

A Framework for Wayshowing:

San Juan Skyway

Ouray, San Juan, La Plata, Montezuma, Dolores,
San Miguel Counties
Colorado



June 2013

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Executive Summary

Wayshowing is a collection of maps, signs and other media that have been developed to aid travelers in their journey. A system of such information is critical to help travelers successfully choose a destination and plan their itinerary as well as to help them navigate once they arrive. As such, efforts to enhance a regional tourism economy must consider the strengths and deficiencies of existing wayshowing elements located along the full length of a byway corridor. The plan that follows assesses the current elements of the wayshowing system that exists throughout the San Juan Skyway, designated as one of 11 of America's Byways® in Colorado and 150 across the nation.

Utilizing a "front-seat back-seat" approach, travelers unfamiliar with the 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 asked for directions. Meanwhile, transportation and tourism specialists in the back seat recorded the navigational challenges for those "new to the byway" travelers in the front. Three (3) four-person teams set out to evaluate how effectively the regional wayshowing system guided travelers to sixty nine (69) specified sites on the San Juan Skyway.

An analysis of the navigation challenges posed in this formal assessment exercise, combined with the input of local officials, transportation 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.

The three teams gave high rankings to a network of eight visitor centers that span the 236 miles of the San Juan Skyway. They found all eight centers stocked with comprehensive written materials that covered the entire region, and visitor center staff that were well trained and extremely helpful. These centers include Silverton Visitor Center, Ouray Visitor Center, San Juan Public Lands Center, Mancos Visitor Center, Mesa Verde National Park and Visitor Center, Cortez Welcome Center, Durango Area Tourism Office and Visitor Center and the Dolores Visitor Center.

Tourism has long been an important economic generator for the South West Colorado region. Its regional heritage sites are recognized nationally for their national and international significance, led by Mesa Verde National Park, a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site. Three federal public land agencies manage the federal lands and heritage sites in the area: The National Park Service, the United States Forest Service, and the Bureau of Land Management. Professional interpretive staff members from these three agencies have helped develop and produce interpretive panels and kiosks over many decades. The network of quality visitor information centers and extensive interpretive signage has created an information-rich region that is second to none in the State of Colorado. Additionally, the regional Colorado Department of Transportation has solid experience designing signage for domestic and international travelers who are unfamiliar with mountain roads.

Because of the excellent interpretive information located at sites throughout the San Juan Byway, the recommendations contained within this report cite mainly site-specific navigation challenges. In summary, the report recommends the following actions:

- A. Improve navigational signage within the city limits of towns and small communities located on the byway. Signage for attractions within the San Juan National Forest was uniformly excellent, as were those associated with Mesa Verde National Park. The greatest need is for wayshowing signs within the limits of the towns themselves.
- B. Modify existing in-town wayfinding signage in both Cortez and Telluride. Both need larger print on signs.
- C. Add pre-notification signs to important heritage sites and attractions. For many, travelers come upon them too fast to safely turn in.
- D. Install identifying signage on the fronts of buildings at the Museum and Mining Heritage Center in Silverton, the Galloping Goose Museum, and the Placerville School.
- E. Address inconsistencies in the naming of attractions in various media (brochures, maps, websites, Google Maps). These inconsistencies are rare and include Keystone Hill Overlook, Ophir Overlook, Red Mountain Overlook, and Galloping Goose Museum.
- F. Cell phone coverage is still spotty on the byway. With research showing that 50% of Colorado travelers depend on mobile devices to make travel decisions, the byway organization needs to move steadily to loading information online and developing byway-specific mobile apps.
- G. Develop clear distinctions between what is offered in the two different information centers in Durango – one downtown and one in Rotary Park.
- H. Assess the impact of heavy motorcycle usage on segments of the byway and add signage that alerts both motorists and motorcyclists to challenging segments of the roadway.
- I. Capitalize on the designation of All-American Road and explain the distinction to locals and travelers alike in wayshowing communication tools.

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 San Juan Skyway in Southwestern Colorado. 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 US Highways 550 and 160, and State Highways 145 and 62, and designation signage along the same 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

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 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.

History of Wayfinding Development on the San Juan Skyway

The San Juan Skyway was designated as a US Forest Service National Scenic Byway in 1988 and as a Colorado Scenic and Historic Byway in 1989. The byway earned the highest level of designation at the national level in 1996 when the Secretary of Transportation designated the route as an All-American Road. Both All-American Roads and National Scenic Byways, those routes with regional significance, fall under the umbrella of America's Byways®.

All-American Roads represent the finest examples of the intrinsic resources of the country. To receive an All-American Road designation, a road must possess multiple intrinsic qualities that are nationally significant and contain one-of-a-kind features that do not exist elsewhere. The road or highway must also be considered a "destination unto itself." That is, the road must provide an exceptional traveling experience so recognized by travelers that they would make a drive along the highway a primary reason for their trip. Designation of these routes requires a special commitment to management to ensure their continued quality. There are currently 31 roads designed as an All-American Road, two in Colorado.

