but needed to know what direction to go

- In town no signs directing you to the loop
- Kiosk was a surprise – no pre-notification
- Interpretation sign at overlook
- Located coffee shop
- Mayflower Gold Mill – needed to find
- First Alpine Loop sign – 3 miles in
- Missing fire danger notice - other than no fireworks
- Signage for Alpine faces Old Hundred Mine and Creed entrance to town
- Maggies Gulch clearly marked (4 miles in)
- Maggies Gulch - great signage for Loop information on 4 wheel
- No sign for Town of Eureka
- Speed limit changes in Eureka
- UTV's equal dust (pollutants) which kill flowers and pollutes river
- Good signage for Animas Forks (No sign for Alpine)
- Easy to find signage at Cinnamon Pass Summit
- Interpretive sign on Cinnamon Pass Summit needs replacing
- Summit was exciting to our guests, took photos
- American Basin interpretive sign needs a road sign
- American Basin interpretive sign not obvious from this direction
- Interpretive sign needs second side
- Burrows Park Red Cloud interpretive sign – great signs
- Burrows Park parking areas with no information on camping requirements and general information
- Located Sherman Overlook interpretive sign
- Located Rosa Lime Kiln with sign

Observations and Notes from Lenore Bates, Tourism Professional, Denver

- Great views from the Yankee Boy Basin – back side of Mt. Sneffels
- Sites to include: Churches & Cemeteries
- Town of Silverton: Visitor Center – Preserve America Community Sign, OHV Sign on road/in front of Visitor Center, Kiosk has room for updates?
- What about the Miners' Saint in Silverton?
- Silverton location where the Train Boards – No Kiosk, sign or visual clue
- San Juan County Mining Heritage Center – Signage in town & Alpine Loop Signage
- Alpine Loop Speed is 25 MPH and direction clockwise (suggested by Lake City & Silverton)
- Turnoff for Old Hundred Mine (Is there signage for tour?) No comments
- Town of Eureka 15 MPH (Eureka Lodge B & B)
- Town of Animas Forks Duncan House – renovated and interpretations – The walking tour #s on the posts are worn – several people signed in
- Cinnamon Pass Summit – Sign is poor and faded
- American Basin Sign – no comment
- Burrow Park – Sign & ghost town – no comment

- Gunnison BLM, Bruce Weaver was replacing logs in designated parking areas
- Sherman Overlook – 14er's Red Cloud – Safety Warning: do not head up after noon to top (another note states that this is butterfly habitat)
- No Columbine Signs every 10 miles (Alpine Loop & Silver Thread to Jim Loveland/BLM and Alan Club/CDOT)
- Town of Lake City – Meeting at restaurant with Town & BLM. Did not visit the locations in town (museum, etc.)
- Suggest two- and three-day itinerary with stops in each town. Clean bathrooms. Since the Alpine Loop has rugged roads – suggested skilled drivers w/ 4WD and they can be guides.
- Include a rating system (like ski slopes) Expert double diamond
- Engineer Pass - Encountered a lost driver going from Lake City to Silverton – sent them correct direction – small jeep going toward Lake City with wife, child no supplies in late afternoon
- Town of Ouray - Hot Springs Pool – (concerns with Cost/family, Time to Soak, Heat)
- Box Canyon
- Visitor Center - Excellent staff Alpine Loop Map and Perimeter Trail info
- Suggest Leave No Trace Education/Outreach with staff along the byway and visitors
- Education Program Topics – Geology, Forest, Wildflowers, Moose & Bear
- Getting from SH550 to Animas Forks is hard to find – 85% know what they know
- Road Conditions Posted?
- Town of Silverton: met with Deanne & Bev. Restaurant was full of visitors. Fire and mudslides with the train made a huge financial loss to Silverton. Suggested two grants
- TAP (Transportation Alternative) to renovate and reuse Train Depot, should include Kiosk/Marker where passengers unload and load, and other materials (printed and/or online)
- FLAP to help address the road conditions heading out of Silverton onto the Alpine Loop

APPENDIX B

What's the difference between a side by side (or a UTV) and an ATV?

The answer is: quite a lot.

While ATVs and UTVs have some things in common (i.e. you ride them outdoors, they have four wheels, they are made by a lot of the same manufacturers, etc.) they have quite a lot of things different. Here's how you can tell the difference between the two:
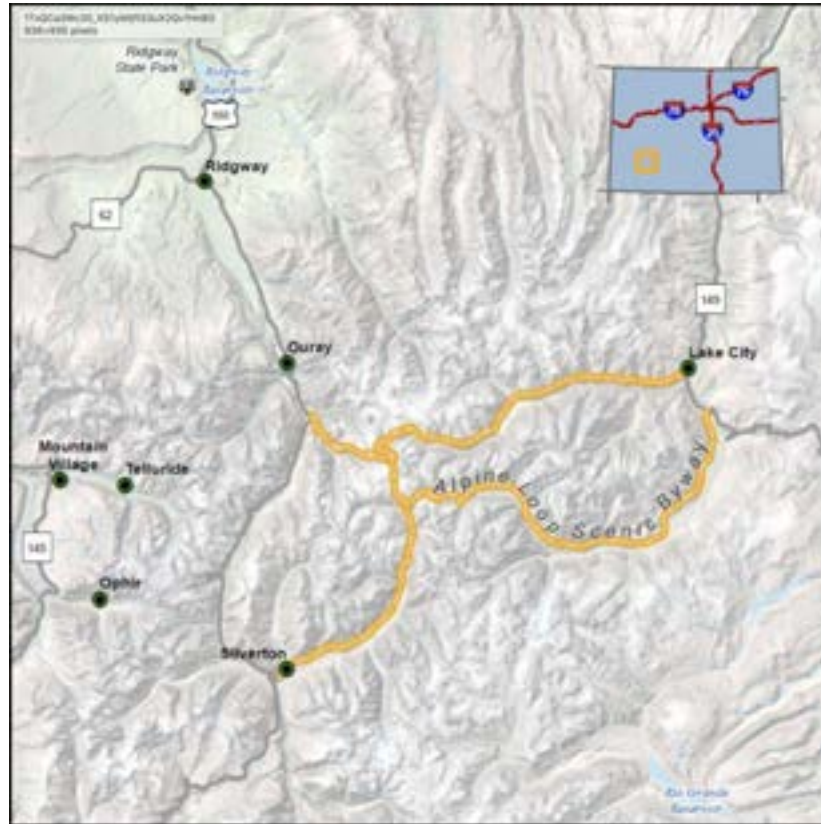
- ATVs are all terrain vehicles. They're smaller than a UTV and are usually meant for a single rider (sometimes 2). They're recreational and are often used for racing/sports because they're nimble and handle well.
- UTVs/side by sides are off-road vehicles that can seat between 2 and 4 people (6 seaters are on the way!) and they're designed for rougher terrain, hauling, and more work horse sort of tasks. (P.S. UTV stands for utility task vehicle).
- Sometimes, you might hear the term ROV or MUV. Both of these terms are referring to side by sides, not UTVs.
- ATVs you straddle like a saddle to ride. UTVs you sit in bench or bucket seats.
- ATVs steer using a handlebar system. UTVs have a steering wheel similar to a car or truck.

Those are the biggies. If you want to get even more specific, (UTVs usually come stock with windshields and roll cages where ATVs usually don't; UTVs can be easier to make street legal, etc.).

www.blog.sidebysidestuff.com

Alpine Loop Scenic Byway (63 miles)
Byway communities include Ouray, Lake City and Silverton

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