

OFFICIAL VISITORS GUIDE



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Delta County is located on Colorado’s western slope, at the base of Grand Mesa, the largest flat top mountain in the world. This region is home to the beautifully unique communities of Cedaredge, Crawford, Delta, Hotchkiss, Orchard City and Paonia. Delta County’s history is one of agriculture pioneers, mining, land, and water development; as a result, we are home to endless opportunities for family fun and adventure.

Delta County offers not only diverse communities, but diverse opportunities for fun, for all! From those who crave the multitude of

recreation opportunities like fishing, biking, rafting and skydiving, to those who prefer to relax at one of our incredibly delightful wineries, to those who seek out local art that can be found throughout the county; Delta County offers it all. Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall, Delta County offers something for everyone!

We invite you to plan your next trip to Delta County and experience the beauty that we call home, we promise, we are worth the drive! For more information: visitdeltacounty.com, or connect via email at tourism@deltacountyco.gov.



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PHOTOS BY NOLAN THORNBERRY

Eckert Crane Days

Eckert Crane Days is a local festival that takes place each year at the onset of the migration of the Greater Sandhill Cranes at Harts Basin.

The festival, sponsored by Black Canyon Audubon Society, hosts a number of activities including presentations to the local community and guided bird viewing. It is an annual event, typically occurring the 3rd weekend in March. For local residents, their arrival is one of the

great harbingers of spring.

The journey of the visiting cranes begins at Bosque del Apache in New Mexico, where the cranes over winter. Then, in early spring they take flight and head north to Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge near Alamosa, Colorado, where they spend

a few weeks feeding and building energy for the long migratory flight north along the Rocky Mountain flyway. Their ultimate destination and breeding grounds are in the wetlands of Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming. The flight over the Rocky Mountains is an arduous one, and on their way, they typically do a stopover at Fruitgrowers Reservoir to roost safely in the shallow waters and to feed during the day in the local, harvested grain fields. Weather conditions permitting, the following morning, once ground temperatures warm the rising thermals, they take flight again, circling higher and higher over the reservoir and then up over the Grand Mesa. It is truly a wonderful spectacle to view the liftoff and hear the chorus of “Karoo, karoo.”





The best time of day to catch the newly arriving Cranes is late afternoon as they fly into Hart's Basin or mid to late morning before they take off. New groups arrive most days from mid-March to mid-April and typically only stay one day. To get to Fruitgrowers Reservoir in Hart's Basin from Delta, take highway 92 east towards Hotchkiss. Then, head north on Highway 65 towards the Grand Mesa, turning left (east) onto North Rd in Eckert. Continue approximately 1 mile to the reservoir. If you haven't seen Sandhill Cranes, it is a thrill to watch them and an opportunity not to be missed.

During the festival, look for the Audubon information table at Crane Point, a pull-off before the reservoir at the top of the road that is typically



good for viewing. There are additional pull-offs along the roadway for guided bird viewing. Audubon sets up spotting scopes and has binoculars on hand for those new to the experience. Cranes are not the only birds to look for. You can also see many species of waterfowl, shorebirds, and songbirds. The reservoir provides habitat for over 200 species and has been designated an Important Bird Area by the National Audubon Society.

Follow crane activity during migration or get the full schedule of festival events on the Eckert Crane Days Facebook page. Also, visit the Cornell



Labs website at ebird.org for a list of all species sighted at the reservoir.

For more information on Black Canyon Audubon Society, visit blackcanyonaudubon.org.



3 Things

TO SEE & DO IN CEDAREGE



Keep history alive at Pioneer Town. As one of the historical staples of Cedaredge, Pioneer Town offers both education and entertainment for people of all ages. Founded 42 years ago, it is known to change and renew with new exhibits, events and stories every year. The beautiful Chapel of the Cross was named 2020's best wedding venue in Delta County. Located at 388 S. Grand Mesa Drive, Pioneer Town is open 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Sunday from Memorial Day Weekend through the first week of October and 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Thursday-Saturday the rest of the year. More information can be found at pioneertown.org.

Try the “flavors” of Cedaredge, which boast a tempting array of locally crafted foods and beverages, including heritage apples, two branch-to-bottle hard apple cideries,

award-winning wineries, goat cheese from Grand Mesa Creamery, local beef, veggies, Granma Cheryl's killer apple fritters, Rick's Real Bar-B-Que sauces and bloody mary mixes, handcrafted kettle corn and chocolates...and the list goes on!

The Grand Mesa Creamery, for example, offers artisanal farmstead cheese made by hand in small batches. And the kicker — it's made with goat cheese! They state on their website, “We follow the principle that the healthiest and happiest animals produce the best products. We believe in sustainable agriculture, and a humane, natural approach to animal husbandry. It is our desire to create a sustainable lifestyle and business built on the cornerstone of respect for the consumer, land, animals, and the strength of commitment in local communities.”

Main Street: restaurants, retail and recreation! For residents, Main Street is one of the primary places to be in Cedaredge. Cedaredge has an amazing selection of small and locally-owned businesses.. A fantastic shopping selection, everything from locally-made art and jewelry to an outstanding antique mall, to unique one-of-a-kind treasures you won't find anywhere else in Delta County. Cedaredge's diverse businesses extend far beyond Main Street, and wherever residents decide to go in town, they can support local business and help the town grow. Local favorites include Ollie Jane's, Hintercraft Handmade, Silent Custom Cyclery, Ribbons & Roses Antique Mall, The AppleShed and Lost Mesa Grill, in addition to SIPS on Main, The Pondy, and Cat's on Main.



THINGS TO SEE & DO IN NORTH FORK VALLEY

Charming B&Bs, restaurants serving farm fresh to table food, locally produced wines, art studios by renowned artists, music performances, ongoing entertainment events and festivals, make the three towns of Crawford, Hotchkiss, and Paonia of the North Fork Valley a special place to visit. Located on the east side of Delta County, on the Western Slope of Colorado.

The North Fork Valley is a beautiful and pristine area tucked away in the West Elk Mountains nestled between the North Fork and South Fork of the Gunnison River and two National Forests and the majestic Black Canyon National Park.

Starting with river activities, enjoy Gold Medal **fishing on the North Fork of the Gunnison River**. Try stand up paddling out of Hotchkiss. Go on guided raft trips and fishing

trips out of Crawford or at Pleasure Park near Hotchkiss. We have experienced guides for all activities along the river or enjoy your own solitude at several accessible river spots in the National Forest and BLM land.

Hiking and biking are favorite activities in the area. Rent bikes in Paonia and find a bike trail leaving the town towards Jumbo Mountain. Or hike our numerous hiking trails around all three towns. And for the heartier, hike down from Crawford's North Rim of the Black Canyon to the Gunnison River. The North Rim of the Black Canyon is the more secluded "road less traveled" and is a great area for camping.

A trip to the North Fork Valley is not complete without tours of our area **wineries** and **organic farms** and orchards, some of which have onsite Bed and Breakfast accommodations.

The North Fork Valley is recognized as an American Viticultural Area (AVA) with a climate and elevation conducive to producing high-end wines by a dozen local wineries. Visit, grab a taste of wine and take home a bottle of your favorite using the West Elks AVA map as your guide (map). And try out our **area brew pubs for beer** including Chrysalis Brewery in Paonia.

While touring the wineries, also plan your trip around visits to some of the numerous **organic farms and orchards**. The North Fork Valley has one of the highest concentrations of organic growers organized by the Valley Organic Growers Association (VOGA) who provide both a printed and online directory of farms and tours at the area's visitor kiosks in each town. Every town has a farmer's market to easily purchase local food and, typically, arts and crafts. And catch one of The Learning Council's pop-up kitchens that serve vegan and gluten-free lunches by our area creative chefs using locally grown food.

Peaches, apples, cherries, plums, apricots and pears make up the bulk of the harvest from the North Fork Valley orchards. Grapes for wine grow particularly well in our higher altitude vineyards.

Budget time to check out the **local art scene** centered around the Paonia Creative District, which is one of only twenty-three creative districts in Colorado. The North Fork Valley Creative Coalition, based in Paonia and the Creamery Arts Center in Hotchkiss anchor the art activities





in the area. A stroll down Paonia's Grand Avenue, with historic buildings that house numerous art studios, is a must! The historical Creamery Arts Center hosts a beautiful and large collection of local artists' best work that is available for purchase.

Don't forget to **browse our local merchants** that provide the more traditional goods to the more eclectic fine apparel, glassworks and more from our local creative artists. We have two historical museums, one in Hotchkiss that showcases Hotchkiss and Crawford history and one in Paonia which includes a historical schoolhouse.

And while enjoying the daily activities, save some energy for evening fun with the available **music and theatrical performances** at the Blue Sage Center for the Arts and Paradise Theater in Paonia and the Creamery Arts Center in Hotchkiss. Local bands play at Big B's outdoor restaurant (great climate) between Hotchkiss and Paonia and at the Boardwalk in Crawford, and Pickin' in the Park in Paonia during the summer months, to name a few of the several

music venues.

Now let's talk about the area's numerous annual festivals and events. Favorites of locals and visitors alike include **Pioneer Days** in Crawford in June, **Cherry Days** in Paonia in July, and the **Delta County Fair and Rodeo** in Hotchkiss in August! In spring, April's outdoor "**Hestival**" at Big B's is hosted with **Pickin' in Park**, followed by the **Hotchkiss Sheep Dog Trials** and **Ute Trails Auto Show** over Mother's Day weekend, in Hotchkiss. September brings Mountain Harvest Festival in Paonia. Art events occur year-round, culminating in November with several **holiday arts and craft fairs** in Hotchkiss, followed by the **Paonia Holiday Art Show** in December

Getting to the North Fork Valley from Denver or surrounding counties is part of the fun. Enjoy coming to the North Fork Valley via the West Elk Scenic Byway, which is a **205-mile National Forest Scenic Byway and Colorado Scenic and Historic Byway**. The Byway reaches its zenith at Kebler Pass, elevation 10,007 feet,

open only in the summer months, connecting Paonia and Somerset to Crested Butte. It's a great day trip from the North Fork Valley.

The North Fork Valley is 60 minutes from the Montrose Airport and 75 minutes from the Grand Junction airport. Both take you to Delta, where you pick up Highway 92 to Hotchkiss, and then Crawford or Paonia (via Highway 133). Aspen is two hours away by car over beautiful McClure Pass and Denver is five hours away either by I-70 or the more scenic McClure Pass that goes by the Redstone Castle and the Paonia State Park. And if you come by way of Gunnison and the North Rim of the Black Canyon to Crawford, you will see why the three towns of Crawford, Hotchkiss, and Paonia are part of the West Elks Scenic Byway.

The North Fork Valley is beautiful, charming, and pristine with numerous activities to make for a special vacation.

See NorthForkCreative.org and NorthForkValley.net for more information.

3 Things

TO SEE & DO IN DELTA

BY DANIEL ROMAN

Go to the park: Cleland, Confluence, Sweitzer and more

Delta has a number of parks and public outdoor recreation areas that offer activities for residents of all ages. Some parks, such as Sweitzer Lake State Park, are farther from town and allow for things like boating, biking and birdwatching; while others such as Cleland Park are more residential and offer activities such as covered picnic areas, playgrounds and sports areas.

City parks alone include activities

such as fishing, hiking and trail walking, and parks provide picnic areas, playgrounds and lakes.

Cleland Park's extensive playground area is, in fact, newly constructed, having celebrated its grand opening in the summer of 2021. There is also the potential for another nine holes of disc golf at Confluence Park. More information on Delta's parks, including information about other nearby recreational opportunities such as Bill Heddles Recreation Center and Fort Uncompahgre, can be found at cityofdelta.net under "Parks and Recreation."



Eat healthy and support locals at farmer's market

Established in 1989, the Delta Farmer's Market offers produce, meats, breads and pies, jams, hydroponics and potted plants, arts and crafts, CBD products, jewelry and more from local vendors. The market has expanded this year to include products that were not offered before and even more vendors.

In addition to providing for the local economy, buying local produce and





food is often a healthier option.

As harvests come in, more produce will be available at the market throughout the season. The Delta Farmer's Market is located at Tru Vu Drive In on Hwy 92 and will be open from 8 a.m. to noon every Saturday and Wednesday through September.

Delta, the City of Murals

Have you seen the murals around the City of Delta? Twenty murals can be found on the sides of various

buildings in Delta. Artwork is from large to small in size and represents the history of Delta and more. New murals include the two new works by Seth Weber on either side of West Legacy Park in downtown Delta. The north-facing one was commissioned by the Delta Rotary Club and the south-facing one pays homage to the city's old industry in sugar beets.

Others include: "Ute Country," by Connie Williams; "Gateway to the Canyons," by Richard Doherty and

Seth Weber; and "Anna Dora Opera House" by Richard Doherty.

Along with murals, you can also find a variety of sculptures with many themes. The most famous one is of Antoine Robidoux and the Ute Indians which can be spotted off of Highway 50 (by McDonald's and City Market).

Artwork is created by local artists and is a great way to take in the sites of the City of Delta.