The byway uses the directional signage with the State scenic byway logo (the Columbine sign) and the America's Byways logo. It is also designated as a US Forest Service National Scenic Byway but the US Forest Service has agreed to use only the Columbine signs for directional wayfinding purposes.

A corridor management plan (CMP) was completed in 1995 outlining management, preservation, marketing and interpretive needs, but the plan was somewhat general in detail. The US Forest Service, which was responsible for directing the byway in the early days after designation, also developed and implemented a comprehensive interpretive plan.

The San Juan Skyway received funding in 1992 through the National Scenic Byways Program to design and install interpretive signage at three locations along the byway. These included interpretive signs at Keystone Hill near Telluride, an orientation kiosk in Cortez and an interpretive center in Mancos. Subsequent grants in 1996 through 1998 resulted in additional interpretive signage all around the byway. Grants in 1997 and 1999 resulted in the construction of the Red Mountain Pass Overlook, a large off road circular pullout with interpretive signs and numerous parking spots.

On a regional scale, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) is responsible for signage along state highways throughout the area, including US Highways 160 and 550, and State Highways 145 and 62. There is good signage for the major attractions, particularly in the national forest. Many of the trailheads, lakes, campgrounds, and picnic areas are signed using the standard brown or green recreational signage. There are a few point-of-interest signs but the usage is not consistent.

Local signage was installed in the towns of Telluride, Durango and Cortez. The signs in Durango and Cortez are similar in design while those in Telluride are more rustic. There are no local signs in Ridgway or any of the smaller communities along the byway.



Telluride Signage



Town of Cortez Signage

San Juan Skyway 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 April 2013 an on-the-road experiment was conducted along the San Juan Skyway 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 several members of the San Juan Skyway Byway Committee at a meeting in February 2013. A signage assessment survey of Committee members was also conducted. Representatives were asked to list the top ten heritage, cultural, and/or recreational sites in their respective counties and provide an assessment of the existing directional signage. Approximately 69 sites were chosen for the Wayfinding Assessment. The attractions and sites chosen for inclusion in this exercise appear in Table 1.

Table 1: San Juan Skyway Wayfinding Assessment Route

Assessment Team # 1: Ridgway to Telluride to Dolores	
Ridgway Museum & Railroad Ridgway State Park Dennis Weaver Memorial Park Placerville School San Miguel County Park Keystone Hill Overlook Telluride Visitor Center Gondola Telluride Historical Museum Telluride Town Park Idarado Legacy Trail Telluride Library	Imogene Pass Trailhead Telluride Mountain Village Ophir Loop Overlook/Pullout Galloping Goose Trail Matterhorn Campground Lizardhead Pass Interpretive Site Bear Creek Trail Rico Interpretive Site Rico Library & Town Hall Louis M Jones Memorial Park Dolores Public Lands Office
Assessment Team #2: Durango to Ridgway	
Trimble Hot Springs Pinkerton Natural Hot Spring Pullout Haviland Lake Durango Mountain Resort Olde School House Café (Restaurant at The Needles)	Silverton Train Depot Silverton Mountain Ski Area Notorious Blair Street Christ of the Mines Shrine Red Mountain Overlook

Andrews Lake – Recreational Trailhead Little Molas Lake Campground Molas Pass Overlook Silverton Visitor Center Silverton Zip Line Museum and Mining Heritage Center Kendall Mountain Recreation & Ski Area	Ironton Ghost Town & Ironton Park Ouray Amphitheater Scenic Overlook Ouray Ice Park – Box Canyon Ouray Visitor Center & Hot Springs Pool Ouray County Historical Society & Museum Uncompahgre River Walk Trail (trailhead in Ouray)
Assessment Team # 3: Durango to Dolores via Cortez	
Durango Area Tourism Office and Visitor Center Animas River Trail – find two trailheads DOW Education & Nature Center Animas Mountain Trail San Juan US Forest Service Office Dominguez & Escalante Expedition Monument Old Mancos Jail Sleeping Ute Mountain Rest Area Cortez Welcome Center Dolores River Trail Karla’s Bakery and Restaurant Dolores - McPhee Reservoir	Discovery Museum Durango Silverton Narrow Gauge Train Las Animas Museum Fairgrounds/Event Center Hesperus Ski Area Mancos Visitor Center Mesa Verde National Park & Visitor Center Cortez Cultural Center Anasazi Heritage Center Dolores Visitor Center Galloping Goose Museum

Three (3) four-member teams were 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 three teams is found in the Appendix.



Byway signage near Ridgway



Bear Creek Recreation Area Interpretive Signs

Summary of Key Observations from the Assessment Team

Navigational signs overview

Cortez – Local directional signage received comments such as “writing too small” and “too much information”; volunteer at Cortez Welcome Center said he’d had comments/complaints about size of signs

Site specific navigational observations

Placerville School - Used map to find Placerville School but could not locate it; asked at one mercantile store – very friendly – said the school was in town park; drove right past town park and turned in on road; no signage

Keystone Hill Overlook - No indication on Colorado highway maps

Rico Interpretive Site - Bit difficult to see even at slow speed; Drove by first and turned around; Need point of interest sign

Louis M Jones Memorial Park -no sign on highway

Dolores Public Lands Office - Sign on SH145, not easy to find this. Needs INFO on the sign

Pinkerton Natural Hot Springs – needs point of interest sign

Haviland Lake – team used website, map on phone and highway signage to locate; GPS gave the wrong directions

Andrews Lake (MM 58) – a new winter parking area has been constructed by CDOT; US Forest Service signage could be improved

Little Molas Lake Campground – there are two similar signs, one for Molas Lake Campgrounds and the other for Little Molas Recreation Area. Assessment team missed the sign on the highway; recommend changing location for better visibility and clarity; consider placing an icon sign for camping

Museum and Mining Heritage Center – The team found that the front of the building has no identifying signage but there is a sign at the rear of the building

Red Mountain Overlook - missed on the route going north on US 550 but found it on the return southbound trip to Durango; make sure northbound signs are installed;

Ouray County Historical Society & Museum – building is signed but there is no sign on Main Street; recommend signage installed on Main Street

Discovery Museum – the left turn into the parking lot from US 550 northbound and the inability to make a left turn upon exiting created uncertainty for the driver in this very busy intersection; transportation professional noted the need for a new solution to access this busy attraction; there was confusion about where museum visitors should park

Las Animas River Trail - trailhead at Rotary Park has comprehensive interpretive signs and map; near the Discovery Museum the trail is only marked with an interpretive sign which does not give indication of where the trail goes and how long it is

Durango Silverton Narrow Gauge Train – directional signs at 6th and 7th need to be reviewed (see team notes)

DOW Education & Nature Center – directional arrow would have been helpful on entrance sign

The Animas Museum – check signage at 31st and 32nd (see team notes)

Animas Mountain Trail – one sign appears on Main Street but no further signage detected; this would have been difficult to find without help from the Visitor Center

Hesperus Ski Area – could use pre-notification signage; needs directional signage at the town of Hesperus

Dominguez & Escalante Expedition Monument – dangerous turn heading westbound and no pre-notification sign

Mancos Visitor Center – No directional signs from the highway or on the business route

Old Mancos Jail – no signs found from the business route

Mesa Verde National Park - there was directional signage for Mesa Verde but would benefit from having an additional directional sign at the stop sign

Anasazi Heritage Center – pre-notification signs needed on US 160 westbound

Dolores Visitor Center – needs pre-notification signage

Dolores - McPhee Reservoir – needs pre-notification sign



Rico Interpretive Site

Site specific interpretation signs

Placerville School - wonderful example of one room school

Rico Interpretive Site - need point of interest sign

Notorious Blair Street – No interpretive information of significant of name

Ironton Ghost Town/Ironton Park –BLM signage exists but provides no interpretation; interpretive signs should be installed

Old Mancos Jail – has no interpretation and is not visitor ready

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

Keystone Hill Overlook - Nothing on Google or Places; a brochure was available on San Miguel Watershed but no scenic byway map

Ophir Loop Overlook/Pullout - Only called “scenic overlook” – found easily with signs

Red Mountain Overlook - some confusion about name – Idarado vs. Red Mountain Overlook

Galloping Goose Museum - Museum signage is good but it does not appear to be named the Galloping Goose Museum

Recommendations and Action Plan

An analysis of this formal assessment exercise combined with the input of local officials, transportation 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.

This document recommends the following:

- A. Improve navigational signage within the city limits of towns and small communities located on the byway. Signage for attractions within the San Juan National Forest was uniformly excellent, as were those associated with Mesa Verde National Park. The greatest need is for wayshowing signs within the limits of the towns themselves.
- B. Modify existing in-town wayfinding signage in both Cortez and Telluride. Both need larger print on signs.
- C. Add pre-notification signs to important heritage sites and attractions. For many, travelers come upon them too fast to safely turn in.
- D. Install identifying signage on the fronts of buildings at the Museum and Mining Heritage Center in Silverton, the Galloping Goose Museum, and the Placerville School.
- E. Address inconsistencies in the naming of attractions in various media (brochures, maps, websites, Google Maps). These inconsistencies are rare and include Keystone Hill Overlook, Ophir Overlook, Red Mountain Overlook, and Galloping Goose Museum.
- F. Cell phone coverage is still spotty on the byway. With research showing that 50% of Colorado travelers depend on mobile devices to make travel decisions, the byway organization needs to move steadily to loading information online and developing byway-specific mobile apps.
- G. Develop clear distinctions between what is offered in the two different information centers in Durango – one downtown and one in Rotary Park.
- H. Assess the impact of heavy motorcycle usage on segments of the byway and add signage that alerts both motorists and motorcyclists to challenging segments of the roadway.
- I. Capitalize on the designation of All-American Road and explain the distinction to locals and travelers alike in wayshowing communication tools.

Partnership and Financial Resources

Projects to be developed in partnership with CDOT:

- Add pre-notification signs to important heritage sites and attractions.

- Assess the impact of heavy motorcycle usage on segments of the byway and add signage that alerts both motorists and motorcyclists to challenging segments of the roadway.