3 DAYS IN Delta County

24 HOURS *in Delta County*

Bright and early, start your 24 hours in Delta County with an amazing 18 rounds of golf at Devil's Thumb Golf Course in Delta, where hopefully the resident antelope will join you on throughout the course.

For lunch, head to Cedaredge and enjoy a local favorite Lost Mesa Grill, then take a lovely stroll around Cedaredge's downtown scene.

Late afternoon, make your way to Stone Cottage Cellars in Paonia and prepare yourself for the most relaxing stay one can imagine in the Stone Cottage, surrounded by a beautiful garden that's yours for the picking, and of course, enjoy a beautiful selection of wine in the tasting room, derived from the very land from which you are so lucky to be enjoying.

Rio Bravo is a must stop for dinner, with delicious Mexican cuisine!

Breakfast brings a quick drive back down to Delta for a rib sticking good old fashioned breakfast at C&J's Cafe, in Delta. Nothing starts the day off better than a great big plate full of creamy biscuits and gravy, golden hash browns, and sizzling bacon.

Enter Delta County from any direction and you will see posted on our welcome sign "Delta County - canyons, rivers, and mountains". It is easy to appreciate this beautiful topography from the road, however in this immersive itinerary We'll share a little local knowledge to help you fully experience the nature-made playground that we call home. Your path winds through land, water, and sky, with stops along the way to enjoy great culinary, historic, and artistic traditions which you will find here among the canyons.

Day 1 – Black Canyon National Park and Crawford Country

The Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park tops the list of things to see here in the area. Over 2 million years the Gunnison River has carved one of the steepest, oldest, and most spectacular canyons in North America. In a word: overwhelming. As you peer into the canyon depths which plunge well over 2,000 feet to the churning river below, you will likely experience a sense that the view is somehow an illusion. Part of the canyon's magic is the fact that it is deeper than it is wide. Unlike the Grand Canyon, which is 18-miles wide. The Black Canyon has a width of only 40-feet at its narrowest point. Viewpoints dot the

rim road, and nature trails are available for the adventurous. Chasm View Nature Trail is a 1/3-mile loop with views of the Painted Wall and Serpent Point. This is a great place to see wildlife, and experience some of the most astounding scenery in the park. North Vista trail offers panoramic views of the area with 3-mile, and 7-mile round trip options.

From most places in Delta County, the canyon's North Rim is most accessible. On your way to and from the North Rim you will pass through historic Crawford Country. This green valley nestled between the West Elk mountains and Black Canyon National Park is home to the small town of Crawford, and Crawford State Park Reservoir. This valley has been home to generations of ranchers and cowboys dating back to the 1880's. You will still see cattle drives here each spring and fall.

In Crawford, you will find the Lazy J coffee shop, Secret Door Book Store, and accompanying art gallery. If you brought your appetite, stroll across the street to the North Fork Boardwalk for some excellent cowboy fare. On warm summer days you will want to stop into Crawford State Park to take a dip in the cool waters of the reservoir.



Day 2 – Raft or SUP the Gunnison River

The Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area is a place of colorful sandstone canyons, ancient archeology, and tranquil waters. The Gunnison River flows clear and cool through the heart of this wonderland, making it one of Delta Counties best natural playgrounds. Native trout, and otters thrive in the Gunnison’s gold medal waters, while bald eagles soar overhead. Foxes, and big horned sheep also call these canyons home. The petroglyph inscribed walls of Eagle Rock Shelter, the “oldest house in Colorado” sit prominently at the mouth of Lawhead Gulch, as they have for the past 13,000 years.

For your second day in Delta County, we recommend an immersive experience in the Gunnison Gorge NCA on a fully outfitted river adventure with Hotchkiss based river outfitter, Western Slope SUP. This trip can be enjoyed as a mellow and scenic rafting float, or a more adventurous stand up paddle adventure. The friendly waters of the Gunnison River cater well to either. The knowledge-

able instructors at Western Slope SUP will introduce you to local wildlife, give a tour of Eagle Rock Shelter, and prepare a delicious locally sourced lunch featuring ingredients from area farms and orchards.

Your river adventure begins and ends at Western Slope SUP’s headquarters in downtown Hotchkiss. After your river trip, take a walk down the block to the Creamery Arts Center. As the name implies, you will find more than art in this two-story gallery. Ask for a scoop of Third Bowl Ice Cream, which is hand-made right here in Hotchkiss. A few doors down you will find Delta County’s only Thai/sushi restaurant, and Black Cat Pizza.

Day 3 – Skydive over Delta

It’s time to go big. Ultimate Skydiving Adventures, the only skydiving center on the Western Slope, is ready to take you 7,500 feet above it all. From Blake Field in Delta, legendary instructor Ben Lowe and his team will fly you into the blue for a one-off perspective on the Grand Mesa, West Elk Mountains, and Black Canyon. Though Ben offers a full learn to

skydive course, the best way to enjoy this adventure in a day is a tandem jump. All you have to do is strap in, let go, and enjoy the view.

After your jump, you will want to let the adrenaline subside. Meander through the nature trails at Delta’s Confluence Park, or amble down Main Street Delta. It won’t take long to see why Delta, Colorado is known as “The City of Murals”. Don’t forget to stop in to CB’s Tavern for a bite and a beverage. At night in Delta you will have the unique opportunity to check out one of Colorado’s last remaining drive-in movie theaters, the Tru-Vu.

There are opportunities for adventures in Delta County to suit just about everyone. Perhaps wine tasting in Paonia is more your speed, or 18-holes at Devil’s Thumb Golf Course. However you chose to spend your time, you will be doing it with some of the friendliest people in Colorado, in one of the last untouched, truly unique parts of the state. A place where old tradition lives on, and western heritage looms large. See for yourself why there is no place quite like Delta County, Colorado.

Town Overview

Cedaredge

Aptly named for residing at the “edge of the cedars” of the Grand Mesa, the Town of Cedaredge was officially incorporated on March 25, 1907. Cedaredge is the gateway to the Grand Mesa via the Grand Mesa National Scenic and Historic Byway, which is the world’s largest flat top mountain and offers four seasons of tourism.

Spring and summer bring fishing with over 300 lakes, hiking, backpacking, biking, boating, bird watching, 4-wheeling, star gazing, camping and more. Fall and winter offer hunting, snowshoeing, skiing and ice fishing.

All ages and abilities can find world class outdoor recreational experiences on the Grand Mesa. Cedaredge is also known for its apples, with orchardists who have been growing apples on the same trees for over 100 years, and offers two truly “branch-to-bottle” hard apple ciders; Happy Hollow Hard Cider and Snow Capped Cider where 100% of the raw ingredients used to make the ciders. The water and all fruit comes from the Surface Creek Valley. You will also find three wineries in Cedaredge: Williams Cellars, Chill Switch Wines and Stoney Mesa Winery, a multigenerational winery and the state’s oldest continual winery license.

Cedaredge is also home to Pioneer Town. Step back into the past with a visit where thousands of authentic artifacts from more than a century ago can be viewed on a nearly six-acre campus. The three iconic Bar-I wooden silos are original to the site and listed on the National Historic Registry, as is the old Stolte Shed fruit packing house and the cabin of early settlers Otto Peterson and his family. Walk the boardwalk of Pioneer Town’s Main Street, where the saloon, country store and original 1906 Cedaredge jail house can provide entertainment for the entire family. The museum contains a large doll and toy collection, an extensive collection of Indian flint and arrowheads, a lovely arboretum, a collection of antique farm machinery and a delightful gift shop. Most guests spend 60-90 minutes looking at the many exhibits, but some spend the entire day.

Main Street in Cedaredge is quaint and inviting with an impressive guitar shop — Starr’s Guitars. Dining and the arts round out the Main Street experience, including the Grand Mesa Arts & Events Center. Wander off Main and find a large selection of antiques, and if you are a golf enthusiast, the Cedaredge Golf Course features an 18-hole course with spectacular views, well-groomed greens and great weather.





Town Overview

Orchard City

As you slowly ascend the rolling hillside up to the Grand Mesa, you will pass through Orchard City — a unique agricultural, residential and recreational area nestled between the cities of Delta to the southwest, Cedaredge to the north, and Hotchkiss to the east.

Despite being the largest municipality in terms of square miles in Delta County, Orchard City is primarily recognized by the names of three smaller and older areas within its boundaries — Austin, Eckert and Cory. They all had separate beginnings, but somehow, through a unique course of events, came together.

Several of the buildings on the highway are constructed using local volcanic rock. The Eckert Presbyterian Church is over 100 years old and showcases examples of this rockwork. The Eckert Creamery sold butter to the public until the 1980s and now serves as an antique store.

Wander off in either direction from the highway and you will pass through a countryside that produces a variety of apples, cherries, apricots, pears and peaches. It is also well known for its variety of organic farm produce and livestock including cattle, sheep, elk and buffalo.

Hart's Basin (Fruit Grower's Reservoir) has been a birder's dream come true for many years and was the first Important Birding Area designated in Colorado. This location is now on the Southwest Colorado Birding Trail. Annually in April, the Sandhill Cranes return here on their northward migration. Thousands of birds take brief sanctuary with the occasional pelican among them.





Town Overview

Delta

The City of Delta, the namesake and seat of Delta County, was originally set up as a trading post for Ute Indians and the new settlers from the east. Delta is situated where the Uncompahgre and Gunnison Rivers come together.

Delta is also known for its abundance of outdoor recreation opportunities, including Devil's Thumb Golf Course, which is rated #1 with the CAGGY Award for Best Public Golf Course on the Western Slope and Southwest Colorado. And after a round of golf, just down the road, you can get your "thrill seeker" on with Ultimate Skydiving Adventures. If you love mountain biking, check out Con-Trail Mountain Biking park located at Confluence Park, which also provides a great family day canoeing, paddleboarding and fishing, or a rousing game of disc golf in the Gunnison's Edge Disc Golf Course.

While in Delta, be sure to stop at Fort Uncompahgre, a reconstruction of the original trading post used by traders, trappers and Native Americans. Antoine Robidoux built the original fort in 1828, where it lasted for 18 years. The Delta County Historical Museum, housed in the old firehouse, is a must see for the history buff and the inner science buff in all of us — fossils, dinosaur bones and a butterfly exhibit which includes some of the only known specimens of now extinct species are on-hand to quench the learning thirst. Take some time to truly explore the "City of Murals," which showcases beautiful wall art up and down Main Street, or seek out the many buildings that are on the local and state historic registers. Just a few miles North of town, discover and hike the newly designated Dominguez/Escalante National Conservation Areas.

If you are into more relaxing activities, take in a movie at the historic Egyptian Theater in downtown Delta, or at one of the few remaining drive-ins in the US — The Tru Vu Drive In. This blast from the past is a can't miss summer event, and to say that the concession burgers are mouthwatering is an understatement!





Town Overview

Crawford

The town is named after Captain George A. Crawford, whose idea to start a post office in this area resulted in the growth of a town — Crawford — which is the high-altitude beauty of the North Fork Valley.

Crawford is the gateway to the North Rim of the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park, which provides numerous outdoor activities, such as snowshoeing, snowmobiling and cross-country skiing in the winter and hiking, biking and photography in the summer.

Located along the West Elk Scenic Byway, the Town of Crawford is nestled in the heart of cattle country between The Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park and the breathtaking West Elk Wilderness Area. With Crawford's quaint restaurants, outdoor attractions and unique shops to enjoy, there are plenty of things for the whole family to do.

The North Rim of The Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park is a wonderful alternative to the more-visited South Rim. This side offers a touch with nature, primitive campsites, and many trails leading down into the 1500-foot deep canyon to the pristine waters of the Gunnison River.

Needle Rock is one of those sites where you ask yourself, "What on earth do you call that?" Needle Rock is an intrusive of rhyodacite volcanic plug, or volcanic neck, that stands 800 feet tall above the floor of the Smith Fork of the Gunnison River Valley. It originated as the throat of a large volcano about 28 million years ago in the Miocene geological epoch, when molten rock intruded between existing sedimentary rocks. It is a breathtaking addition to the view shed in Crawford along the West Elk Loop Scenic Byway.

Visit the Crawford State Park for many other outdoor sports, including hiking, fishing, biking, boating and stand up paddle boarding, just a mile out of the Town of Crawford. Another natural resource to be explored is the Gunnison Basin National Forest, where the outdoor recreation opportunities are endless.

The annual Crawford Pioneer Days festival the second weekend of June each year; enjoy Fireworks over beautiful Crawford State Park, along with a parade, outhouse races and old-fashioned melodrama, vendors, music in the park, a baking contest, kids events and so much more!





Town Overview

Hotchkiss

Hotchkiss, dubbed the “Friendliest Town Around,” truly lives up to its name! Named after the man that founded the little town in 1900, Enos T. Hotchkiss, the town holds many wonders to explore and enjoy.

Hotchkiss is located on the scenic West Elk Loop Byway. Getting here is an enjoyable and scenic trip over McClure Pass out of Glenwood Springs or past the Blue Mesa Reservoir from Gunnison, or via Highway 92, from Delta.

Hotchkiss is surrounded by local vineyards, wineries, and organic farms and orchards. The area is a recognized American Viticultural Area (AVA) and the altitude and climate produce award-winning wines. The area is particularly well known for its fresh farm-to-table produce. Purchase local food from farmers’ markets, direct farm/orchard purchases, or the in-town Farm Runners Market that sells locally grown and produced goods. Big B’s is a local in-town manufacturer of hard apple and other fruit ciders that are sold and served locally.

Downtown Hotchkiss is thriving, with many eclectic restaurants serving Thai, Sushi, BBQ, Burgers, Mexican/TexMex dishes and “Pizza with an attitude.” You will also find coffee shops and many retail businesses for your shopping pleasure.

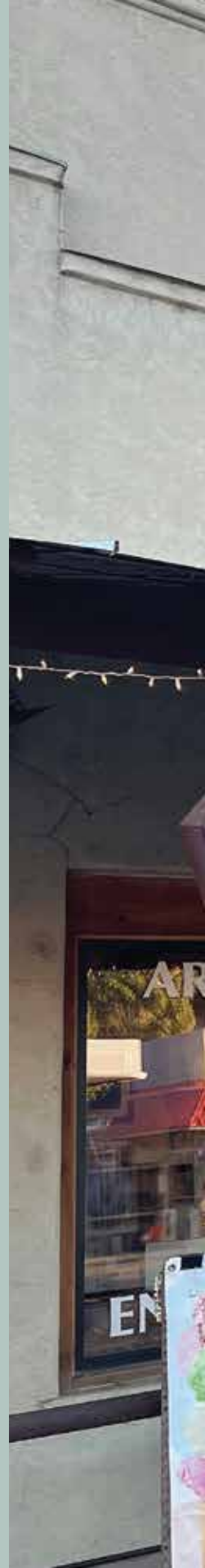
Local artists display their talent at the beautiful Creamery Arts Center, which also hosts local musical performers and provides classes that include pottery-making, jewelry, and other artistic interests. The Creamery also provides locally made ice cream from Third Bowl Ice Cream, made just a few blocks away. The Hotchkiss-Crawford Historical Museum houses the history of the North Fork Area and is a

great place to visit, research and sift through all of the local historical information and vast collection of items from the past.

Outdoor activities are numerous given the proximity to the Grand Mesa, Gunnison National Forests and the spectacular Black Canyon National Park, with its sheer cliffs leading down to the South Fork of the Gunnison River. Local guides and outfitters provide equipment and experiences for rafting, fishing and SUP (stand up paddling) up and down the Gunnison River via the boat/raft launch at the Delta County Fairgrounds. The Hotchkiss National Fish Hatchery replenishes our area reservoirs with over 600,000 new trout annually, along with providing tours. The Eagle Rock Shelter and Hiking Area and the Gunnison River Pleasure Park are only two of several places to recreate and camp. Fall brings many hunters to the area and winter brings snowmobiling, skiing and snowshoeing.

The North Fork Recreation District, located along Highway 92, includes an outdoor pool, a bike pump track and ball fields. The Nature Connection offers fantastic opportunities for outdoor activities for kids year-round. Hotchkiss is also home to the Delta County Fairgrounds which will host the 118th Delta County Fair from July 27 – August 4, and is considered one of the premier events in the county each year.

Hotchkiss hosts several other annual events. The Sheep Dog Trials kick off the season on Mother’s Day weekend in May, bringing in the top dog handlers in the U.S. You will also find outdoor concerts at Big B’s Delicious Orchards. Add these events to those held in Paonia and Crawford, with both towns only 13 minutes away, and there is always something to do in the North Fork Valley. Come for a visit and stay at the charming B&Bs, the locally owned Hotchkiss Inn, or camp nearby, and see what Hotchkiss has to offer!



CREAMERY ARTS CENTER



Paonia

Paonia is a unique community, born from a rich history of miners, ranchers, artists, activists, agriculturists, foodies and artisans.

Legend has it that Samuel Wade, who settled the area with William Clark and Enos Hotchkiss, wanted to name the town after one of his favorite flowers, using the Greek spelling Paeonia. Whether the name was misspelled intentionally or by accident, when the town was incorporated in 1902, it was officially named “Paonia.” Peony plants from the original stock are said to be growing today in the Town Park more than 100 years later. The Valley was originally inhabited by Ute Indians, the only Indians indigenous to Colorado. Ute history can be traced to an early Fremont man who migrated the Bering Strait 10,000 years ago and occupied west-central Colorado. The Utes practiced a universal religion in a natural sanctuary of mountains, rivers and forests.

Paonia was later known as the banana-belt of the Rockies holding the highest concentration of organic farms in the State of Colorado. It is naturally air conditioned by warm air flowing up the valley at night and cool air from the mountains during the day, resulting in optimal conditions for growing cherries, apricots, grapes, peaches, plums, pears, nectarines

and apples. You’ll find sustainably raised meats, value-added products and award-winning wines. Indulge in some of the highest quality, cleanest food in the world when you visit the North Fork Valley.

Paonia is a focal point of back roads and trails leading into the forest, attracting nature lovers, hunters, hikers, cyclists and cross-country skiers. Hunters outfit themselves in Paonia before setting out to get their wild game. Few places offer such a wonderful combination of climate, scenery, lifestyle and recreation.

As a certified “Colorado Creative District,” folks can experience the vast expression of creativity via performing arts, public murals and art galleries. Paonia is home to many creatives, including painters, jewelers, sculptures, dancers, actors, musicians, vintners, brewers and culinary artisans.

Paonia’s several local media sources include KVNF (90.9), a public radio station that broadcasts from Grand Junction to Lake City and beyond, The High Country News, which is an internationally renowned, award-winning environmental newspaper and the High Country Shopper/Spotlight, a weekly newspaper with everything for buy, sell or trade in Delta County.

Unique accommodations to suit any taste can be found via Historic lodging like Simpler Time Bed & Breakfast or Bross Hotel, operating since 1906. You can stay in at the castle at <https://wisehartspringsinn.com/>

or try a school bus or yurt at <https://sageviewranch.com/>. A complete list of lodging can be found on our Paonia Lodging page.

Activities

Paonia Town Park is the social heart of town, hosting annual events and year-round enjoyment. The park occupies an entire city block and is filled with amenities for all ages, including picnic tables and barbecue, a playground, skate park and sports field. The park hosts an impressive canopy of tall trees in a wide array of species. Insider tip: Tuesday night Arbol Farmers’ Market, April – October.

Numerous orchards offer U-Pick for locals and visitors with enormous varieties of fresh fruit: crisp apples and juicy peaches to tart cherries and mouth watering apricots, pears and grapes. Do NOT miss a trip to one of the nine valley wineries or two craft breweries downtown.

On a hot summer day, grab a locally made ice cream at the Hearth Ice Cream Shop and walk or ride bikes down to the Paonia River Park for a quick dip on summer day. Be sure to visit the Paonia Museum at the entrance to the park packed with awesome finds and old photographs of the town’s history.

Stroll downtown Grand Avenue to visit boutiques, thrift stores, galleries and restaurants.



Arts & Entertainment

Two community-owned performing arts centers occupy the town center, offering rich year-round programming. The Blue Sage is known for their classic chamber music series, contemporary music on the second stage at “Sage Alley” and an array of classes in the Great Hall.

The 95-year-old Paradise Theater screens new releases and independent films and is known for its renowned national musical acts and theatrical productions.

Food, Wine and the Great Outdoors

Working with local farms, ranches,

orchards and wineries, the North Fork Valley restaurants create a diverse, seasonal experience that express the particular terroir of this abundant region. Just outside town are numerous orchards and vineyards. Paonia sits in the middle of the West Elks American Viticulture Area, a nationally designated wine growing area. *See events listing

Fresh fruit is available during the summer at local orchards, such as Delicious Orchards, First Fruits and Orchard Valley to name a few. Paonia’s fruit bounty includes cherries in early July, peaches in August, apples and grapes in the fall and fresh vegetables all summer

long.

Arbol Farmers Market at Town Park on Tuesdays April – October. Valley farmers and value-added makers feature their freshest fruit and vegetables with live music and food vendors.

Paonia State Park features great scenery packed with flora and fauna. Camp near a babbling stream where folks can canoe, water-ski or stand up paddle board in the fresh mountain reservoir. Explore the majestic Ragged Mountains.

Hike or bike Jumbo Mountain single-track trails or cross country ski and sled in the winter months.



Looking at the Past

It was the summer of 1893 when three members of the McCarty Gang came into town. On Sept. 7 the trio (Tom McCarty, his brother Bill and Bill's son Fred) executed their plan to rob the Farmers and Merchants Bank on Main Street.

Days before, they had cased the bank under the guise of ranchers in the market for land. Tom stayed with the horses while Bill and Fred entered the building, guns in hand. Tellers Andrew Blachly and H.H. Wolbert were staring down the barrels of the McCartys' guns as they were told to empty the safe. To warn attorney W.R. Robertson, an attorney who held an office at the back of the bank, Blachly yelled that the bank

was being robbed. When he refused to quiet down, Fred shot him dead sounding the alarm.

Ray Simpson heard the shots and sprang into action and posted up on the corner of Main and Third streets.

Simpson, who was part owner of the local hardware store (which would eventually become Delta Hardware), was standing in the doorway of his shop with his .40 caliber Sharps rifle

nearby. Rumor has it that Simpson, a dead shot with his rifle, had a dream the night before about a robbery and was discussing it with his father when he heard trouble.

After Fred shot Blachly, he and Bill grabbed a bag of coins and a stack of cash before meeting up with Tom in the alley. Tom had his gun on Robertson and soon the three fled.

As they rode away, Simpson shot,

hitting Bill with his first attempt. Fred turned around firing shots at Simpson but missed. Soon the merchant shot again, hitting Fred. Tom was able to get away.

Simpson was acknowledged nationwide for his actions. He even received telegrams from Scotland Yard congratulating him.

Events like these have put Delta County on the map. History buffs can find out more about this story as well as others that have happened around Delta County at local museums. There are two in Delta: Fort Uncompahgre Interpretive Center (440 Palmer St., Delta; 970-874-8349) and The Delta County Historical Society (251 Meeker St., Delta; 970-874-8721). One in Hotchkiss: the HotchkissCrawford Historical Museum (180 Second St., Hotchkiss; 970-872-3780), and one

in Cedaredge: Pioneer Town (388 S. Grand Mesa Drive, Cedaredge; 970-856-7554).

Jim Wetzel, who is part of the Delta County Historic Landmark Board, said there are many historic buildings found throughout the county listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties, as well as local historic registers. As Wetzel explains, through the history of Delta County, the tearing down of many original buildings did not happen, but rather owners restored them. And now, many welcome visitors.

The Delta County Historic Landmark Board is the group that is responsible for reviewing sites. The board includes five people who represent the communities around the county. Those who would like to have a building or a site on the registry, go

through a process with the board.

The applicant collects his or her supporting documentation and turns it into the board along with the application and a \$10 fee. The board reviews the material, and if it checks out, will present the information to the Delta County Commissioners requesting it to be placed on the historical register.

For those looking for the application, board members can supply it. For more information, call 970-874-8721.

Full details on Delta County historic sites on the National Register of Historic Places and the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties can be found at historycolorado.org/national-state-register-listed-properties (filtered by "county"). There are other sites such as that of the Ute Council Tree — a cottonwood tree where the local Ute Indian Tribe would hold its council meetings which often included Chipeta (Chief Ouray's wife) — which is not listed but is a draw for tourists (a sign can be seen on the highway directing folks to the site). Information on these sites can be found at the museums.