Projects to be undertaken in partnership with local communities:

- Improve navigational signage within the city limits of towns and small communities located on the byway.
- Modify existing in-town wayfinding signage in both Cortez and Telluride. Both need larger print on signs
- Develop clear distinctions between what is offered in the two different information centers in Durango

Projects to be undertaken with individual attractions:

- Install identifying signage on the fronts of buildings at the Museum and Mining Heritage Center in Silverton, the Galloping Goose Museum, and the Placerville School

Additional Projects to be undertaken by the Byway Organization:

- Address inconsistencies in the naming of attractions in various media (brochures, maps, websites, Google Maps) for Keystone Hill Overlook, Ophir Overlook, Red Mountain Overlook, and Galloping Goose Museum.
- Work to load information online and develop byway-specific mobile apps.
- Develop wayshowing communication tools that explain the All-American Road designation to locals and travelers.

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 San Juan Skyway Committee can play a valuable role in working with relevant stakeholders and CDOT officials. Recommendations concerning interpretive signage will require additional effort to secure funding and achieve consensus on placement.

APPENDIX

This section includes the list of sites identified by the San Juan Skyway Byway Committee as key heritage, recreational, and cultural attractions that are meaningful for travelers along the San Juan Skyway All-American Road. Also included are the notes and observations from the Wayfinding Assessment Teams during their tour on the San Juan Skyway on April 24, 2013.

Assessment Team #1

Starting Point: Ridgway

Sites to be located:

Ridgway Museum & Railroad
Ridgway State Park
Dennis Weaver Memorial Park
Placerville School
San Miguel County Park
Keystone Hill Overlook
Telluride Visitor Center
Gondola
Telluride Historical Museum
Telluride Town Park
Idarado Legacy Trail
Telluride Library
Imogene Pass Trailhead
Telluride Mountain Village
Ophir Loop Overlook/Pullout
Galloping Goose Trail
Matterhorn Campground
Lizardhead Pass Interpretive Site
Bear Creek Trail
Rico Interpretive Site
Rico Library & Town Hall
Louis M Jones Memorial Park
Dolores Public Lands Office

BACK SEAT OBSERVATIONS

Observer #1

1. Ridgway Museum & Railroad
 - Found no problem; right on Main Street and very obvious
2. Ridgway State Park
 - Found the park – signage was very obvious
3. Dennis Weaver Memorial Park
 - Signage was obvious
4. Placerville School

- Used map to find Placerville School;
 - saw byway signs on the way;
 - asked at one mercantile store – very friendly – said the school was in town park;
 - drove right past town park and turned in on road; no signage;
 - wonderful example of one room school
5. San Miguel County Park
 - Found it easily due to sign
 6. Keystone Hill Overlook
 - Used smart phone and found photo by Sally Pearce
 - No indication on CO maps
 - Search was for Keystone Hill and found it on National Scenic Byways website
 - Nothing on Google or Places
 - Stopped at overlook after seeing sign; interpretive signage was nice to include sign board of San Juan Skyway
 - Brochure was available on San Miguel Watershed but no scenic byway map
 7. Telluride Visitor Center
 - Easy to find; took list inside to ask questions; wealth of information
 8. Gondola
 - Found easily
 9. Telluride Historical Museum
 - Found easily from information at visitor center
 10. Telluride Town Park
 - Saw from Imogene Road
 11. Idarado Legacy Trail
 - Found sign; nice truck driver told us that road was open up the trail
 12. Telluride Library
 - Found quite easily
 13. Imogene Pass Trailhead
 - Drove up to Jud Wiebe Trailhead; showed signs for hiking, biking, and horseback
 14. Telluride Mountain Village
 - San Juan Skyway sign right before turn to Mountain Village; well signed
 15. Ophir Loop Overlook/Pullout
 - Well indicated; well interpreted
 16. Galloping Goose Trail
 - Saw from Keystone Overlook
 17. Matterhorn Campground
 - Saw sign very easily
 18. Lizardhead Pass Interpretive Site
 - Very well done to include restrooms
 19. Bear Creek Trail
 - Found easily
 20. Rico Interpretive Site
 - Pointer sign to the museum with picture; great.
 - Bit difficult to see even at slow speed
 - Drove by first and turned around

- Need point of interest sign
 - Well done once we stopped
21. Rico Library & Town Hall
 - Architecture was easy to see
 22. Louis M Jones Memorial Park
 - Town park – asked local where it was
 - Finally saw sign when we drove by park
 23. Dolores Public Lands Office
 - Dolores Visitor Center is closed; found quite easily

Where can we.....