Listed Historic Sites:

Bross Hotel: 312 Onarga Ave., Paonia

Bruce Estate: 1468 Colorado Hwy. 133, Paonia

Captain Smith's Cabin: Escalante Road west of US Highway 50, Delta vicinity

Cedar Mesa Community Club: 15637 Peach Road, Cedaredge

Cedaredge Consolidated School: 360 N. Grand Mesa Drive, Cedaredge

Crawford School: 425 Colorado Hwy. 92, Crawford

Curtis Hardware Company: 228 Grand Ave., Paonia

Delta County Bank Building: 301-305 Main St., Delta

Delta National Bank (Delta City Hall): 360 Main St., Delta

Delta Post Office and Federal Building: 360 Meeker St., Delta

Delta Public Library (a NeoClassic Carnegie Library): 211 W. Sixth St.,

Delta Egyptian Theater: 452 Main St., Delta

Elmwood School: 2876 O Road, Hotchkiss vicinity

Fairlamb House: 700 Leon St., Delta

Ferganchick Orchard Rock Art Site: Austin vicinity

First Methodist Episcopal Church of Delta, 199 E. Fifth St., Delta

First National Bank Building: 226 Grand Mesa Ave., Paonia

First Presbyterian Church of Eckert: 13011 Colorado Hwy. 65, Eckert

Garnethurst: 509 Leon St., Delta

Hotchkiss Homestead: 422 Riverside Drive, Hotchkiss

Hotchkiss Hotel: 101 Bridge St., Hotchkiss

Hotchkiss Methodist Episcopal Church: 285 N. Second Ave.,

Hotchkiss Lovett House: 210 Aspen St., Cedaredge

Mathews House: 40467 Mathews Lane, Paonia

Paonia First Christian Church: 235 Box Elder Ave., Paonia

Stell House: 1122 2100 Road, Orchard City vicinity

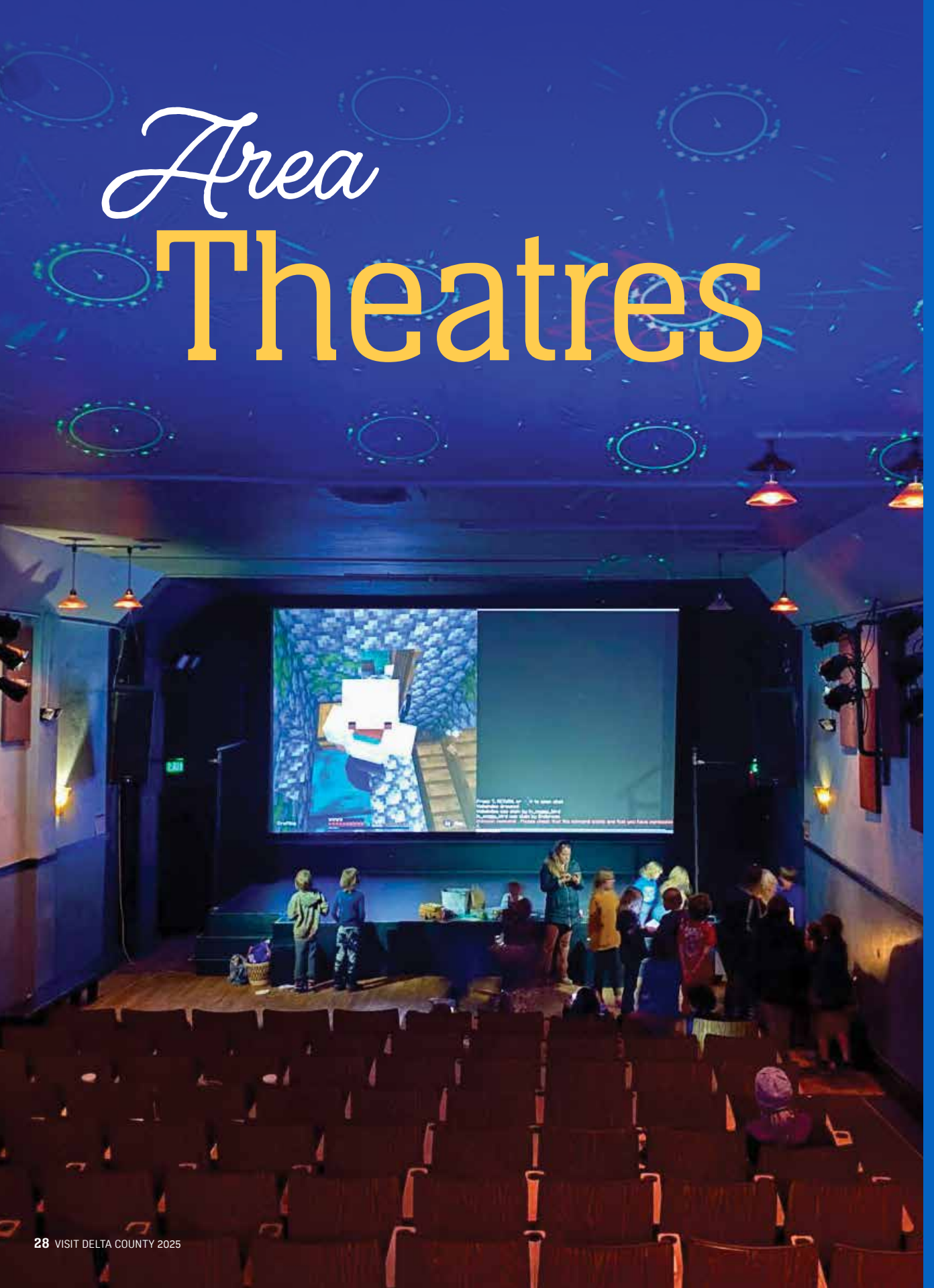
Stolte House: 1812 Colorado Hwy. 65, Cedaredge

Surface Creek Livestock Company Silos: 315 SW Third St., Cedaredge

Tru-Vu Drive In: 1001 Colorado Hwy. 92, Delta

Walker Cabin: Escalante Road, west of US Hwy. 50, Delta vicinity

Area Theatres



Paradise Theatre of Paonia

The Paradise Theatre of Paonia is a nonprofit organization with the mission of elevating community culture through diverse, quality art and entertainment. Located on Grand Avenue in downtown Paonia, the theater juggles classics, senior

specials, partner programs with other organizations and a variety of live performances.

The Paradise hosts two different film festivals each year — the Cabin Fever Festival in the early months of the

year and Paonia Film Festival in late fall.

For insight to the Paradise Theatre's full schedule, visit paradiseofpaonia.com.

Egyptian Theater

The 425 seat Delta Egyptian Theater, built in 1928, is the crown jewel of Main Street in downtown Delta, and benefits the whole community. By the 1930s, the Delta Egyptian Theater was one of over 100 theaters across the country to decorate itself in an Egyptian Revival style. This historic theater owes this connection to the discovery of the tomb of King Tut in 1922. That discovery set off a nationwide interest in everything Egyptian. There are only six remaining Egyptian Theaters in the United States today.



The Delta Egyptian Theater offers traditional movies in addition to live music such as Opera and Musical Theatre, comedy shows, community

events and so much more!

For more information on the Delta Egyptian Theater visit deltaegyptian.org.

Tru Vu Drive In

Having opened to the public in 1955, during the height of the drive-in era, the Tru Vu Drive In is a single-screen drive-in theater that still seasonally plays double features to this day. Recently acquired by

father-daughter duo George and Jesikah Rodriguez, the iconic retro venue is in the safe hands of former employees and fanatics of the drive-in culture.

This year, the outdoor movie venue will open into a revival of 1950s vibes, aided by theme nights and classic movie events, alongside regular theatrical releases.

THE GUNNISON GORGE

National Conservation Area

The Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area, designated as such by Congress in 1999 is the jewel of Delta County. A variety of landscapes and terrain, in the 62,844 acre will satisfy anyone's need to recreate.

Raft, canoe or kayak rapids up to class IV on the 14 mile river. Exciting class III and IV rapids can be accessed at the Chukar Trail or the calmer class I and II waters at the Gunnison Forks.

Horseback riding, biking, and hiking are enhanced by the breathtaking views the NCA offers, including the Uncompahgre Valley along with West Elk, San Juan and Grand Mesa mountains.

Day use and overnight camp sites are clearly marked so you can choose how long you wish to stay, play and explore.

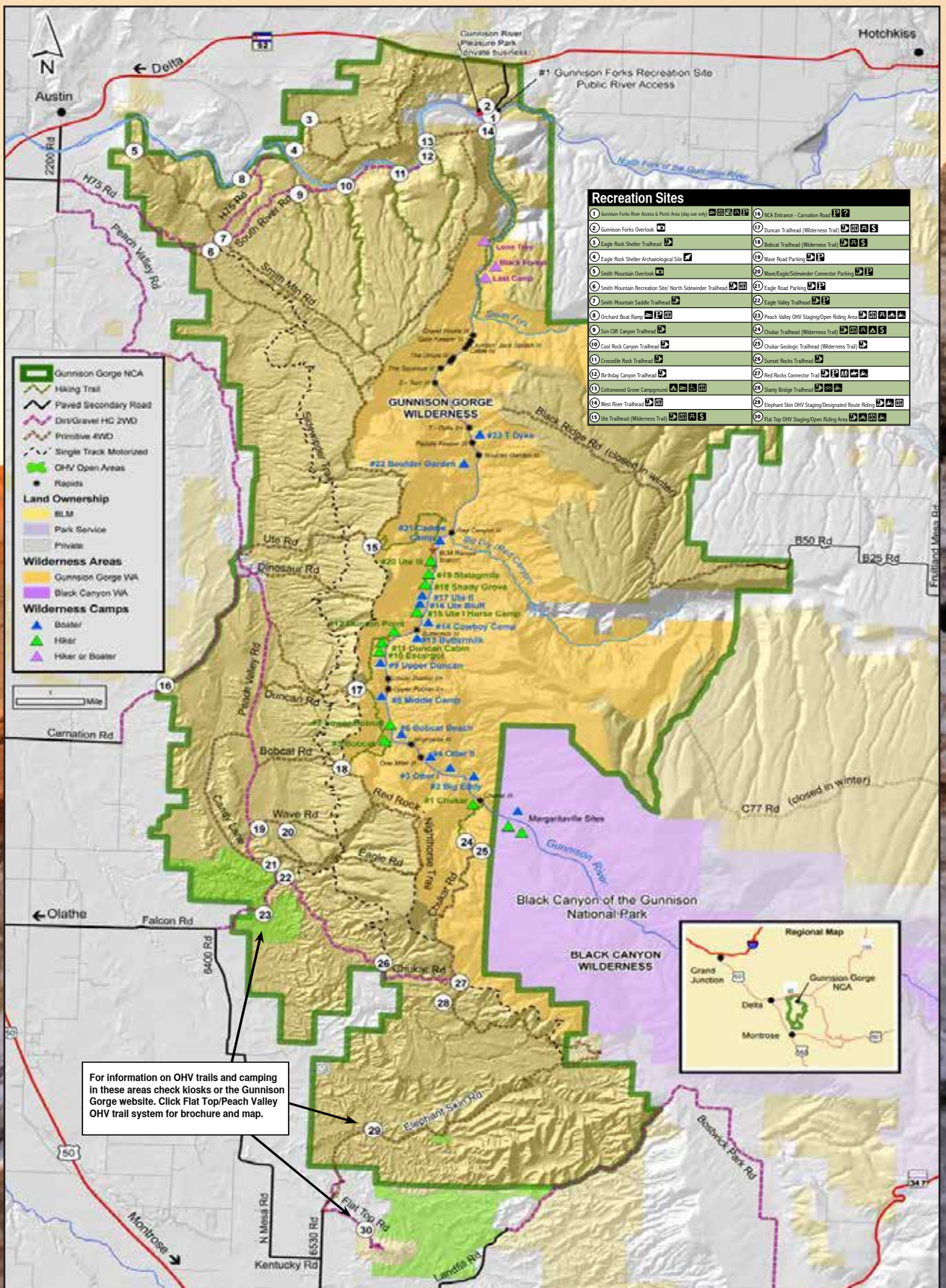
Discover prehistoric rock art panels and historic rock configurations. But it's the diverse terrains that completes your exploration and fully takes you back in time. Traversing on trails through adobe formations, sandstone canyons and the uplands gives you the sense of what Native Americans generations ago experienced.

There are so many other motorized and non-motorized trails to explore throughout the county. For more information you can visit deltacountycolorado.com or visit the following websites.

Biking county-wide: Visit the Colorado Plateau Mountain Bike Trail Association at cpmoba.org.

Hiking Grand Mesa: alltrails.com and type in "Grand Mesa" to link to descriptions and maps for multiple trails on Grand Mesa.

Exploring Dominguez-Escalante and Gunnison Gorge National Conservation and Wilderness Areas: blm.gov then select "Programs", Colorado, then click on "National Conservation Area".



Recreation Sites

1 Gunnison Forks River Access & Picnic Area (day use only)	13 C3 Entrance - Garnison Road
2 Gunnison Forks Overlook	14 Duncan Trailhead (Wilderness Trail)
3 Eagle Rock Shelter Trailhead	15 Bobcat Trailhead (Wilderness Trail)
4 Eagle Rock Shelter Archaeological Site	16 Wave Road Parking
5 Smith Mountain Overlook	17 Wave/Eagle/Sidevalley Connector Parking
6 Smith Mountain Recreation Site/ North Sidevalley Trailhead	18 Eagle Road Parking
7 Smith Mountain Saddle Trailhead	19 Eagle Valley Trailhead
8 Orchard Boat Ramp	20 Peach Valley OHV Staging/Open Riding Area
9 Sun Off Canyon Trailhead	21 Chukar Trailhead (Wilderness Trail)
10 Cool Rock Canyon Trailhead	22 Chukar Geologic Trailhead (Wilderness Trail)
11 Crocodile Rock Trailhead	23 Sunset Rocks Trailhead
12 Birdseye Canyon Trailhead	24 Red Rocks Connector Trail
13 Customized Grove Campground	25 Shady Bridge Trailhead
14 West River Trailhead	26 Elephant Skin OHV Staging/Designated Route Riding
15 Ute Trailhead (Wilderness Trail)	27 Flat Top OHV Staging/Open Riding Area

- Gunnison Gorge NCA**
- Hiking Trail
- Paved Secondary Road
- Dirt/Gravel HC 2WD
- Primitive 4WD
- Single Track Motorized
- OHV Open Areas
- Rapids
- Land Ownership**
- BLM
- Park Service
- Private
- Wilderness Areas**
- Gunnison Gorge WA
- Black Canyon WA
- Wilderness Camps**
- Boater
- Hiker
- Hiker or Boater

For information on OHV trails and camping in these areas check kiosks or the Gunnison Gorge website. Click Flat Top/Peach Valley OHV trail system for brochure and map.



Fun and Fish in the Delta Region

By Joel Evans

Looking to chase a fish? Visitors and residents alike can find water most any direction from Delta. Being Colorado, numerous lakes and rivers shout, "Fishing is fun!" Follow me on a quick tour of prime destination fishing spots within an easy day trip of Delta.



Confluence Lake - Confluence Lake is a quiet park and picnic area on the western side of downtown Delta. Since its opening in the early 1990s, this city park has seen multiple improvements over the years, with much to do besides fishing. The point here is that this is a great place to take kids for fishing without driving very far. Given the short attention span of kids, if they tire quickly, then the time to get back home is minimal. Or they can find multiple other activities in the area such as

playgrounds, the Fort Uncompahgre Museum, ball fields, and if nothing else, skipping rocks on the lake or watching the ducks. Kids will do best with spinning gear. Adults can hook a trout themselves either with spin gear or fly gear. Not to be ignored are the large carp in the lake, a challenge to even the experienced fisherman. Not for kids, but at low-flow season, adults can access the Gunnison and Uncompahgre Rivers, which join here.

Sweitzer Lake – Just a short distance south of Delta is Sweitzer Lake, a Colorado Parks and Wildlife State Park. Considered primarily a boating and recreational lake, Sweitzer offers fishing for warm water species such as largemouth bass, bluegill, catfish and carp. Another place for the kids to fish and play for a day.

Grand Mesa National Forest – A beautiful setting of endless fishing opportunity. Numerous lakes, some natural, but most actually are a

reservoir, the lakes generally fall into one of two fishing categories. Either they are easily accessed as they are close to the main road, in which case they are heavily stocked with catchable trout. Or they are down an unimproved road or require a hike, in which case they see fewer fishermen which increases the chances of a trophy fish. While rainbow trout are the primary catch, other trout such as brown, brook and cutthroat are scattered throughout the Grand Mesa. Some lakes are managed for specific species, such as grayling, splake and tiger trout, and may have special limited or no-kill regulations. Cutthroat trout are the only native trout to Colorado, but today exist only in limited waters.

The small creeks of the Grand Mesa harbor cutthroats. These creeks are very small and may only flow a short distance from one reservoir to the next. The Colorado Parks and Wildlife has published a locally available book about fishing on the Grand Mesa. Not so much a fishing guide book, it is more of a reference book that gives a brief synopsis of the many waters, listing the lake size and depth, how to access the lake by vehicle or trail, and what kinds of fish to expect in that water.

Gunnison River – The best river fishing the area has to offer and even nationally famous for good reason, the Gunnison boasts one of the highest counts of fish per mile in the entire nation. Big rainbows and abundant brown trout rarely mean a slow day. Public water extends its entire length from east of Delta at the confluence of the North Fork of the Gunnison and the main stem of the Gunnison, which travels all the way from Blue Mesa Dam east of Montrose. Along that journey, the river courses through the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park and the Gunnison Gorge National Conservation and Wilderness Area. The most secluded section of the river lies within the National Park. Available only by foot and only to the strongest of heart, the river in the deep canyon is beautiful and

bountiful with fish. One can drive to the river in only a few places.

The closest to Delta is the confluence, where one can park at the river. Except for times of high flows, the public water is upstream from the confluence for miles for those willing to walk and wade. For the hearty hiker, the Gunnison Gorge is accessed by dirt roads off of the highway south of Delta, near Olathe. These sometimes rough roads wind and lead upward to the distant canyon rim. At the rim, one parks the vehicle, grabs a carefully thought-out backpack, to descend steep foot trails down into the canyon.

Hikes of 30 minutes to an hour or more lead to wade fishing in a wonderful pool and pocket water. Chukar Trail, the shortest and most popular of four designated trails, is the access point for private and commercial rafting. Inquire locally about trail maps and float trips on the Gunnison. There are special fishing regulations for the Gunnison.

The Black Canyon National Park is accessed out of Crawford to the north rim or Montrose to the south rim. Either way leads to outstanding fishing, but very steep and difficult trails limit the trip to only the hardest

of hikers. An overnight backpack trip is a wonderful experience. But this is a trade-off – a day trip is less time on the water but doesn't require carrying a heavy pack. An overnight gives more time to fish, but requires hiking up a long and very steep trail with a pack. More – This is western Colorado – with abundant public lands, particularly higher elevation national forests which provide cold water for fishing. Within a few hour's drive or less, particularly east of Delta, there are numerous lakes and streams within an easy day trip of Delta.

Other access points include the Hotchkiss National Fish Hatchery on the North Fork of the Gunnison River, the North Fork River further upstream near Somerset, Crawford State Park, and Vega State Park.

Check with the local sporting goods stores for more information. Also stop in at the offices of the Colorado Parks and Wildlife, the Bureau of Land Management, or the Forest Service offices, all with offices in the area or with information available online. Visitor or resident — does not matter. Take some time and go fishing.

Joel L. Evans is an avid fisherman, outdoor writer and photographer who has explored Colorado for decades.



The Arts Flourish

IN DELTA COUNTY



Delta County boasts a vibrant arts community—an enterprise so diverse that a visitor, literally, needs a program to comprehend it all. Here's a run-down in three acts:

Act One:

If You Build It, They Will Come

Arts begin at the grassroots level when talented artists and performers gravitate to a region. For coastal areas of the nation, the ocean is a magnet. For other spots, a major

university may provide the catalyst. In Western Colorado, the attraction comes from the divergent chemistry of spectacular sprawling vistas and small-town audacity. People in small places tend to dream big and their dreams often materialize in the form of a repurposed historic building. Such is the case in the communities of Paonia,

Hotchkiss, Cedaredge and Delta.

It may be small, but the town of Paonia packs a potent artistic punch. Two main venues sit on Grand Ave, the town's main thoroughfare. The Paradise Theatre, a movie house that traces its ancestry to 1928, is located at 215 Grand. The Blue Sage Center for

the Arts occupies vintage retail buildings which stretch from 226-228 Grand. Literally a stone's-throw apart, the two neighboring sites offer a host of shared and complementary events including live music and theater, contemporary and vintage cinema, art shows and creative classes. Happenings often spill onto sidewalks and streets and into nearby parks. Go online for current events: the movie house is at paradiseofpaonia.com. The center for the arts is at bluesage.org. Phone the Paradise Theatre at 970-527-6610 and the Blue Sage at 970-527-7243.

The town of Hotchkiss sits at the intersection of two rural highways: Colorado 92 and 133. Self-described as "The Friendliest Town Around," the modest community has converted a former farm factory into an artistic showplace. Featuring classrooms, an art gallery, an active courtyard and performance stage, The Creamery Arts Center at 165-W. Bridge St hosts live music, art exhibits, classes and other community events. For current offerings visit the website creameryartscenter.org. Phone 970-872-4848.

Cedaredge is home to the newest addition to the Delta County arts community. Opening in June 2018, the Grand Mesa Arts & Events Center (GMAEC) occupies an historic building which, in the past, has served as a bank, a beauty shop, a repair garage, a movie theatre and a mortuary. The site currently houses an art gallery, classrooms and black box theatre. Located at 195-W. Main St in downtown Cedaredge, the place has become a popular destination and, in a very real sense, it functions as the heart of the community. For current events visit grandmesaartscenter.com. Phone 970-856-9195. Cedaredge

is also home to an artists' co-op: ImpressionZ Gallery. ImpressionZ is housed in a historic apple sorting complex known as the AppleShed which is a gallery in its own right. Both enterprises are located at 250 S. Grand Mesa Dr. The ImpressionZ website is impressionzgallery.org; phone 970-208-6898. The AppleShed Fine Art Gallery website is theappleshed.net; phone 970-856-7007.

The City of Delta has reclaimed the most imposing of the county's historic buildings by repurposing the auditorium contained in the city's old high school building. Early photographs of Delta show a three-story building which dominates the eastern fringes of the growing settlement. Graduating its first high school class in the late 1800s, the building's auditorium was in full use during succeeding decades featuring lectures, music and theatrical performances. Currently known as the Delta County Performing Arts & Education Center, the vintage building now hosts a full array of programs under the banner of The Delta-Montrose Community Concert Association. For current listings, visit the webpage concertassociation.net/DeltaCO/. Phone stage manager 970-250-5257. Delta is also home to a thriving "coalition of creatives" who gravitate around the TADA Your Art Space. Housed in a vintage downtown building at 459-Main St, TADA features a gallery and book signings by local authors. Visit their Facebook page under "tadayourartspace." Phone 970-209-5293.

Act Two:

Crafting a County Mosaic

Delta County neighbors have formed an important mosaic of

artistic endeavors. Managed by the North Fork Valley Creative Coalition, the Paonia Creative District is the hub of arts and cultural activity in the region adjacent to the North Fork of the Gunnison River. The coalition and its managed district encompass artists, performers and venues in the towns of Paonia, Hotchkiss and Crawford. With an emphasis on creative industries, the district promotes the diversification and stability which supports "many types of makers, including, but not limited to: visual artists, designers, performing artists, culinary artists and value-added food makers, arts activists, young artists and healing arts practitioners." For current activities visit the org.

Act Three:

Linking Colorado Communities

An active creative coalition and district in the North Fork region makes the town of Paonia, and therefore Delta County, part of a greater entity known as the Colorado Creative Corridor. Western Colorado communities tend to be separated by river valleys and mountain ranges and linked by rural highways which traverse high alpine passes. Weaving together unique communities along a trail which stretches for 331 miles, the Colorado Creative Corridor links five state-certified creative districts. The mountain towns of Carbondale, Crested Butte, Paonia, Ridgway and Salida form the corridor. Combining things to do with hotels & lodging and lining up festivals & events, the corridor establishes a readymade road trip which invites visitors to sample the best of Western Colorado.

For a current schedule of events and a recommended 5-day road trip, visit the website Colorado.com/creative-corridor-channel.

Water **'ROUND HERE**



These little mountain towns are charming adventures that graciously include water for those hotter summer days.

Stand Up Paddle Boarding

The big one around here is being able to stand on the water and slow-speed surf around on Delta County's lakes.

Recommendations by Western Slope SUP, located in Hotchkiss, include the Gunnison River, Ruby Canyon and Horsethief Canyon. Western Slope SUP also boasts the best quality brands of paddle boards, which can be rented out to the public.

In the Delta and Surface Creek area, folks have Mesa Rentals in Delta to set them up for kayak, paddle board and other outdoor rental needs including generators.

Mesa Rental is ideally located at 692 Hwy 50 in Delta. Locally owned by Brenda and Robert Brown. They can be reached at 970.874.5213 for more information.

Rafting and Kayaking

Delta County also has connections to rafting and kayaking outings, particularly through Western Slope SUP.

If it's May-October, ask about the Gunnison

Gorge NCA River Tour, a beginner journey that includes instruction and has the options of kayaks, stand up paddle boards and rafts. The guide, the instruction, transportation and all the equipment is included in the package for a half day up to a full day. \$85-\$129 for adults, \$99-\$119 for ages 12 and under.

There are also organized rafting trips through Western Slope SUP in the Gunnison Gorge, North Fork Gorge, Heart of the Valley and Anthracite Creek.

Visit westernslopesup.com and mesarentalsdelta.com for more details on either location.

Just Swimming

Or one could just take a step back and chillax with the family.

Bill Heddles Recreation Center in Delta, on Gunnison Avenue, has been a long-time destination for indoor swimming with its traditional 25 yard main pool, a tot pool, a medium pool with lazy river and a hot tub, of course.

For outdoor swimming, the North Fork Pool in Hotchkiss is the place to go, just behind that mountain with the H on it.

The North Fork Pool features a main pool, a tot pool and a hot tub as well as a water slide.