1. Hike - Telluride
2. Mountain bike – Telluride, Dolores
3. Road bike – anywhere on scenic byway
4. Find locally grown food – all along the byway in summer season

General Comments:

- Only was able to use smart phone twice due to lack of cell phone coverage
- The more even the smaller communities can get their information online, the better it will be for them

Observer #2

Chipeta – scored map;
Cimarron Café excellent

1. Ridgway Museum & Railroad
 - Found visually easily
2. Ridgway State Park
 - Found easily, used Jan’s previous knowledge
3. Dennis Weaver Memorial Park
 - Found sign and entrance; easily signed
4. Placerville School
 - No sign!
 - Historic – used map
 - Took SH 62 to Dallas Divide and Placerville
 - Could not find it at first; wandered around town and asked at a store, got friendly instructions and found it
5. San Miguel County Park
 - Saw on highway; good sign in Placerville
6. Keystone Hill Overlook
 - Not sure; Jan tried device but insufficient reception and not on map
 - Decided to go to Telluride to ask
 - Greg found it on his device “straight search” – National Scenic Byway website library of photos
 - Greg found this – well signed on highway;
 - has good map showing hiking, biking trails, Telluride area watershed map, no byway map

7. Telluride Visitor Center
 - No problem – well signed in advance
 - Very friendly staff – had information and directions to all Telluride sites (#8-13) and town map
8. Gondola
 - check
9. Telluride Historical Museum
 - Closed – went up Imogene Pass for view
10. Telluride Town Park
 - Visual from Imogene Pass
11. Idarado Legacy Trail
 - Drove along it, information center folks told us where to find it
12. Telluride Library
 - Found from map
13. Imogene Pass Trailhead
 - Drove up it – good views
14. Telluride Mountain Village
 - Easy to find, on map, went in and out
15. Ophir Loop Overlook/Pullout
 - Only called “scenic overlook” – found easily with signs
16. Galloping Goose Trail
 - Saw it from Keystone Hill Overlook
17. Matterhorn Campground
 - Easy – well signed
18. Lizardhead Pass Interpretive Site
 - Got it easy - nice
19. Bear Creek Trail
 - Well signed
20. Rico Interpretive Site
 - Drove past it—came back after passing it up. Needs POI sign-SB
21. Rico Library & Town Hall
 - Easy off highway, easily recognizable architecture
22. Louis M Jones Memorial Park
 - No sign except “townpark” on highway. Found it
23. Dolores Public Lands Office
 - Sign on SH145, not easy to find this. Needs INFO on the sign

Assessment Team #2

Starting Point: Durango

Sites to be located:

Trimble Hot Springs

Pinkerton Natural Hot Spring Pullout

Haviland Lake

Durango Mountain Resort

Olde School House Café (Restaurant at The Needles)

Andrews Lake – Recreational Trailhead

Little Molas Lake Campground
Molas Pass Overlook
Silverton Visitor Center
Silverton Zip Line
Museum and Mining Heritage Center
Kendall Mountain Recreation & Ski Area
Silverton Train Depot
Silverton Mountain Ski Area
Notorious Blair Street
Christ of the Mines Shrine
Red Mountain Overlook
Ironton Ghost Town & Ironton Park
Ouray Amphitheater Scenic Overlook
Ouray Ice Park – Box Canyon
Ouray Visitor Center & Hot Springs Pool
Ouray County Historical Society & Museum
Uncompahgre River Walk Trail (trailhead in Ouray)

BACK SEAT OBSERVATIONS

Observer #1

1. Trimble Hot Springs
 - From rental car place – the mobile directions told the driver to turn the wrong direction from the side street. Kylynn told Doug not to turn left, to go ahead and turn around up on the right to get back onto the highway. (Highway sign stated 550 N 8 miles) (SB Sign needs Jan Juan Skyway and Arrows)
2. Pinkerton Natural Hot Spring Pullout
 - This was on the mobile device. (add to Tagwhat) The frontseaters have never noticed this pullout. Matt took pictures and stated that it was moved from the other side of the road to this side. We do not recall having advance notice of the pullout.
3. Haviland Lake
 - Matt said there are leaches in the lake. Horseback Riding Rapp Corral (Add to Tagwhat) (SWA Brown Sign)
4. Durango Mountain Resort
 - On left, Large Signage.
5. Olde School House Café (Restaurant at The Needles)
 - Spotted on the right as driving down the road. (Note on Coal Bank Pass)
6. Andrews Lake
 - Recreational Trailhead – At MM58 little sign (too little) states twilight peak. Make sure that website states place for overnight parking and day parking. (opposite sides of road)
7. Little Molas Lake Campground
 - There was not a tent sign in the parking area. Front seaters missed the tent sign on the highway. There is winter parking. Also a Little Molas Recreation Area Sign.
8. Molas Pass Overlook
 - No comments

9. Silverton Visitor Center
 - Volunteer helped. Stated a zipline is not built yet in town. They had books, postcards & maps for sale and bathrooms.
10. Silverton Zip Line
 - There was a service (shuttles) that take visitors to a zipline. However, the front-seaters did not stop to ask questions or did not see the service in town.
11. Museum and Mining Heritage Center
 - Closed for the season. There was not a sign on the street front. We drove to the rear and there was a sign there.
12. Kendall Mountain Recreation & Ski Area
 - In town and front seaters did not get out to read or observe. They almost use a mobile device as a sole source of all information, except for talking to the Silverton Visitor Center volunteer.
13. Silverton Train Depot
 - No comments
14. Silverton Mountain Ski Area
 - Brown Sign stated 6 miles.
15. Notorious Blair Street
 - It was mentioned that this winter Justin Timberlake stayed in one of the hotels.
16. Christ of the Mines Shrine
 - We drove from the back of Silverton up to the shrine. Then we hiked up to the shrine and looked around. (Lungs were on fire at that altitude.) We returned to the highway.
17. Red Mountain Overlook
 - Is this also known as Idarado? We found this site on the way back to Durango.
18. Ironton Ghost Town & Ironton Park
 - Stopped at trailhead going to Ouray and driver looked at trailhead sign without info. Stopped on the other side of the road on the way back to Durango. Larson Brother's Mine with no interpretive signage.