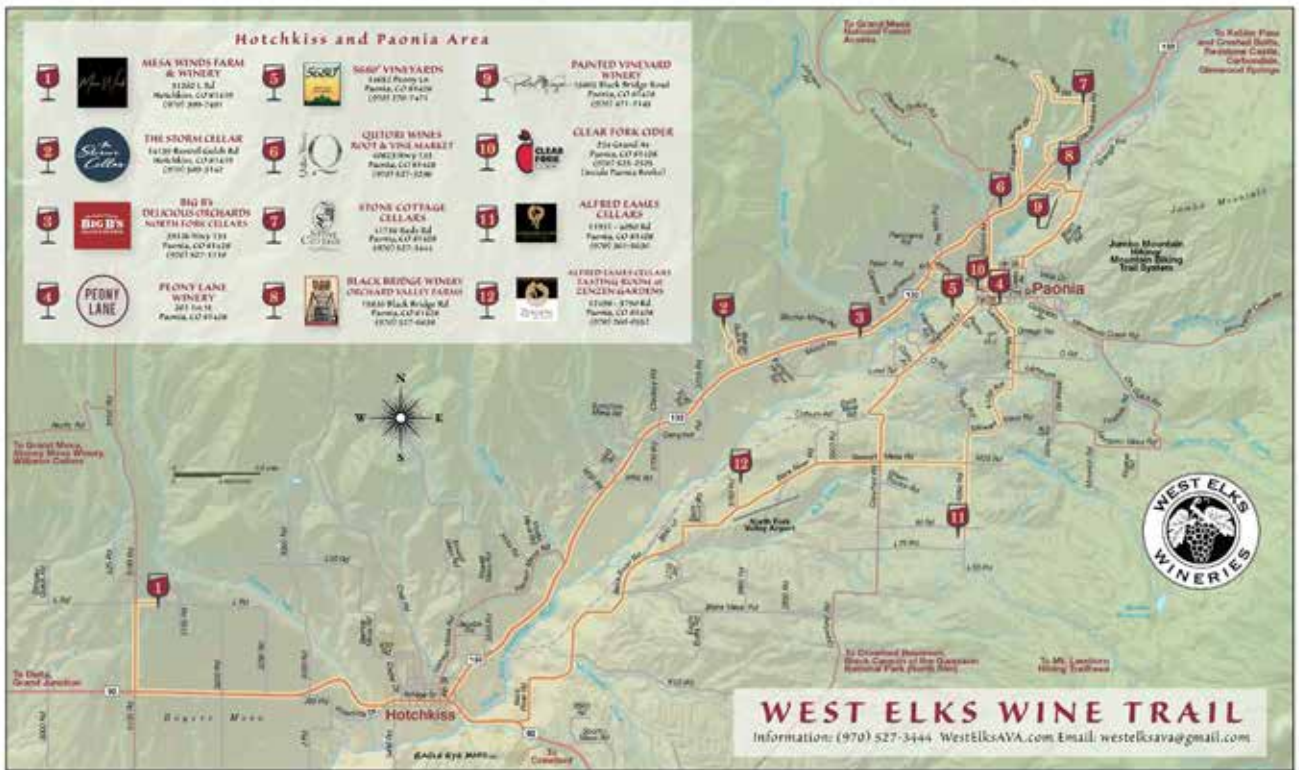
Visit cityofdeltanet.net and northforkrecreation.com for live information on Bill Heddles Rec Center and the North Fork Pool respectively.



MAKE THE MOST OF *Food and Wine Tours*

Wine tours are just a small part of what's good about the North Fork Valley. The area is referred to as the West Elks American Viticultural Area, which is a great source for high-altitude Colorado grown and produced wines. With the help of The Storm Cellar (a vineyard overlooking the Hotchkiss and Paonia areas atop Sunshine Mesa) co-owner Jayme Henderson, there is a mini tour around the North Fork Valley. Henderson has a background as a wine director and sommelier in the restaurant industry. She highlighted her favorite spots both for wine and for food. Here is her list along with some helpful information.





Starting in Delta...

1. Start your day wine-tasting in the high-elevation town of Cedaredge. Williams Cellars, and Stoney Mesa Winery are both great stops along a beautiful drive.
2. After your first tastings, head up to Farm Runners Station, 235 CO-133 in Hotchkiss, for local produce, Blue Sky Baking Co. for baked goods and local meat/eggs/cheese.
3. After picking up some local goods, head over to Big B's Delicious Orchards for lunch or dinner. This orchard offers you the opportunity to pick vegetables and fruits as well as a tasting room and a cafe. There are live music nights over the summer and 30 camping spaces in the orchard are available.
4. After your night camping, head to Root & Vine Market, 40823

CO-133 in Paonia, for breakfast and coffee treats. This is also the home of the award-winning Qutori Winery, which is open for tastings throughout the year.

5. Lunch can be found at Berg Harvest, 73 Samuel Wade Road in Paonia. Henderson said there is great pizza available here.
6. After lunch, stop by some of the wineries within the towns of Paonia and Hotchkiss. Stone Cottage Cellars, Mesa Winds Winery, Black Bridge Winery, Painted Vineyard are all open for tastings this summer.
7. Along your way, be sure to visit the various shops along Grand Avenue – The Cirque (boutique with unique gifts and local items), Seven Trees (gorgeous ladies boutique with fresh facials on Fridays) and the Refinery (boutique featuring handmade and upcycled apparel).

8. Another place for good, local items is Small Potatoes Barn Market and Bakery, 40575 O Road in Paonia. This spot is open Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, and features farmfresh produce and wood-fired sourdough breads.
9. To end your tour, visit Western Culture Farmstead and Creamery, 39883 Mathews Lane in Paonia. This location is a goat farm with farm fresh goat cheese. Here are just a few tastings of the valley; for more places to visit check out the West Elks AVA Wine Trail.

Surface Creek Wineries

Stoney Mesa Winery
16199 Happy Hollow Rd, Cedaredge
970-856-9463 | stonemesa.com

Williams Cellars
250 S Grand Mesa Dr., Cedaredge
970-856-7006 | williamcellars.com



Delta County Festivals 2025

Grand Mesa Songwriters Festival

- June 6-8, 2025 The Grand Mesa Songwriter Festival is an opportunity for seasoned and aspiring songwriters to have their songs heard, and for music fans to learn the stories behind the lyrics and melodies that only the song's writer can express.

Multiple festival stages are filled with songwriters, playing and performing their original songs. The festival is a great way to connect with singer-songwriters who have written your favorite songs and hear some of the best songs ever written that you've never heard before. These intimate in-the-round acoustic performances will feature three songwriters swapping songs and telling the stories behind them. This setting gives attendees the opportunity to experience tomorrow's headliners in small stage "listening room" performances at unique venues in historic downtown Cedaredge. For more information visit www.grandmesasongwriterfestival.com.

The 46th Annual Crawford Pioneer Days

- June 12-14, 2025 is the celebration of the community's roots. Pioneer Days, like many small-town community celebrations, is so very special to the locals. The Town Park is filled with local vendors showing their wares. Crawford Pioneer Days is truly a celebration with neighbors.

A locally produced Melodrama starts Thursday evening and produces much laughter and fun for family and friends; the Melodrama will also be shown twice on Saturday. Friday evening features a baking contest and the annual Pioneer Days benefit auction and Fire Auxiliary dinner at Town Hall. Saturday morning the festivities kick off with a Fireman's Pancake Breakfast, followed by the fun-filled parade down the main street at 10a. After the parade the whole community heads to Town Park to socialize, enjoy the live music, browse the craft booths, eat fair food, and watch the outhouse races while the kids participate in the kid's activities. The grand finale is the fireworks display Saturday

evening over the lake at the Crawford State Park! For more information visit www.crawfordpioneerdays.com.

July 3 - 6, 2025 the City of Delta is hosting its **3rd annual Western Sky Balloon Festival** at Confluence Park. Join us for both early morning ascensions and evening glow events (weather permitting!). The four-day event will be filled with family friendly can't miss events such as a pickleball tournament, movie night at the Tru Vu Drive- In, the Deltarado Days parade, community pancake breakfasts, a Christmas in July Craft fair, food trucks, wine/beer garden and kids' games and activities, grass volleyball, and more. And don't forget the 4th of July fireworks over Confluence Lake; it's sure to be a fabulous four-day event! For more information visit www.cityofdelta.net.

The Paonia Cherry Days, July 4-6, 2024 is one of the longest running community festivals in Colorado, held each 4th of July since 1947. Visitors arrive from all across the country, and

Paonia swells to nearly bursting. The festival features a parade honoring our American Holiday, our foundation, and traditions. Paonia Cherry Days has lots of games and activities, vendors, and delicious food. You will also find great entertainment and music, including many local artists and bands. Each year, a graduating senior is crowned Cherry Days King and Queen, and given scholarships to help in furthering their education. For more information visit www.paoniacherrydays.com.

The 120th Annual Delta County Fair - July 25 - August 3, 2025 will be held at the Delta County Fairgrounds, in Hotchkiss. In addition to all of the animal shows that the kids have worked so hard for, the Delta County Fair also offers a CPRA rodeo, a Ranch Rodeo, Mutton Bustin', the beloved parade, and so much more! For more information visit www.deltacountyfair.com.

The Mountain Harvest Festival will be held September 26-28, 2025. Mountain Harvest Festival is an annual celebration of local music, art, farms, food and spirits organized by the nonprofit organization North Fork Valley Creative Coalition. Held in the charming town of Paonia, visitors enjoy the music of the North Fork Valley, browse local arts and crafts and participate in the fun activities like the Great Chili Cookoff, Farm Tours and a Pub Crawl. Plus, all the music performances are free! Mountain Harvest Festival is small town Americana at its best. For more information visit www.mountainharvestfestival.org.

Cedaredge Applefest is in its 47th year, and will be held October 3-5, 2025. The Surface Creek Valley is known for its temperate climate, and early settlers took advantage by growing award-winning apples, peaches, and other fruits. In 1909, Cedaredge and other Surface Creek fruit growers entered the National Apple Show, winning more prizes than any other entrants from across the nation.

Cedaredge Applefest has been



celebrating area fruit growers annually since 1977 on the first full weekend in October, commemorating the fall harvest and rich agricultural heritage of our area.

Festivities include live music, art, craft & food vendors, 5 Alarm Chili Cook Off, Golf Tournament, Car, tractor & motorcycle show, a 5K run, and much more!

Bringing together our local businesses, apple orchards, artists, musicians, 180+ vendors, and over 20,000 event attendees, you definitely don't want to miss this amazing community event with distinct Cedaredge flair and flavor.

For more information visit www.cedaredgeapplefest.com.



ASTROTOURISM

Witness starry starry nights

Since ancient times, humans have been fascinated by the night sky, and Delta County offers exceptional night sky viewing of the Milky Way, planets and constellations. Today residents and tourists seek out areas where stars are in profusion and city lights are limited for stargazing, astrophotography, and dark sky camping to once again experience the awe that dark skies excite in all of us.

Since 2001, DarkSky International has certified more than 200 locations around the world as International Dark Sky Places (IDSP), ranging from parks and sanctuaries to reserves and communities. As part of the Western Slope Dark Sky travel loop, Delta County is home to the following dark sky designated areas.

Paonia became the sixth International Dark Sky Community in Colorado. Located on Colorado's Western Slope in eastern Delta County, Paonia is a small, rural town with nearly 1,500 residents, making it the most populous International Dark Sky Community in Colorado. Its high-desert climate provides abundant clear, starry nights, with the Milky Way visible from many backstreets and open spaces throughout the town. Paonia is surrounded by public lands, including the Grand Mesa National Forest, West Elk Wilderness, and Raggeds Wilderness, all offering world-class night skies.

Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area (NCA), one of nineteen NCAs managed by the Bureau of Land Management, became Colorado's eleventh International Dark Sky Park. Skies are the darkest within the canyon of the Gunnison Gorge, in fact one of the darkest in the Colorado, so floating the Wilderness section (Chukar to Gunnison Forks) and camping overnight gives the best viewing opportunities for the night sky.

If you plan to stargaze, check out Gunnison Gorge's brochure for vehicle access to various

trailheads or staging areas. There are no lights in the NCA, so getting there before nightfall is essential, and the use of a red-light headlamp or flashlight is highly recommended to preserve your night vision.

Crawford State Park, in partnership with Colorado Parks and Wildlife, DarkSky Colorado, and the Colorado Tourism Office, is applying for The Colorado State Parks Dark Sky Certification Mentor Program. This program will provide the park with the following benefits: preservation of the night sky resource and cultural heritage, enhanced visitor opportunities to experience and learn about natural night skies, increased awareness of the value of natural night skies and their benefit to local wildlife and ecology, as well as long-term management and planning for IDSP certification.

Today the Black Canyon Astronomical Society hosts a number of star-gazing events, often referred to as Star Parties, during the warmer months of spring, summer and fall. Locations include the Grand Mesa, Crawford State Park, public town parks in Hotchkiss and Paonia, as well as a number of other outlying areas, such as Ridgway State Park and the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park.

For more information on stargazing events for the 2025 season, visit <https://www.blackcanyonastronomy.com/>. Also, you can tune into the KVNF FM 90.9 & 89.1 broadcasts Western Slope Skies on alternate Fridays at 10 AM and on the following Wednesday at 7 PM.





DELTA COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

Available for events and more!

The Delta County Fairgrounds boasts over 50 acres of space for a plethora of activities, and is located in Hotchkiss. Delta County Fairgrounds hosts many events throughout the year including an annual BMW rally, a Shemanic Summer Festival, and several 4-H and FFA events. Mother's Day weekend each year brings the Hotchkiss Sheep Camp Stock Dog Trials to the fields adjacent to the Fairgrounds, which overflows into the Fairgrounds Park with lots of family friendly activities throughout the weekend.

The Delta County Fairgrounds' beautiful park has playground equipment and a wonderful StoryWalk provided by Delta

County Libraries that provides delightfully engaging stories within the park that serves as a fantastic opportunity to foster the love of reading in children, while getting outside and active at the same time. The Fairgrounds also has a disc golf course and horse shoe pits.

The Delta County Fairgrounds has one large outdoor riding arena that hosts barrel racing, team roping, and rodeo events each summer. There is also a covered arena that is often used for small show events or sales. If you are in need of a large event space for a wedding reception, birthday party or corporate meeting, Heritage Hall is the perfect option as it will

seat up to 200, and has a warming kitchen area. Smaller meetings or events can be accommodated in the Maloney House.

The Delta County Fairgrounds is home to the Delta County Fair which takes place during the first full week of August each year. This is the 120th year for the Delta County Fair which kicks off with a free Community Night BBQ put on by Delta County on Friday, July 25, 2025, and is packed full of Fair events and activities through Saturday, August 2. For more information on the Delta County Fair visit deltacountyfair.com.

For additional information on the Delta County Fairgrounds, or the use of one of the venues, visit deltacounty.com/255/Fairgrounds.



THE HUNT IS ON IN DELTA COUNTY



Delta County is your home base for big game hunting, whether you are planning to hunt in Delta County or the surrounding area. Delta County offers big game hunting for such species as elk, mule deer, pronghorn, moose, mountain lion and bear.

Experienced hunters can go it alone but Delta County offers a variety of guide companies to increase your chances for a successful hunt.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife has all the information you need concerning hunting in Colorado.

You can visit their website at cpw.state.co.us or call their office in Montrose at 970.252.6000.

Waterfowl hunting is plentiful in Delta County. Hunters enjoy

success hunting public lands on the many rivers, streams and lakes.

If upland game bird hunting is your passion, then **Black Canyon Wing & Clay** can provide you with an excellent experience. Situated on 730 acres you can hunt with or without a guide. Located on the aptly named Pheasant Rich Rd just south of Delta call 970.874.7195 or visit bcwandc.com to schedule your hunt.

DELTA COUNTY BIG GAME HUNTING GUIDE LIST

Silver Spur Outfitters

970.249.4242
huntsilverspuroutfitters.com

Surface Creek Outfitters

970.312.7952
Find them on Facebook

West Elk Outfitters

970.640.9461
westelkoutfitters.com

North Rim Trophy Hunts

970.250.0569
northrimtrophyhunts.com

Hubbard Creek Outfitters

970.201.2278
hubbardcreekoutfitters.com

Rugged Creek Outfitters

970.778.9211
ruggedcreekoutfitters.com

Elk Basin Outfitters

970.921.3877
elkbasinoutfitters.com

Huntsman Mountain Outfitters

970.527.6147
huntsmanmountainoutfitters.com

Saddle Mountain Outfitters

970.921.3651
saddlemountainoutfitters.com

Sawbuck Outfitters

970.921.3557
sawbuckoutfitters.com



MAY 02 **CINCO DE MAYO CELEBRATION**
 MAIN STREET | 6:00PM

JUN 07 **OUTDOOR HERITAGE DAY**
 CONFLUENCE LAKE | 7:00AM

JUL 4-6 **WESTERN SKY BALLOON FESTIVAL**
 CONFLUENCE PARK | 6:00AM

JUL 19 **ARCHERY & MUZZLELOADING EXPO**
 FORT UNCOMPAHGRE | 9:00AM

SEP 19 **CAR SHOW & DOWNTOWN CRUISE**
 MAIN STREET | 5:00PM

OCT 31 **MAIN STREET TRICK OR TREAT**
 MAIN STREET | 3:00PM

DEC 05 **CHRISTMAS AT THE PORT**
 FORT UNCOMPAHGRE | 6:00PM

DEC 06 **BREAKFAST WITH SANTA**
 BILL HEDDLES REC CENTER | 8:00AM

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 WWW.CITYOFDELTA.NET



Dominguez-Escalante Canyon

The best way to approach the huge site known as Dominguez-Escalante is to think of it as two distinct entities.

Part of the sprawling area is accessible by car, the other is a large road-free wilderness which can only be reached by floating the Gunnison River or embarking on trails to hike, ride horseback or bike through breathtaking vistas.

The all-encompassing Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area and the area's interior portion known as the Dominguez Canyon Wilderness are managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The conservation area encompasses 209,610 acres (about 327 square miles) including

the 66,000-acre wilderness which is one of the state's largest road-free regions. The area stretches across three Western Colorado counties, with a sizable share of the most accessible acreage falling in Delta County.

In 1776, two Franciscan priests — Fathers Dominguez and Escalante — set out to explore New Mexico, Colorado, Utah and Arizona. Although their route did not include the sites that would eventually bear their names, their detailed journal describes topography similar to that included in the present-day conservation area: semi-arid land, large and small rivers, colorful vistas and deep canyons.

Keep in mind that the place is huge, about a third the size of Rhode Island. Given its size, a map is an essential

resource. Visitors can obtain an area brochure which includes a map at the Fort Uncompahgre in Delta's Confluence Park at 440 N. Palmer St. At the Fort, be sure to ask for the newest Dominguez-Escalante Travel Map.

First-time visitors can access a scenic portion of the area by car. Highway 50 connects Delta and Grand Junction. The Escalante Canyon Road is on the west side of Highway 50 between mile markers 59-60. Barring heavy rain or snow the dirt road is passable year-round with a passenger car, but a four-wheel drive is recommended beyond the first 17 miles where the roadway reaches Escalante Forks. Although the road passes through several miles of private property which are not accessible for hiking, there are viewpoints all along the road

including historic cabins, spectacular red rocks, and occasional herds of mountain sheep. And the Potholes Recreation Site area (12 miles in) offers camping, picnicking, hiking and seasonal swimming with the precautions of wearing a life jacket and refraining from diving into a watery cauldron which has claimed at least eight lives.

With a map in hand, a hike through Big Dominguez Canyon will give visitors an intimate sense of the place. The full journey is over 16 miles one way and requires a full day to hike in and back out again, but explorers can shorten the distance as they wish and still encounter spectacular scenery along with ancient petroglyphs. Start at the Bridgeport Trailhead which can be reached by taking Bridgeport Road on the west side of Highway 50 near mile marker 52.

The newly-designed Escalante Triangle Mountain Bike Trail System can be accessed from Delta by traveling west on West Fifth Street which becomes G Road. Take the fork to Sawmill Mesa Road which leads to Escalante Rim Road. A more detailed map can be obtained online by searching for “Escalante Triangle Mountain Bike Trail System.”

Rivers of the Dominguez-Escalante area are prized by white water kayakers as well as those who paddle canoes and rafts. Search the internet for tips using the “lower Gunnison River” as a search term in tandem with “canoeing” or “floating.”

The Cactus Park region on the north-western edge of the conservation area includes roads for motorized recreation along with horseback riding, mountain biking, and traditional hiking. Portions of Escalante Canyon Road are also open to all-terrain vehicles and motorcycles.



Many places to pitch a tent

Like all of the Western Slope of Colorado, there is camping abound in Delta County, whether you like to get in the backcountry or take your family to a nice camping spot, there are endless possibilities for you and your family to get out and camp.



State Parks

Delta County is home to three beautiful state parks that range in scenery and activities.

The first is **Crawford State Park**. It's near the Black Canyon of the Gunnison (one of Colorado's national parks).

Crawford State Park has fishing, boating, hiking and more. It makes for a nice retreat for outdoor recreation, but there is also camping available. It's by reservation only.

cpwshop.com or 800-244-5613.

Paonia State Park plunges deep into nature as a narrow lake park. There are steep mountainsides, beautiful water attractions, alpine scenery

and plenty more for nature lovers. In addition to water-skiing, picnicking and sightseeing, there is some camping available. But there is no drinking water available in the park, so bring your own water.

cpwshop.com or 800-244-5613.

Sweitzer Lake State Park is known well to locals. It started out as a dream for the community and provides tons of recreation and relaxation for locals in addition to visitors. It was built solely for recreation, so this is the one state park where you aren't going to find anything in the way of camping. But there are plenty of park activities you can find on the 210 acres and in the 137-acre reservoir in the park.

Unique Camping

While there are plenty of public lands, there are some unique adventures in camping on private campgrounds.

One good example is **Big B's Delicious Orchards** in Paonia. They call it "The Campground at Big B's" and it offers a chance to camp among the orchards that grow fruit for delicious cider.

They offer showers and several campgrounds. They also allow pets at these campgrounds, which include spots for tents, cars, campers and RVs. Depending on the site, the cost varies.

bigbs.com/camping or email camping@bigbs.com or text/call 970-812-3342



More Public Lands and Backcountry Camping

The **Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area**

comprises 210,172 acres of protected public lands and includes the 66,280-acre Dominguez Canyon Wilderness. It's one of the gems of the area, located between Grand Junction and Delta County.

It's managed by the Bureau of Land Management, so that means you can camp pretty much anywhere you'd like, if you're adventurous enough. During the day, people find fun recreating on trails with mountain bikes, dirt bikes and more.

They also offer plenty of fun in the

form of hiking and floating (the Gunnison River flows through the area).

[blm.gov](https://www.blm.gov)

Cottonwood Grove Campground

is another popular spot in Delta. It actually has six campsites, but is on BLM land, so camping can be done in more than just the campsites.

Site amenities include a boat ramp, shade structures, picnic tables, fire rings and a vault toilet. It gives people access to water recreation and beaches for yourself or your pet.

[blm.gov/visit/cottonwood-grove-campground](https://www.blm.gov/visit/cottonwood-grove-campground)

Island Lake Campground, near Cedaredge, is at 10,000 feet and located on Colorado's Grand Mesa, which is home to more than 300 fishing lakes.

It is part of the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forest (GMUG). There's endless recreation around this beautiful camping location. And though it's beautiful, Island Lake is just one of several camping spots on the Grand Mesa. It looks out at one of the hundreds of beautiful mountain lakes on the mesa.

To book: [recreation.gov/camping/campgrounds/233387](https://www.recreation.gov/camping/campgrounds/233387)



Four Fun Winter Activities on Grand Mesa

1. Skiing and Snowboarding at Powderhorn - Powderhorn averages 250 inches of dry powder every winter. Powderhorn Mountain Resort, perched on the northern edge of Grand Mesa, is a family-friendly ski and snowboard area with affordable prices, 1,600 acres of diverse terrain, 42 trails, two terrain parks, an average of 250 inches of dry Colorado powder every winter—and no crowds. The area, with 20 percent beginner and 50 percent intermediate runs, is perfect for families and novice skiers, while advanced skiers and boarders love Powderhorn’s steep runs, moguls, and glade skiing through groves of white-trunked aspens. Besides great skiing, Powderhorn is renowned for its stunning views across the Roan Plateau and Book Cliffs below Grand Mesa. There’s lodging at the mountain base and food and drink at the Sunset Bar & Grill.

2. Colorado’s Best Cross Country Skiing - Grand Mesa in northern Delta County simply offers the finest cross-country skiing in Colorado. Deep snow blankets the 10,000-foot-high mesa, called the biggest flat-topped mountain in the world, from November through April. Grand Mesa Nordic Council maintains and

grooms 32 miles of ski trails in three different trail systems—Ward, County Line, and Skyway. The trails offer both skate and classic Nordic skiing on either flat or undulating terrain, making it perfect for cross-country winter adventures. Warming huts are near the trailheads. The council also maintains more trailheads on the Mesa for backcountry skiing on ungroomed terrain. Get lessons and ski rentals at Mesa Lakes Resort.

3. Snowmobiling in the Deep Snow - Delta County is western Colorado’s snowy playground for snowmobiling. More than 400 inches of powdery snow blankets Grand Mesa every winter, and a dedicated system of snowmobile trails—plus plenty of room for off-trail riding—give you lots of opportunities to take advantage of it all. The trail system includes Land’s End Loop, Bonham, Bull Creek, Cold Sore, and Vega trails, along with the longest snowmobile trail in the lower 48 states. The 123-mile Sunlight to Powderhorn Trail, running between Sunlight Ski Area near Glenwood Springs to Powderhorn Mountain Resort on Grand Mesa, is one of the state’s best rides. Trails are marked with orange flags, with some also used by cross-country skiers. Remember to share the trail.

Snowmobile rentals, tours, and lodging are available at Thunder Mountain Lodge, Grand Mesa Lodge or Alexander Lake Lodge with Grand Mesa Adventures. Other snowmobile trails are in the North Fork Valley near Paonia.

4. Snowshoe Adventures on Grand Mesa - The broad top of Grand Mesa yields some of Colorado’s best snowshoeing adventures, especially for beginners and families with its gentle terrain. The Mesa is also big enough to find solitude and silence in the winter woods away from cross-country skiers, snowmobilers, and ice fishermen. It’s best to avoid the groomed X-C trails and instead head into the deep woods and snow-covered meadows where you can snowshoe almost anywhere. A designated two-kilometer snowshoe trail is part of the Nordic Coalition’s Skyway Trail System. Other great snowshoeing trails are the Griffith Lakes Trail, Crag Crest Trail, West Bench Trail, and Mesa Lakes Loops. One of the best treks is the 3.5-mile Ward Trail which climbs almost 1,000 feet from the south trailhead on highway 65. Snowshoe rentals and guided tours are available at lodges atop Grand Mesa.