FOUND ANOTHER PULLOUT – New Bear Creek Falls pullout with interpretive signs and a great view of the canyon.

19. Ouray Amphitheater Scenic Overlook
 - Found the site but the gate was closed for the season.
20. Ouray Ice Park
 - Box Canyon - We walked on the metal board walks to view the ice park.
21. Ouray Visitor Center & Hot Springs Pool
 - Front seaters talked to the volunteer and asked about the River Walk Trail and places for lunch. We ate at the Brewery and had delicious pulled pork with coleslaw on the sandwich and green tea. Visitor Center was very knowledgeable on all activities (including mud fest) and restaurants.
22. Ouray County Historical Society & Museum
 - Drove past the museum. Also drove past a motel called Wiesbaden that Matt said it has a hot springs in a cave on the premise.
23. Uncompahgre River Walk Trail (trailhead in Ouray)
 - The trailhead was closed near the visitor center, so they sent us down the road over the bridge.

Observer #2

1. Trimble Hot Springs
 - Site was easy to find for the team. Site was on the phone's GPS and identified with highway signage. Recreation usage.
2. Pinkerton Natural Hot Spring Pullout
 - Site was surprisingly on phone GPS map and easy to find. Site has a kiosk which verified the location.
3. Haviland Lake
 - GPS gave the wrong directions - to CR200, Haviland Road. May have been operator error. Team used website, map on phone, and highway signage to find the site. Recreation usage.
4. Durango Mountain Resort
 - Team had knowledge of this site. Found it with signage and also used GPS. Recreation usage.
5. Olde School House Café (Restaurant at The Needles)
 - Team saw the café sign as they were driving to DMR.
6. Andrews Lake – Recreational Trailhead
 - The main recreational trailhead is closed for the winter. Team found with highway signage. A new winter parking area has been constructed by CDOT and could use better signage by the USFS. Site has kiosks at the main area which was closed.
7. Little Molas Lake Campground
 - Site was hard to find. There are two similar Molas Lake Campgrounds. Highway signage was likely knocked down by winter plowing. It was present in the southbound direction. It would likely be replaced by the time the campground was opened. Site could use a USFS sign indicating camping is available at the kiosk just off the highway.
8. Molas Pass Overlook
 - Found easily with highway signs. Has recreation usage.
9. Silverton Visitor Center
 - Site was found with GPS and highway signage. Team was given a map with info for sites 11, 12, 13, 15, and 16. Staff person was very funny.
10. Silverton Zip Line
 - Found out that it doesn't exist at the Visitors Center. Were given a brochure for the Red Mountain Zip Line.
11. Museum and Mining Heritage Center
 - Site was closed. It is missing any kind of signage to ID the building.
12. Kendall Mountain Recreation & Ski Area
 - Found easily with road signage and map. Rec usage.
13. Silverton Train Depot
 - Found easily with road signage and map. Has kiosk.
14. Silverton Mountain Ski Area
 - Found signage for area. Didn't go down the 15 mile dirt road to see it.

15. Notorious Blair Street
 - Found on map. No info signage of significance was observed but likely there somewhere.
16. Christ of the Mines Shrine
 - Easy to find. Has signage and info on the monument.
17. Red Mountain Overlook
 - Missed on first pass. Found on the return trip with south bound highway signage. Not on GPS. North bound signage was likely wiped out by winter plowing and will be replaced in the spring.
18. Ironton Ghost Town & Ironton Park
 - Found site but team didn't recognize it. BLM signage was observed but it didn't mention the site. Roadway was closed due to snow.
19. Ouray Amphitheater Scenic Overlook
 - Found easily with highway signage. It was closed for the winter.
20. Ouray Ice Park – Box Canyon
 - Found easily with highway signage. It was closed.
21. Ouray Visitor Center & Hot Springs Pool
 - Found both with good signage. Center provided very good information.
22. Ouray County Historical Society & Museum
 - Found with the visitors center info. It has signage on the building but lacks signage on Main St.
23. Uncompahgre River Walk Trail (trailhead in Ouray)
 - Found with the visitors center info. Confirmed with site signage.

Assessment Team #3

Starting Point: Durango

Sites to be located:

Durango Area Tourism Office and Visitor Center
 Discovery Museum
 Animas River Trail – find two trailheads
 Durango Silverton Narrow Gauge Train
 DOW Education & Nature Center
 The Animas Museum
 Animas Mountain Trail
 Fairgrounds/Event Center
 San Juan US Forest Service Office
 Hesperus Ski Area
 Dominguez & Escalante Expedition Monument
 Mancos Visitor Center
 Old Mancos Jail
 Mesa Verde National Park & Visitor Center
 Sleeping Ute Mountain Rest Area
 Cortez Cultural Center

Cortez Welcome Center
Anasazi Heritage Center
Dolores River Trail
Dolores Visitor Center
Karla's Bakery and Restaurant
Galloping Goose Museum
Dolores - McPhee Reservoir

BACK SEAT OBSERVATIONS

Observer #1

1. Durango Area Tourism Office and Visitor Center
 - Well staffed; daily info available – very effective
 - Very knowledgeable staff – were able to ask a lot of questions and were able to map route
 - Restrooms available
2. Discovery Museum
 - Not a good way to get into parking lot if turning left
 - Very busy intersection
 - Exiting was also awkward – no left turn
3. Animas River Trail – find two trailheads
 - Near museum – interpretive sign is the only marker of a trail – does not give indication of where the trail goes and how long it is
 - No directional indicators on the interpretive sign
 - Also found trailhead at Rotary Park – interpretive signs and interpretive map
4. Durango Silverton Narrow Gauge Train
 - Comfortable area with things to do while waiting for train
 - Schedule posted on the wall (great idea) as well as on brochure
 - Current brochures with current prices were not available
 - Person in ticketing office was not the best person with people
5. DOW Education & Nature Center
 - Directional arrow would have been helpful on entrance sign
 - Piece of carpet thrown outside at front of entrance to interpretive center but was done that morning and will be taken away
 - Interesting interpretive signs
 - Connects to the Animas Trail and Rotary Park
6. The Animas Museum
 - Nice place for rest area outdoors
 - Educational class with museum staff
 - Wheelchair access was available
 - Overall navigation form information and maps very good
7. Animas Mountain Trail
 - Sign from Main Street but after that we did not see signage and mostly luck in finding it from the museum
 - Two interpretive signs including a map of the trail

8. Fairgrounds/Event Center
 - Signage announced it;
 - looked like ample parking but not sure for big events
 - complex was connected
 - did not get out
9. San Juan US Forest Service Office
 - Good interpretive materials for kids
 - Room especially for hikers with maps
10. Hesperus Ski Area
 - No directional signage at Hesperus town
 - Signage about ½ mile on
 - Change to the intersection for Hesperus to cut down on traffic turning left to see where the ski area is
 - Good safe entrance to ski area from the highway
11. Dominguez & Escalante Expedition Monument
 - Coming from Durango there are double lines on highway and limited view of oncoming traffic
 - Dangerous turn
 - Better to stop and see it from the east traveling lanes
 - During the busy season it would be very dangerous to stop on a 65 MPH highway to make a left turn
12. Mancos Visitor Center
 - No signage from highway that there is a visitor center
 - Asking at town hall for directions
 - No signage directing to visitor center from business route
13. Old Mancos Jail
 - No interpretation for jail
 - The view inside is not accessible to children (too high)
 - It was locked and the visitor center said they never unlocked it for visitors
 - It should be interpreted, unlocked and historically recreated inside
14. Mesa Verde National Park & Visitor Center
 - Excellent – loved the new sculpture at the entrance to the Visitor Center
 - Ramp off highway – there was directional signage for Mesa Verde but would benefit from having an additional directional sign at the stop sign
15. Sleeping Ute Mountain Rest Area
 - Hiking trails at rest area
 - Covered places to sit out and eat
 - Separate dock walking area
16. Cortez Cultural Center
 - Directional signage good within the town but the font is too small and some signs have too much information to read (general comment about Cortez signage)
 - Very interesting place and very nice ladies inside
 - Locally grown foods
17. Cortez Welcome Center
 - Colorado Welcome Center
 - Lots of information placed nicely and informative personnel

18. Anasazi Heritage Center
 - Interactive displays – great for kids
 - Would definitely return
 - Hiking in the rear
19. Dolores River Trail
 - Several trail signs along the highway with several access points to the trails
20. Dolores Visitor Center
 - Good signage – looked closed but easy to find
21. Karla's Bakery and Restaurant
 - Used Google Maps and didn't find it
 - Stopped and asked directions and got them
 - Easy to find
22. Galloping Goose Museum
 - Museum signage is good but it does not seem to be named the Galloping Goose Museum
23. Dolores - McPhee Reservoir
 - Easy to find
 - Hike
 - Mountain bike – road bike

Observer #2

1. Durango Area Tourism Office and Visitor Center
 - Found immediately after asking at the reception desk at the Strater Hotel
 - Not 100% certain this was the correct location as the visitor center is out at Santa Rita Park and not on Main Ave. downtown
 - Our tourists got several maps and brochures and asked the lady for locations of each attraction and circled each on the map.
 - She also provided specific directions to the Discovery Museum
2. Discovery Museum
 - Based on directions from Welcome Center, found quickly but signage seemed poor and arrived behind the museum instead of in the main parking lot
 - The only way they found it was because of the museum sign on the side of the museum building after passing the main entrance.
3. Animas River Trail – find two trailheads
 - Found one “trailhead” right behind the Discovery Museum but no sign indicating it was the Animas River Trail
 - Then headed out to find #5 – trouble turning right due to no left turn
 - Spotted a sign for Animas River Trail at Rotary Park so successfully followed signs to second trailhead
 - Got out and read sign with some information
4. Durango Silverton Narrow Gauge Train
 - (#7) Came from Animas Museum and decided to follow signs
 - Was signed at 7th so turned left on 7th instead of 6th as we should have – might consider moving the sign or saying “Next left”
 - After reaching 7th and Main, no sign to indicate needed to turn right – got lucky and used signs on Main to find station
 - Ticket office gave very good brochure

5. DOW Education & Nature Center
 - (#4) Didn't find any signs until right at the driveway
 - Found mainly due to help from the welcome center and the provided map but basically found immediately and efficiently
 - Durango Service Center was open and talked to some DOW personnel
 - Visitor Center not open for another couple of weeks
6. The Animas Museum
 - Found using map from welcome center
 - Saw one sign on N Main but missed 31st St and had to turn on 32nd and work our way back
 - Was a sign at 31st but we thought it would have been more useful on the north side of 31st rather than south side
 - Kris thought the position of the sign implied you'd take the next street (30th) instead of 31st
 - Kris and Roger seemed very interested in the museum
7. Animas Mountain Trail
 - Went there from the Animas Museum using directions from the welcome center
 - After leaving the museum there were no signs and would have been difficult to find without the directions
 - Roger seemed keen to come back for a hike later
8. Fairgrounds/Event Center
 - (#5) Accidentally found the fairgrounds due to sign after the fairgrounds entrance
 - Entered the recreational center and worked back south through the parking lots – lucky
 - Had previously seen signs back around Rotary Park
9. San Juan US Forest Service Office
 - Sign posted as San Juan Public Lands Center – I imagine most would not have found it looking for Forest Service
 - Found relatively easily using mainly the map from welcome center and directions from welcome center staff
10. Hesperus Ski Area
 - No signs until after Hesperus but then "Ski Area" signs made it obvious
 - Found based mainly on directions and map from welcome center
11. Dominguez & Escalante Expedition Monument
 - Could not find on any map or brochure – only knew roughly where it was from directions from welcome center
 - Sign right before monument indicated location
 - Scary both from perspective of fast oncoming traffic and fast traffic from behind
 - No turn lane available as a refuge
12. Mancos Visitor Center
 - Primarily used map and directions from welcome center but had some reassurance with several signs indicating miles to Mancos
 - Took Mancos Business route so no signs whatsoever indicating visitor center
 - Asked at town hall – she gave directions to visitor center and jail
13. Old Mancos Jail
 - Found after getting directions from the town hall but no signs found (from business route anyway)
 - Thought the jail was lacking in any information or interpretive signs

- Was locked so you couldn't go in - a disappointment
14. Mesa Verde National Park & Visitor Center
 - Used directions from Durango Visitor Center and map from same
 - Had some issues knowing which way to turn to get to Mesa Verde Visitor Center from top of interchange ramp
 - Driver missed what I thought was a large obvious sign and turned right instead of left \
 - Thought a sign visible from the stop sign might be helpful at the top of the ramp
 15. Sleeping Ute Mountain Rest Area
 - Saw "rest area" sign one mile ahead and sign right at the entrance – no problems whatsoever
 - Did not know until we arrived that it was named "Sleeping Ute Mountain" Rest Area
 16. Cortez Cultural Center
 - Found it based on the purple signs on Main Street but again thought writing was a bit small – had to be right at the sign to read it
 - However it was located quickly and efficiently
 - Feeling rushed so no time to hang around
 17. Cortez Welcome Center
 - Went to the Colorado Welcome Center which is hopefully the same thing
 - Followed purple signs which received comments such as "writing too small" and "too much information"
 - Man at reception desk said he'd had comments/complaints about size of signs and people have missed it
 - Our "tourists" thought it looked very interesting and would come back
 18. Anasazi Heritage Center
 - Sign on US 160 Westbound pointing to SH 145 but no indication of distance
 - Turned but when not visible, did "U" turn and headed toward Cortez again
 - Coming back eastbound followed signs effectively to the location
 19. Dolores River Trail
 - Saw sign pointing to trail as we pulled into Dolores
 - Also spotted trail and river prior to that
 - Short on time so kept driving
 20. Dolores Visitor Center
 - Drove past – big obvious sign but didn't see any advanced signs
 21. Karla's Bakery and Restaurant
 - Could not locate using I-Phone
 - Drove north through Dolores looking for it but gave up and turned around
 - Stopped and asked a lady painting a building and she directed us back north again ¼ mile
 - We'd just missed reaching it previously before turning around
 22. Galloping Goose Museum
 - Saw it from SH 145
 - Didn't notice any advance signs but the Galloping Goose "train" outside made the location obvious
 - Short of time so didn't stop
 23. Dolores - McPhee Reservoir
 - Kris used San Juan Skyway map from the Durango Welcome Center to find the reservoir
 - Saw no signs and almost turned back on SH 184A

- Came upon a sign just prior to the turn to the reservoir and drove a mile or so to a view of what is left of the reservoir (mostly dried up)
- Somewhat disappointing due to low water level and dramatic reduction in area



Galloping Goose Railroad Museum, Dolores