GRAND MESA SONGWRITER FESTIVAL

Featuring Marcus Hummon



On June 6-8, 2025 the Cedaredge-based Grand Mesa Arts and Events Center (GMAEC) will host a Songwriter Festival. The public is invited to attend the three-day festival which is billed as a celebration of songs, songwriters and the stories which inspire them. The event will feature the music of nineteen singer-songwriters.

Headlining the group will be Marcus Humman. Also performing will be Deb Scheer, Susan Marie Reeves, Bill Edwards, Joe Oeser, Michael Lille, Irene Kelley, Dana Cooper, Tori

Tuller, Erik Stucky, Liz Barnez, and much more.

The Grand Mesa Songwriter Festival represents an occasion for seasoned and aspiring songwriters to have their songs heard as well as a unique opportunity for music fans to learn the stories behind the lyrics and melodies.

The festival format calls for multiple listening room stages, where songwriters play and perform their original songs. Each in-the-round acoustic performance will feature

three songwriters swapping songs and relating the story behind each song. Listeners will hear old favorites as well as entirely new works. The intimate settings will give audience members a chance to hear tomorrow's headliners in small-stage performances held in a variety of unique venues in historic downtown Cedaredge.

Full-festival weekend passes and single-day passes can be purchased online at gmaec.org or at Grand Mesa Arts and Events Center, 195 W. Main St., Cedaredge. For further information and GMAEC hours, call 970-856-9195.





Fort Uncompahgre

If you've ever wanted to take a trip back in time, Fort Uncompahgre Interpretive Center might be the place for you, and it's located right here in Delta.

A replica of the original fort, it takes visitors back to the 1820s and the days of the Old Spanish Trail, where everything is made to authentically replicate what folks would have seen. From furs and dirt floors, to costumes and artifacts, the history lesson begins when you arrive.

When you visit, you'll go through the Visitor Center, bookstore and information center before walking around to other attractions, like a reconstruction of a trapper's cabin.

Visitors will step back in time the moment they enter the unique living history museum, from the blacksmith shop to the live turkeys that roam the grounds.

The history

Antione Robidoux established the trading outpost in the late 1820's in an area known as Robidoux Bottoms near the junction of the Gunnison and Uncompahgre Rivers, just west of Delta, Colorado. This area was a hub

for trails coming north out of the San Juan River Basin in South Western Colorado and north western New Mexico, meeting the North Branch of the Old Spanish Trail (a pack route traveling east and west from Santa Fe to Los Angeles).

The fort remained in operation until the mid 1840s before being attacked by a band of Ute Indians. It has been speculated that the attack on Fort Uncompahgre was the result of built up Ute hostility stemming from the introduction of "Taos lightning" in the

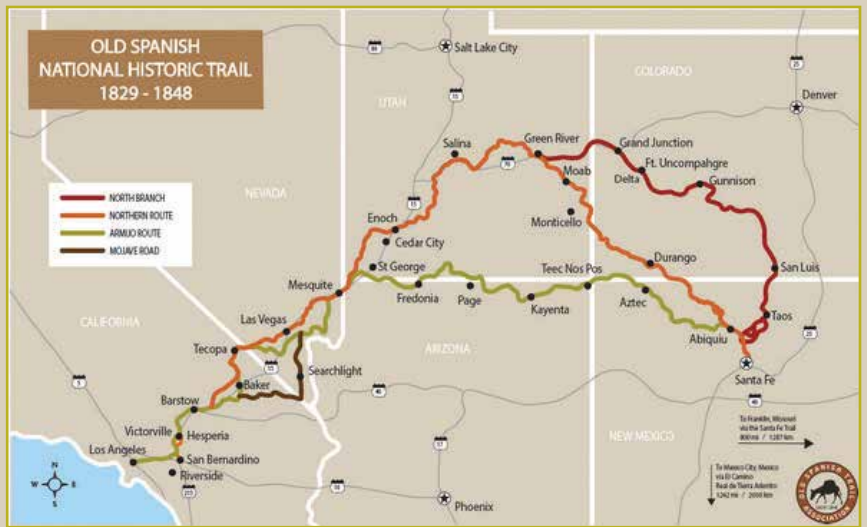
1840s.

With the decline of the beaver population in the intermountain west, compounded by changes in clothing styles, the days of the mountain men were numbered. In 1846, Antione Robidoux joined General Steven Watts Kearny as an interpreter in Kearny's campaign to the west in the war with Mexico. Later expeditions through the area would note the fort in passing, with time taking its toll on the structure.

Special events and more

Christmas at the Fort takes place in early December each year following the annual Delta Parade of Lights. People can meet, sing Christmas carols and share in festivities.

The fort is entering an exciting new time as the City of Delta takes on a mission to strengthen the venue's importance in the community, increase the indigenous merchandise



in the Visitor Center, expand the existing trail system and construct a schedule of regular programming at the fort's new stage area.

Fort staff is also working to partner with local organizations to improve the educational programming put out by the Fort Uncompahgre.

More events include Saturday Trade

Days and Deltarado Days, a VFW American flag retirement ceremony on the last Saturday in September, a Robidoux Artist Camp, and Mountain Men and the Stars.

Fort Uncompahgre Interpretive Center is located at 440 N. Palmer St. in Delta. It's open 11 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays and 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. Saturdays. Call 970-874-8349 for details.





FIVE WAYS TO ENJOY EVERY SEASON WITH YOUR LIBRARIES

“No matter the season, libraries strive to meet the ever-changing needs and interests of the communities they serve,” says LaDonna Gunn, District Director of Delta County Libraries.

The libraries transition from season to season, along with the community and, in doing so, offer many services to add enjoyment year-round!

1) Check Out Seeds. The Delta County Seed Library has been providing library patrons with access to seeds, seed-saving programs, and seed resources since the spring of 2013. Every year in March, thousands of seed packets are available for library patrons to take home and plant in their gardens.

2) Walk a Storywalk®. StoryWalks® are a great way for families to get outdoors and read together by walking along a trail or through a park, while reading a storybook posted on panels.

Delta County Libraries, through various partnerships, offers four StoryWalks® in Delta County. Visit Crawford State Park, Delta County Fairgrounds, Surface Creek Trail, and Sweitzer Lake State Park to enjoy a StoryWalk®!

3) Get a State Parks Pass. Would you like to visit a state park in Colorado? Look no farther than your local library! Through a partnership with the Colorado State Library and Colorado Parks and Wildlife, every library in Delta County offers three state park kits that include a pass to enter the parks. The kits check out for one week on a first-come, first-served basis.

4) Check Out Gear. Are you still

looking for snow in the great outdoors? Then snowshoeing on Grand Mesa might be the spring activity for you! Through a partnership with The Nature Connection, the Cedaredge Library provides access to snowshoes to help families get outdoors and explore together. Contact Cedaredge Library for more information at 970.399.7674.

5) Map Kits. Get outdoors and explore this spring with a map resource kit for our local wilderness areas. Through a partnership with Colorado Canyons Association and the Bureau of Land Management, the libraries offer map resource kits for the Gunnison Basin and the Uncompahgre Plateau.



Innovation Workspace at the Delta Library

The City of Delta along with Delta County Libraries have created the Innovation Workspace at the new Delta Library. The new library opened in 2023. The Innovation Workspace includes a co-working space and a makerspace. The goal is to bring Delta's exceptionally talented community together in a community workshop that can inspire learning and collaboration. The Innovation Workspace is our newest economic development effort and is designed to encourage new product and business creation through mentoring and onsite office and workshop space.

The Innovation Workspace will allow for co-programming with the Library for existing businesses, budding entrepreneurs, and youth. The co-working component focuses on existing and expanding businesses and remote workers. Office space, and business development



tools, classes, and resources are available. Growing businesses, remote workers, and those that need access to high-speed internet, copiers, or other traditional office resources can utilize this space to meet their day-to-day business needs.

Makerspaces are community, lifelong-learning centers where kids and adults learn the value of persistence, invention, and collaboration, as well as how thinking critically helps drive innovative solutions with an emphasis on the entrepreneurial spirit, science, technology, engineering, and art. The space will include design/think, woodworking, metals fabrication, industrial sewing, technology/3D printing, and audio/visual production workstations. These stations will have tools, equipment, and materials that participants in classes or members of the makerspace can use to learn, create, invent, and prototype.



Relocating

Delta County

560 Dodge St.,
Delta, CO 81416
970-874-2100
deltacountyco.gov

Town of Cedaredge

235 W. Main St.,
Cedaredge, CO 81413
970-856-3123
cedaredgecolorado.com

Town of Crawford

425 Hwy 92,
Crawford, CO 81415
970-921-4725
townofcrawford.colorado.gov

City of Delta

360 Main St.,
Delta, CO 81416
970-874-7566
cityofdeltanet

Town of Hotchkiss

276 W. Main St, Hotchkiss, CO
81419
970-872-3663
townofhotchkiss.colorado.gov

Orchard City

9661 2100 Rd.,
Orchard City, CO 81410
970-835-3337
orchardcityco.org

Town of Paonia

214 Grand Avenue,
Paonia CO
970-527-4101
townofpaonia.colorado.gov/

Delta Montrose Electric Association

11925 6300 Rd,
Montrose, CO 81401
877-687-3632
dmea.com

Black Hills Energy

888-890-5554
blackhillsenergy.com

JC Propane

1014 1200 Rd.,
Delta, CO 81416
970-874-5381
jcpropane.com

Pioneer Propane

743 1325 Rd,
Delta, CO 81416
970-874-9100
pioneerpropaneinc.co

Elevate

11925 6300 Rd.,
Montrose, CO 81401
844-386-8744
elevateinternet.com

Spectrum

1-855-243-8892
spectrum.com

TDS

1-855-220-2592
tdstelecom.com/shop.html

Double J Disposal

20754 Austin Rd.,
Austin, CO 81410
970-835-8886
double-j-disposal.business.site/

Delta Health

1501 E. 3rd St.,
Delta, CO 81416
970-874-7681
deltahealthco.org

HopeWest

195 Stafford Lane,
Delta, CO 81416
970-874-6903
hopewestco.org

Delta County School District

145 W. 4th St.,
Delta, CO 81416
970-874-4438
deltaschools.com

Technical College of the Rockies

1765 US Hwy 50,
Delta, CO 81416
970-874-7671
tcr.edu

Delta County Libraries

149 E. Main,
Hotchkiss, CO 81419
970-399-7876
deltalibraries.org

Delta Area Chamber of Commerce

301 Main St.,
Delta, CO 81416
970-874-8616
deltacolorado.org

Clearnetworkx

970-240-6600
clearnetworkx.com

Delta County Board of Realtors

724 Main St.,
Delta, CO 81416
970-874-4727
dcbor.com

Delta Workforce Center

206 Ute St.,
Delta, CO 81416
970-874-5781
cdle.colorado.gov/wfc

One Delta County: An Economic Alliance

560 Dodge Street
Delta, CO 81416
(970) 874-2188 (office)
(970) 275-0717 (cell)
gpope@deltacounty.com

North Fork Valley Chamber of Commerce

970-872-3226
northforkvalley.net





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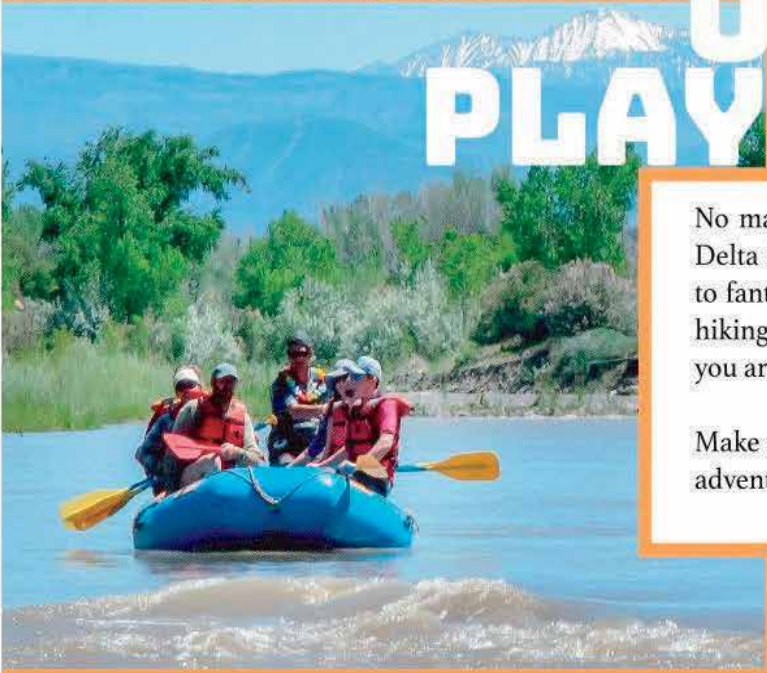
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CAMPING
FOSSILS
NATURAL AREA
GRAND MESA NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA