



The Old Spanish National Historic Trail

Recreation and Development Strategy, Mesa and Delta Counties, Colorado



United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management-National Park Service
October 2018





Old Spanish National Historic Trail

Recreation & Development Strategy

Dear Reader,

The purpose of this Old Spanish Trail Recreational Development Strategy is to explore different possibilities for local communities to increase recognition, general knowledge, and usage of the Old Spanish National Historic Trail in Mesa and Delta Counties, Colorado. The Old Spanish National Historic Trail, which was designated by the U.S. Congress in 2002 under the authority of the National Trails System Act, recognizes the 2,700 mile-long trade route between Santa Fe, New Mexico and Los Angeles, California throughout the 19th century. This strategy identifies potential projects that could enable the public to find, follow, and experience the trail throughout these two counties in western Colorado. The Old Spanish National Historic Trail has a diverse, unique and rich history, and the recreational activities associated with the trail in these two counties are also very diverse.

This strategy is not a decisional or land use planning document that requires conformance with the National Environmental Policy Act, nor will this strategy preclude other multiple uses of nearby public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Public lands adjacent to and within viewing distance of the recreational routes identified in this strategy will continue to be managed in accordance with the BLM’s multiple-use mission established in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, other applicable federal statutes, and the applicable BLM Resource Management Plan.

We would like to thank the numerous local, regional, and national stakeholders that participated in the development of this strategy, and we hope that this document establishes a strong foundation for future on-the-ground partnerships that will celebrate Colorado’s rich cultural heritage.

Sincerely,

Rob Sweeten

BLM Old Spanish Trail Co-Administrator/
Historic Trails Lead Utah State Office

Aaron Mahr

Superintendent
National Trails Intermountain Region-NPS

Prepared For :

The Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Residents of Mesa and Delta Counties, and the Old Spanish Trail Association (see pg. 6).

Prepared By :

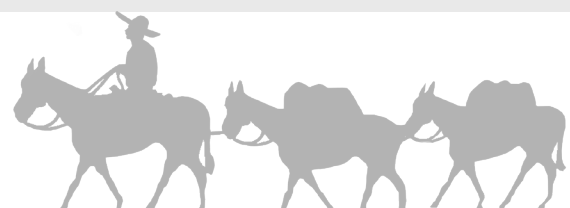
Courtney Bringhurst & Cara Glabau, BLM, American Conservation Experience
Rob Sweeten, BLM, Old Spanish Trail Co-Administrator/Historic Trails Lead Utah State Office

Funded by a grant from the Partnership for the National Trails System



Above: Colorado Riverfront Trail Perspective

Cover Photo: Castle Rock in Rabbit Valley
Photo Credit: Dan Ben-Horin





Old Spanish National Historic Trail

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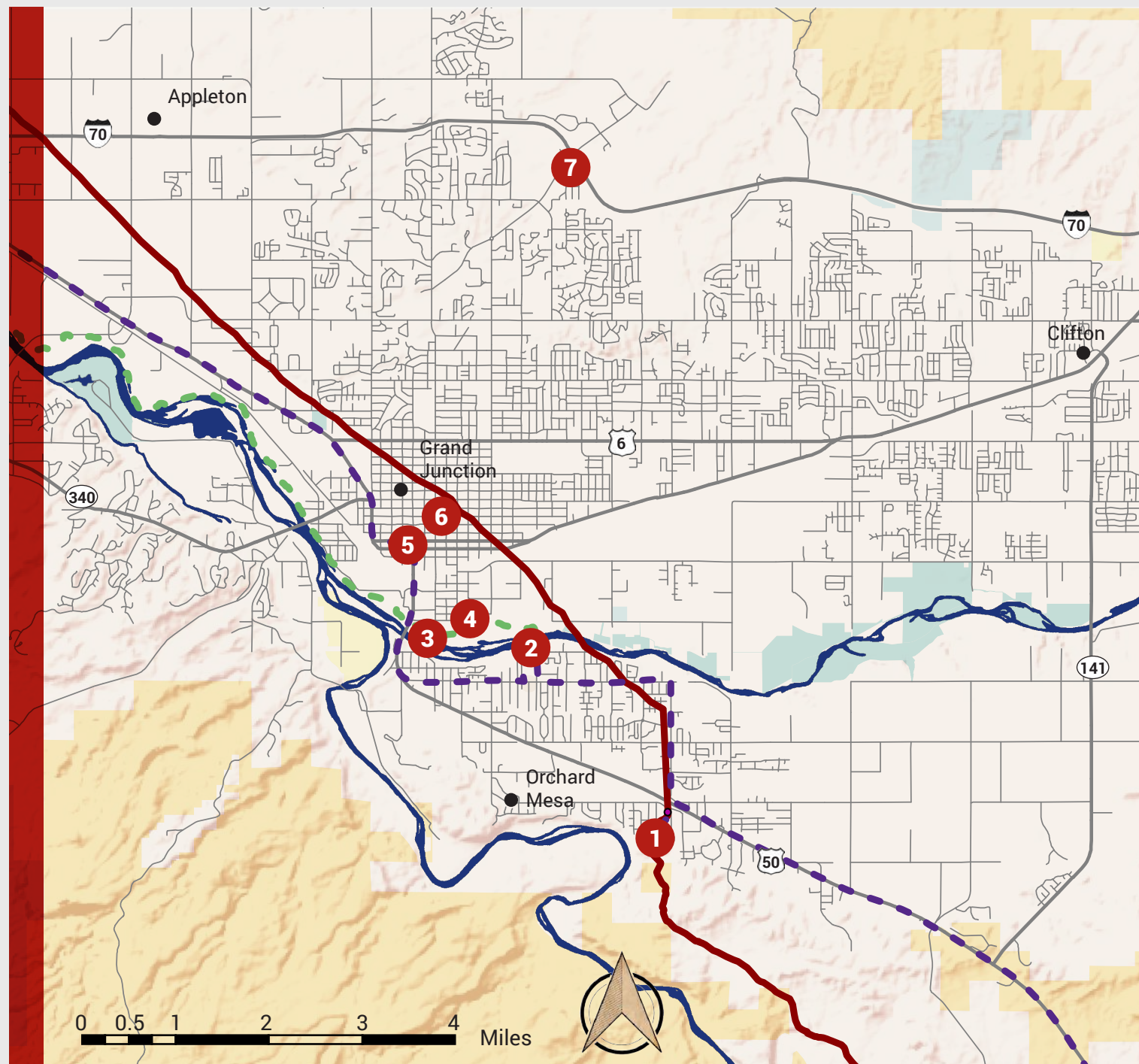
Introduction





Old Spanish National Historic Trail

Map and Legend Example



Document Sections

The **Introduction** section gives background information about national historic trails and the Old Spanish National Historic Trail (NHT), defines project boundaries, and describes the project's process.

The **Project Overview** section shows an overview map of the Old Spanish NHT and of the project area.

The **Mesa and Delta Counties** sections of the congressionally designated Old Spanish NHT are addressed individually. Each area is shown on a map and then described in detail. Existing and proposed trail elements, such as inscriptions, trailheads, and waysides, are shown. Connections to other recreational and cultural resources in close proximity to the Old Spanish NHT are also identified.

The **Appendices** section describes typical recreational trail elements, as well as the range of alternative development, from primitive, to rustic, to developed. It also contains a trail chart and examples of the standard authorized signage for the Old Spanish NHT.

Map and Legend Explanation

Proposed NHT Site: Sites that have yet to be developed specifically for the Old Spanish NHT. Suggested development components often include Old Spanish NHT interpretative media and signage to be added to a proposed site.

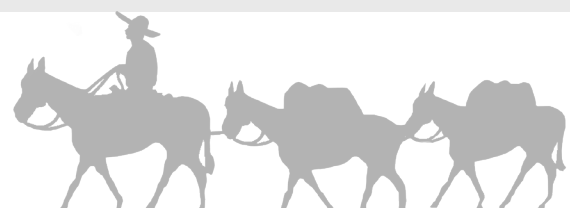
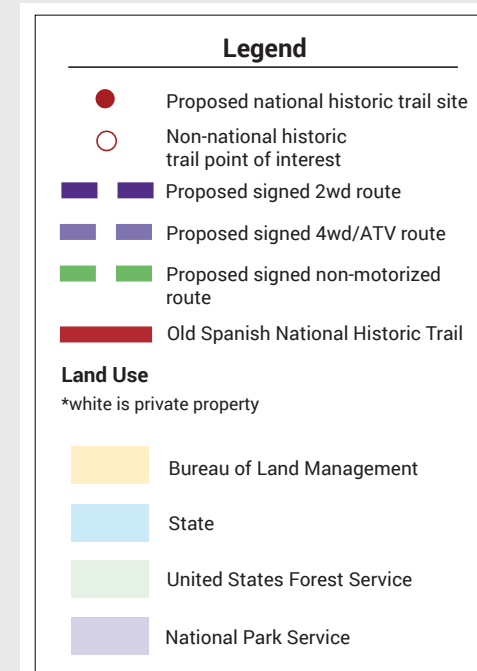
Non-NHT Point of Interest: These are sites that are along, or within close proximity to the Old Spanish NHT that are not related to the Old Spanish NHT. These sites are developed and ready for visitor access.

Proposed 2WD route: Existing paved main roads and highways that follow closely the Old Spanish NHT and are proposed for trail signage.

Proposed 4WD/ATV route: Typically existing 4WD/ATV trails that are proposed for trail signage. Further explanation of the type of trail is described on Trail Element pages.

Proposed Non-Motorized Trail: Non-motorized trails include biking, hiking, or equestrian trails or any combination proposed for trail signage. Further explanation of the type of trail is described on Trail Element pages.

Land Status: Colors indicate who owns or manages a particular parcel or parcels of public land.





Old Spanish National Historic Trail

Recreation & Development Strategy Participants

Delta County



Fort Uncompaghre



Mesa County



Museums of Western Colorado



Grand Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization



Colorado Riverfront Foundation



City of Fruita



Colorado Electric Bikes



City of Grand Junction



**Colorado Plateau Mountain
Bike Trail Association, Inc**



Old Spanish Trail Association



Colorado Parks and Wildlife



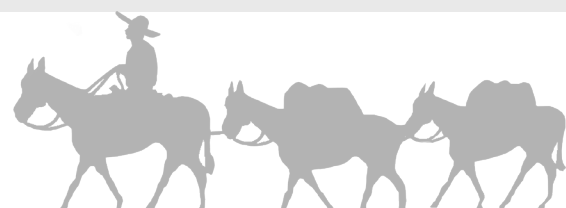
Old Spanish NHT Administration
(co-administered by the BLM and NPS)



Bureau of Land Management
(Grand Junction Field Office, Uncompaghre
Field Office, McInnis Canyons NCA,
Dominguez-Escalante NCA)



Partnership for the National Trails System





Old Spanish National Historic Trail

Project Background: Trail History

In 1968, the National Trails System Act was passed by the US Congress, and signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson. Ten years later national historic trails were added to the act for "the identification and protection of historic routes and their historic remnants and artifacts for public use and enjoyment. All federal agencies have management authority over their lands where national historic trails may cross. Administration and management of an entire National Historic Trail is overseen by

one or more offices within the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the National Park Service (NPS), and/or the US Forest Service (USFS). There are currently 19 national historic trails in the United States.

The Old Spanish National Historic Trail became the 15th national historic trail in December 2002. The Old Spanish NHT is co-administered by the Bureau of Land Management and the National Park Service. Today, the Old Spanish NHT is

widely known as the "longest, most arduous, and crookedest pack mule route in America." (Hafen and Hafen, 1993)

From 1829 to 1848, traders knew the trail as the most feasible path between Los Angeles and Santa Fe for traveling caravans. The trail provided a trade route for quality woolen goods produced in New Mexico which were traded for a surplus supply of horses and mules raised on California's ranchos.

Trade with American Indians was also prominent along the trail, including an extensive slave trade of American Indian women and children who were forced to become domestic servants for ranchers in New Mexico and California. Explorers of the Old Spanish NHT established the route along a loose network of American Indian footpaths that crossed the wide expanse of the Rocky Mountains, the Colorado Plateau, the Mojave Desert, and the Transverse Ranges and coastal valleys of southern California.



1598
Don Juan de Oñate establishes San Juan de los Caballeros near Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo in New Mexico

1765
Juan María Antonio Rivera explores southwestern Colorado and southeastern Utah

1776
Francisco Atanasio Dominguez and Silvestre Vélez de Escalante follow Rivera's route to the Great Basin in Utah

1825
Antoine Robidoux constructs Fort Uncompahgre near Delta, Colorado.



1826
Jedediah S. Smith leads a party of fur trappers southwest from Utah to southern California

1831
William Wolfskill (pictured below) and George C. Yount establish a route that goes into central Utah before heading southwest into California



1837
Julian Chávez arrives in Los Angeles via the Old Spanish Trail. Later acquires property in present day Elysian Park area. Chávez Ravine namesake.

1841
Regular trade caravan is led by Francisco Estevan Vigil

1843-44
Juan Arce hauls merchandise worth \$487.50 and Francisco Rael leads sheep worth \$1,748

1848
Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ends Mexican American War, Gold Rush begins

1849
Commercial caravans across Old Spanish Trail cease and varied routes develop

1598



1610
Don Pedro de Peralta founds Santa Fe, New Mexico

1774
Father Francisco Hermenegildo Garcés explores a path to the California missions, and reaches Mission San Gabriel

1821
Mexico becomes independent from Spain



1829
Antonio Armijo leads trade party from Abiquiu to Los Angeles blazing the Old Spanish Trail

1834
José Avieta and 125 men arrive at Los Angeles with woolen goods to trade for horses and mules.



1839
José Antonio Salazar arrives in California with a group of 75 men. Francisco Quintana carries domestic manufactures worth \$78.25

1842
40 New Mexicans from Abiquiu settle at Agua Mansa and Politana in California; 194 men lead 4,150 California animals back to New Mexico

1846
Mexican-American war begins



2002
The Old Spanish National Historic Trail is designated by Congress

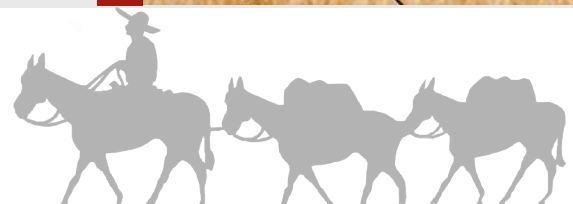
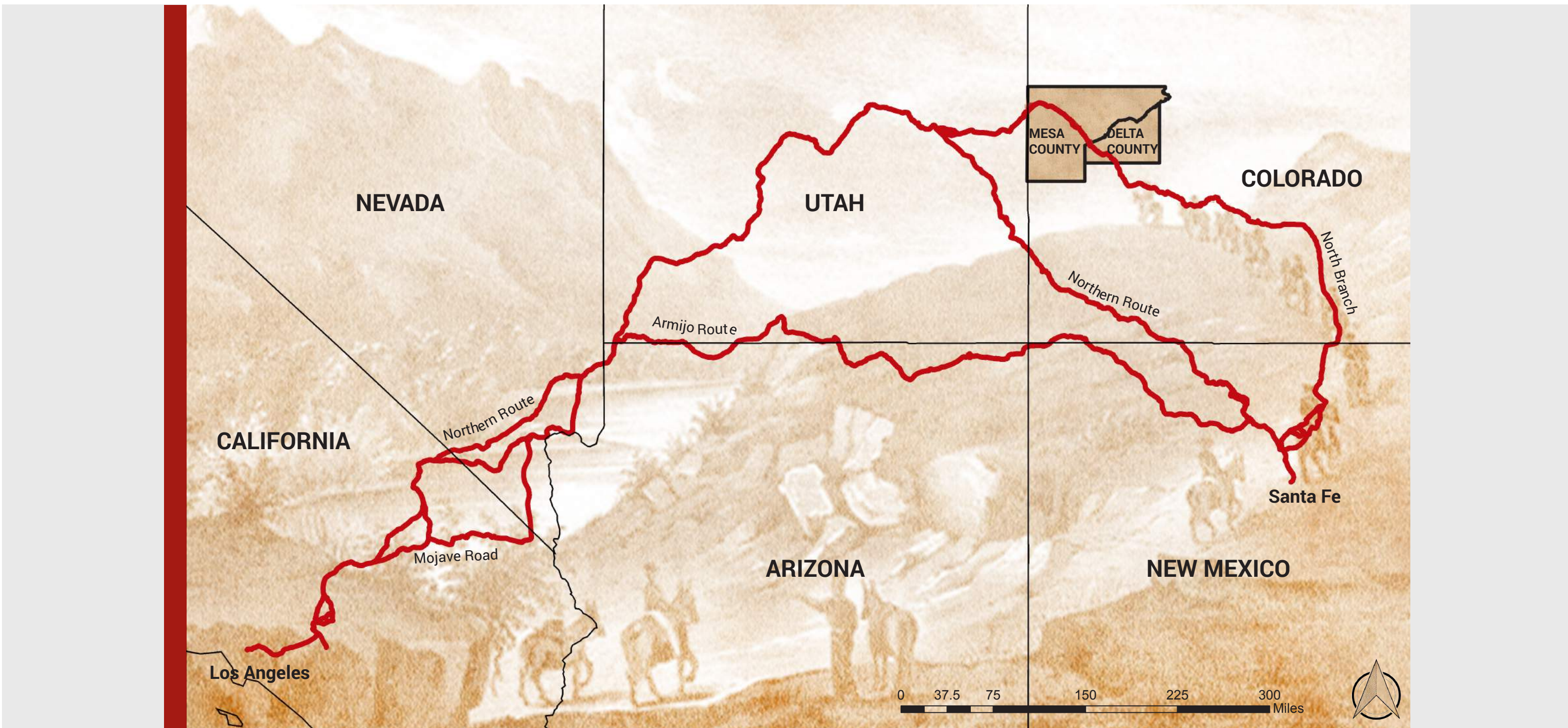
2002





Old Spanish National Historic Trail

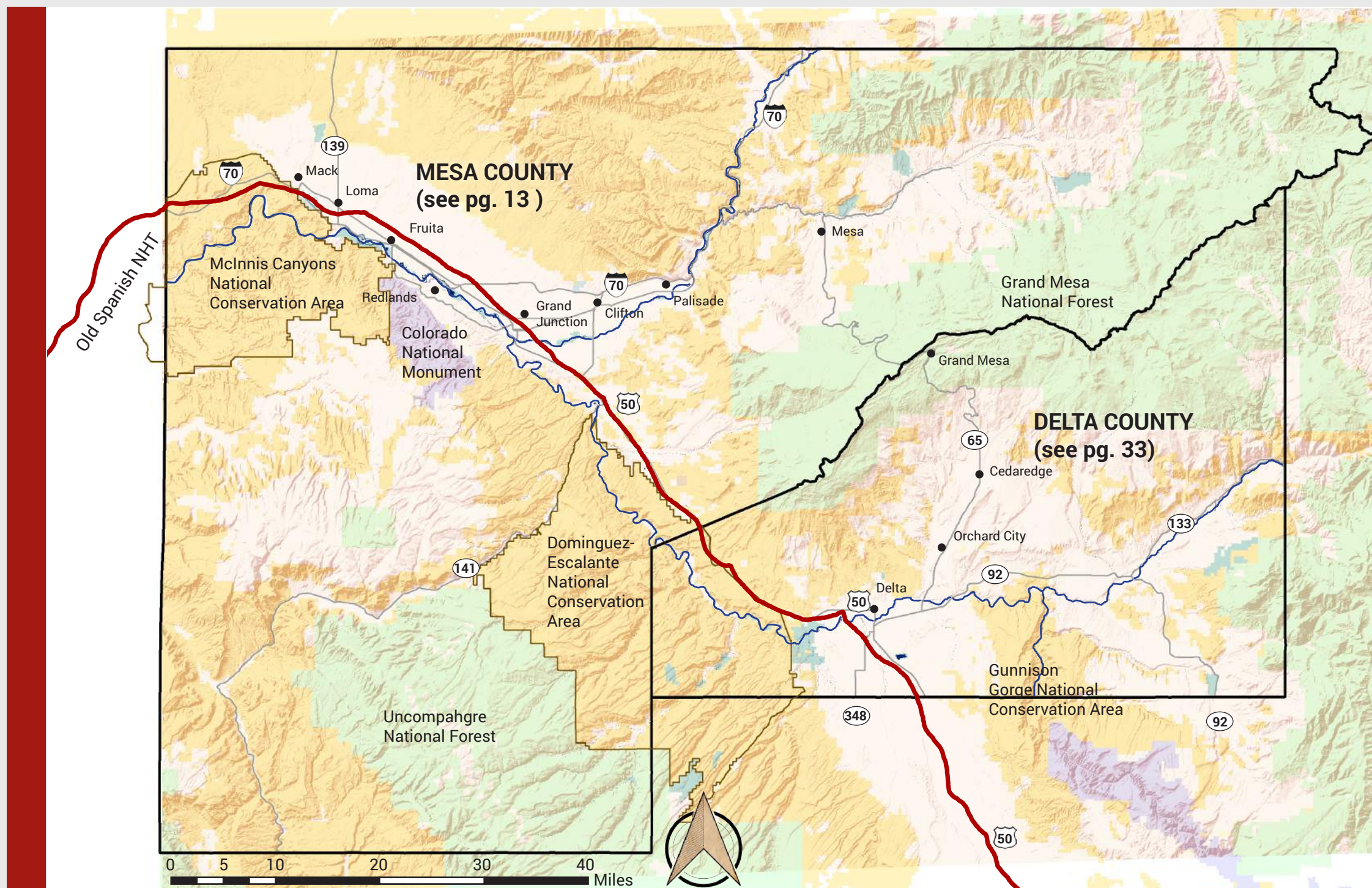
Trail Alignment





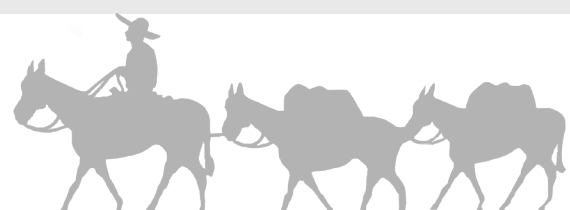
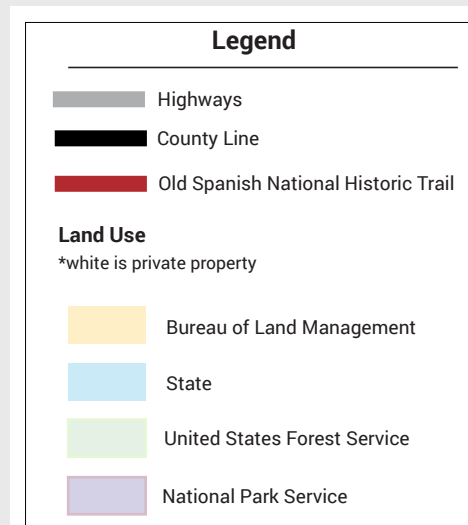
Old Spanish National Historic Trail

Regional Context



Map Summary

The solid red line marks the congressionally designated route of the Old Spanish National Historic Trail.



Project Overview





Old Spanish National Historic Trail

Project Process



Meeting with trail stakeholders in Grand Junction, Colorado

In order to accomplish the goal of increasing general knowledge and usage of the Old Spanish National Historic Trail (NHT), local residents, professionals, city and county officials, the Old Spanish Trail Association, and government agencies from various backgrounds came together to discuss and visit the trail and identify interpretive, educational, and recreational opportunities in Delta and Mesa counties.

The Bureau of Land Management held a meeting on April 10, 2018 in Grand Junction, CO, where draft maps were presented and feedback was collected from attendees. The goal of this meeting was to gather additional information about sites and opportunities for interpretation and recreation along the

Old Spanish NHT. Staff from the National Park Service, Utah BLM State Office, and the Grand Junction BLM Field Office, visited critical sites along the Old Spanish NHT during this meeting.

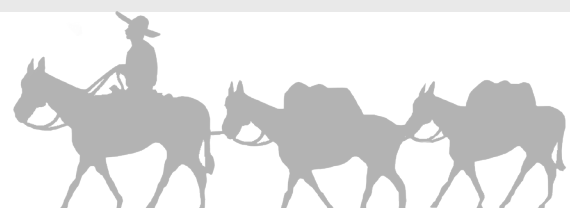
One outcome of this discussion and input was the identification of Old Spanish NHT sites and trail segments that exist throughout Mesa and Delta counties that could be further marked and developed for the public. Trail sites include proposed trailheads, overlooks, and prime interpretive locations. Trail segments include existing hiking/biking/equestrian trails, 2WD routes, 4WD routes, and ATV routes. The development of these elements would make the trail accessible to the public, and provide opportunities for them to interact with and learn about the Old Spanish NHT.



Viewing the landscape over the Gunnison River

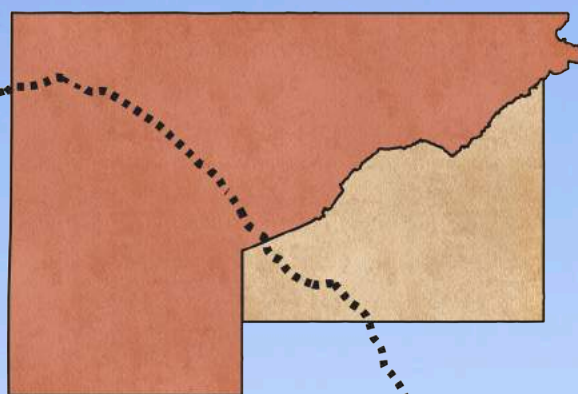
This strategy also includes sites and other points of interest outside of the Old Spanish NHT's period of significance of 1829 through 1848. These areas of interest serve to illuminate local history and add to the overall recreational experience of the public. In these

instances there is some historical continuity with the Old Spanish NHT and long term routing and travel themes.



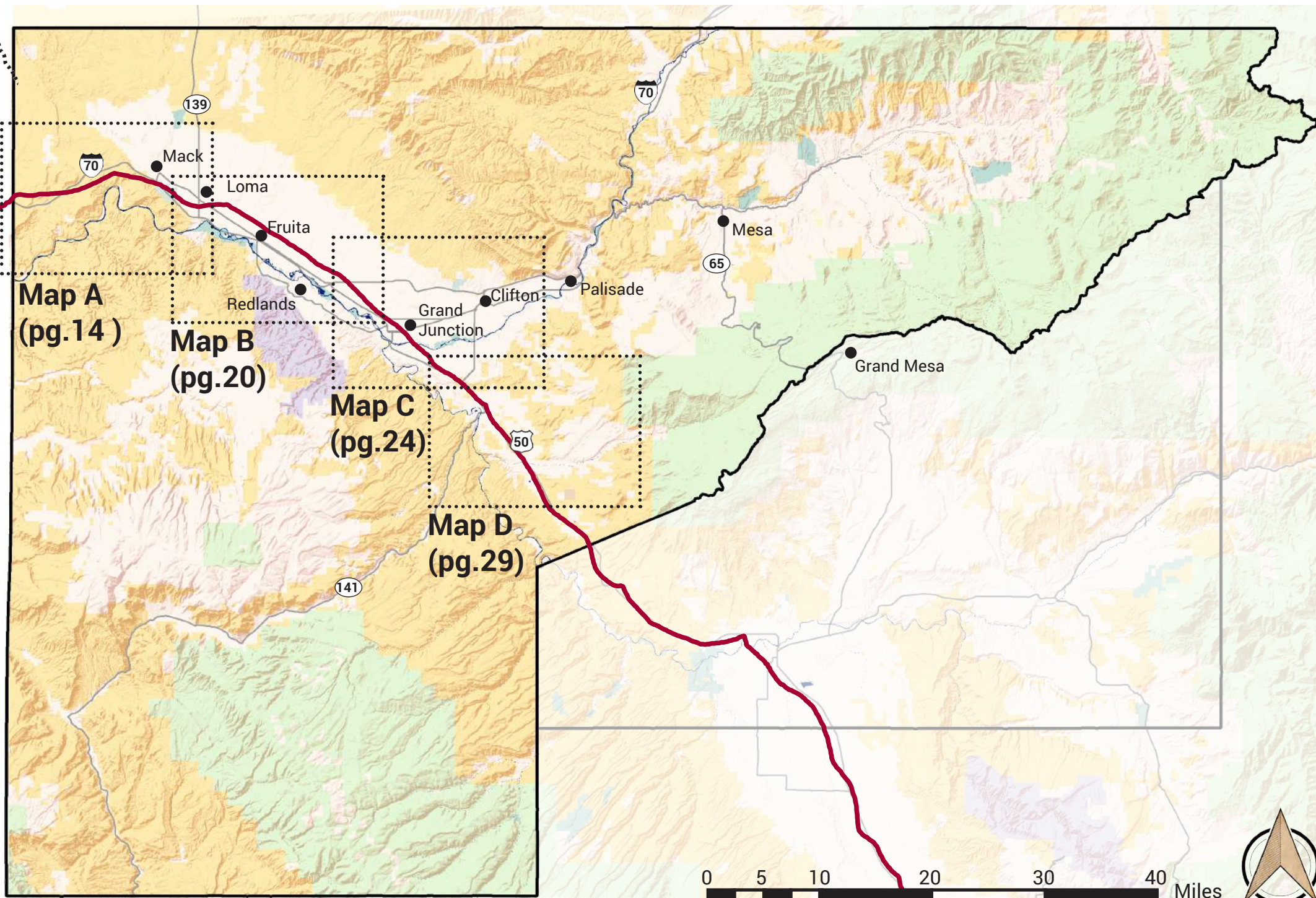
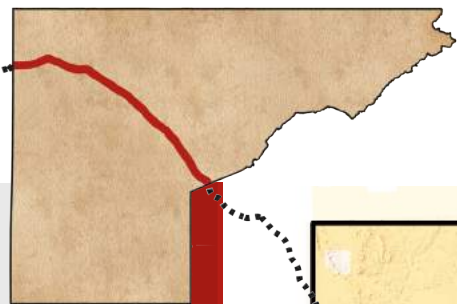
Mesa County

Trail Segment Details





Overview Map of Mesa County

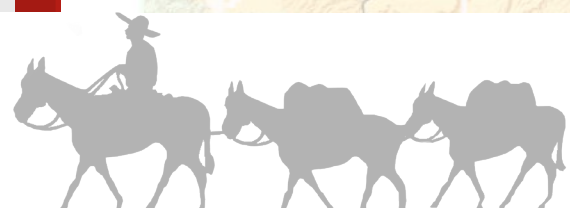


Legend

- Old Spanish National Historic Trail
- Map Sections
- City

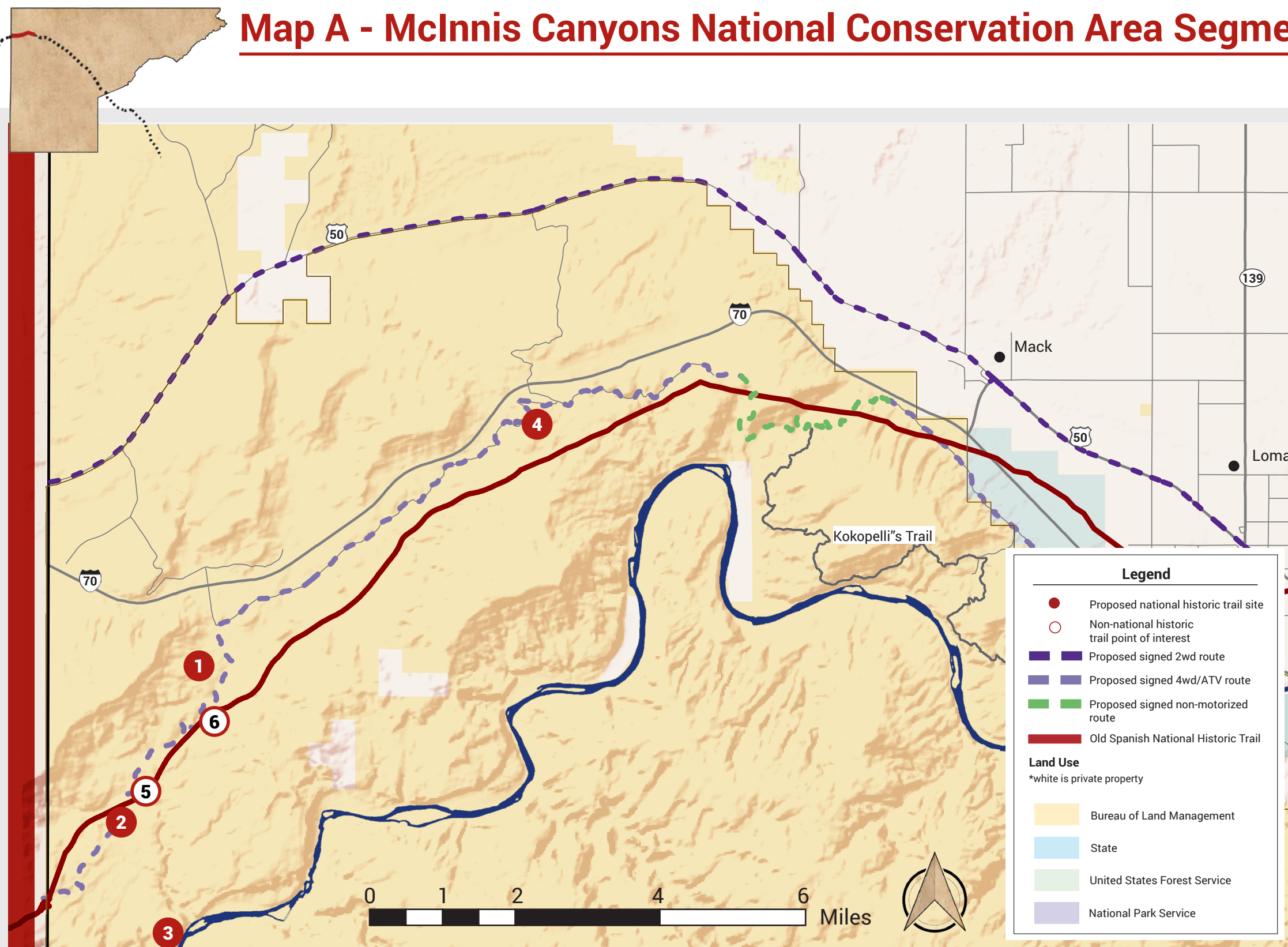
Land Use
*white is private property

- Bureau of Land Management
- State
- United States Forest Service
- National Park Service





Map A - McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area Segment - Mesa County



Existing Trail Elements:

- 1 Interpretive Media Joufflas Campground

Proposed Trail Elements:

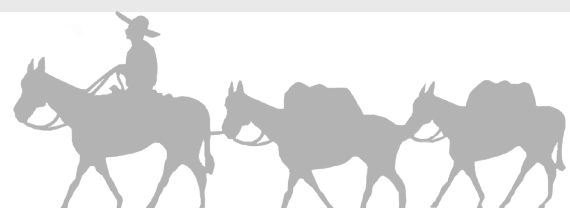
- 2 Castle Rock
- 3 Knowles Canyon Overlook
- 4 Rabbits Ear Trailhead

Other Points of Interest Along the Trail:

(Non-Old Spanish National Historic Trail related)

- 5 McDonald Creek Trail
- 6 Joufflas Horse Trail

See pg. 44 for detailed trail element descriptions



Mesa County- North Branch of the Old Spanish NHT

Map A - McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area Segment Proposed Trail Elements

1

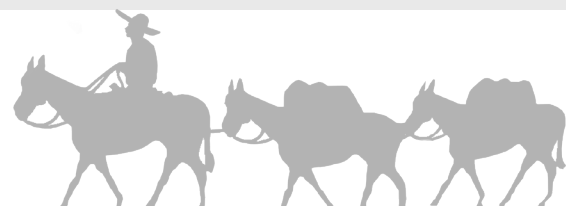
Interpretive Media at Joufflas Campground

Development Opportunities:

The Joufflas Campground in the McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area has eight campsites. This is a highly trafficked campground with picnic tables, fire grates, and bathrooms. Near the bathrooms, there is existing interpretive media that highlights the Joufflas family, early settlers in the McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area, and other early uses of the land, including the Old Spanish NHT.

Suggested Actions for Implementation:

- Enhance and improve existing campground and facilities
- Update current interpretive media



Mesa County- North Branch of the Old Spanish NHT

Map A - McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area Segment Proposed Trail Elements

2



Castle Rock



Development Opportunities:

A US Army expedition led by Col. Loring in 1858 was one of the many parties that used the Old Spanish NHT as they traveled across this portion of the United States. Castle Rock was a landmark used by the travelers going through Rabbit Valley. Developing an overlook or trail

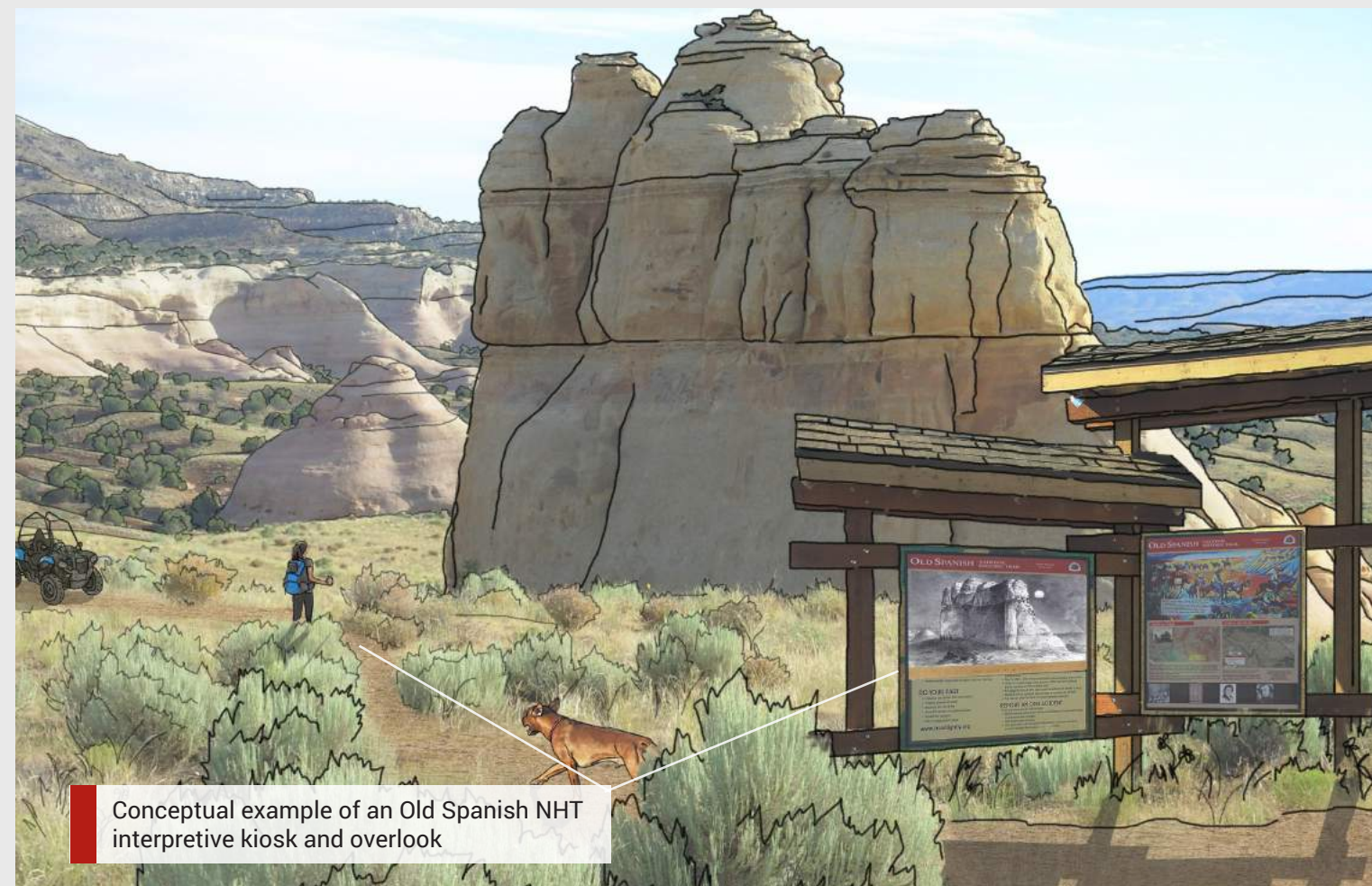
with interpretive media would allow visitors to view Castle Rock and provide a clear visual into the experience of travelers on the Old Spanish Trail.

Suggested Actions for Implementation:

- Choose appropriate interpretive media
- Determine if need is orientation, interpretation, or both
- Consult an interpretive media specialist or contractor



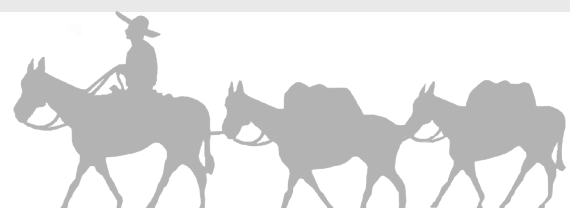
View of Castle Rock from the Kokopelli's Trail



Conceptual example of an Old Spanish NHT interpretive kiosk and overlook



This sketch from the US Army Col. Loring Expedition shows the significance of Castle Rock as a landmark along the Old Spanish NHT



Mesa County- North Branch of the Old Spanish NHT

Map A - McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area Segment Proposed Trail Elements



Knowles Overlook



Development Opportunities:

The Knowles Overlook Campground sits above the Colorado River and the Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness, with seven undeveloped campsites, and a small unmarked trail to the cliffs edge. An opportunity exists to develop interpretive media for this overlook location that would inform visitors of the importance of the Colorado River for various groups following the Old Spanish National Historic Trail.

National Historic Trail.

Suggested Actions for Implementation:

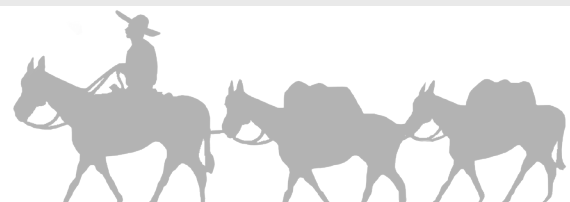
- Choose appropriate interpretive media
- Determine if the need is orientation, interpretive, or both
- Consult an interpretive media specialist or contractor.



Knowles Overlook of the Colorado River



Conceptual example of an Old Spanish NHT low profile exhibit at the trail to the Knowles Overlook



Mesa County- North Branch of the Old Spanish NHT

Map A - McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area Segment Proposed Trail Elements



Rabbits Ear Trailhead



Development Opportunities:

This existing BLM trail leads visitors to a vista of the Colorado River, the Grand Mesa, and the La Sal Mountains in Utah. This trail provides an opportunity for visitors to participate in active recreation and to see the various landscapes that travelers on the Old Spanish NHT encountered. Additional interpretation at the trailhead would give users a background on the Old Spanish NHT before using the trail, and in effect, the ability to picture the rough terrain traveled by people before them.

Suggested Actions for Implementation:

- Choose appropriate interpretive media
- Determine if need is orientation, interpretation, or both
- Consult an interpretive media specialist or contractor



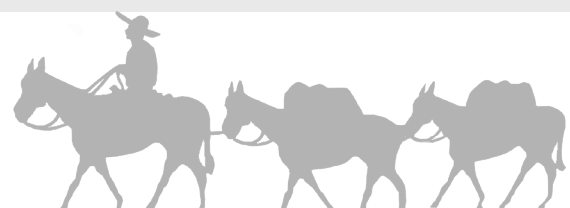
Wayside exhibit



Rabbits Ear Trailhead site sign



Rabbits Ear Trailhead information kiosk and log book



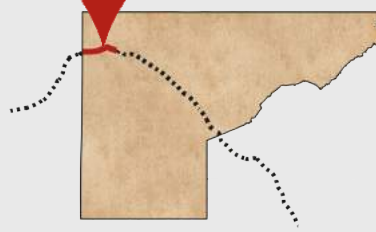


Mesa County- North Branch of the Old Spanish NHT

Map A - McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area Segment Additional Points of Interest

5

McDonald Creek Trail

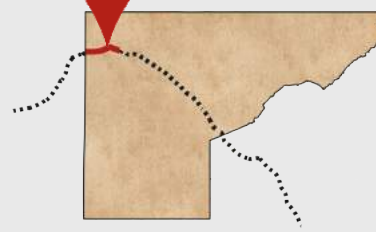


Development Opportunities:

McDonald Creek is a four mile out-and-back trail within the McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area. Users follow McDonald Creek to the Colorado River, passing a variety of unique rock art from the ancestral Fremont culture of Native Americans. The trailhead is on the suggested recreation route following the Kokopelli trail, where there is also a clear view of Castle Rock.

6

Joufflas Horse Trail



Development Opportunities:

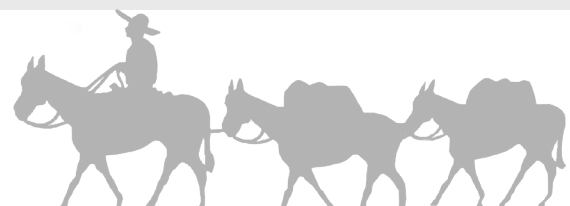
Joufflas Horse Trail is a popular trail, connecting to the McDonald Creek Trail after the first five miles. Its proximity to both Joufflas Campground and Castle Rock makes it a notable destination for users of the McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area. Both the Joufflas and McDonald Creek trail either start at or loop back to the Old Spanish NHT, but do not follow the historic route of the trail.



View of Castle Rock from the McDonald Creek trailhead

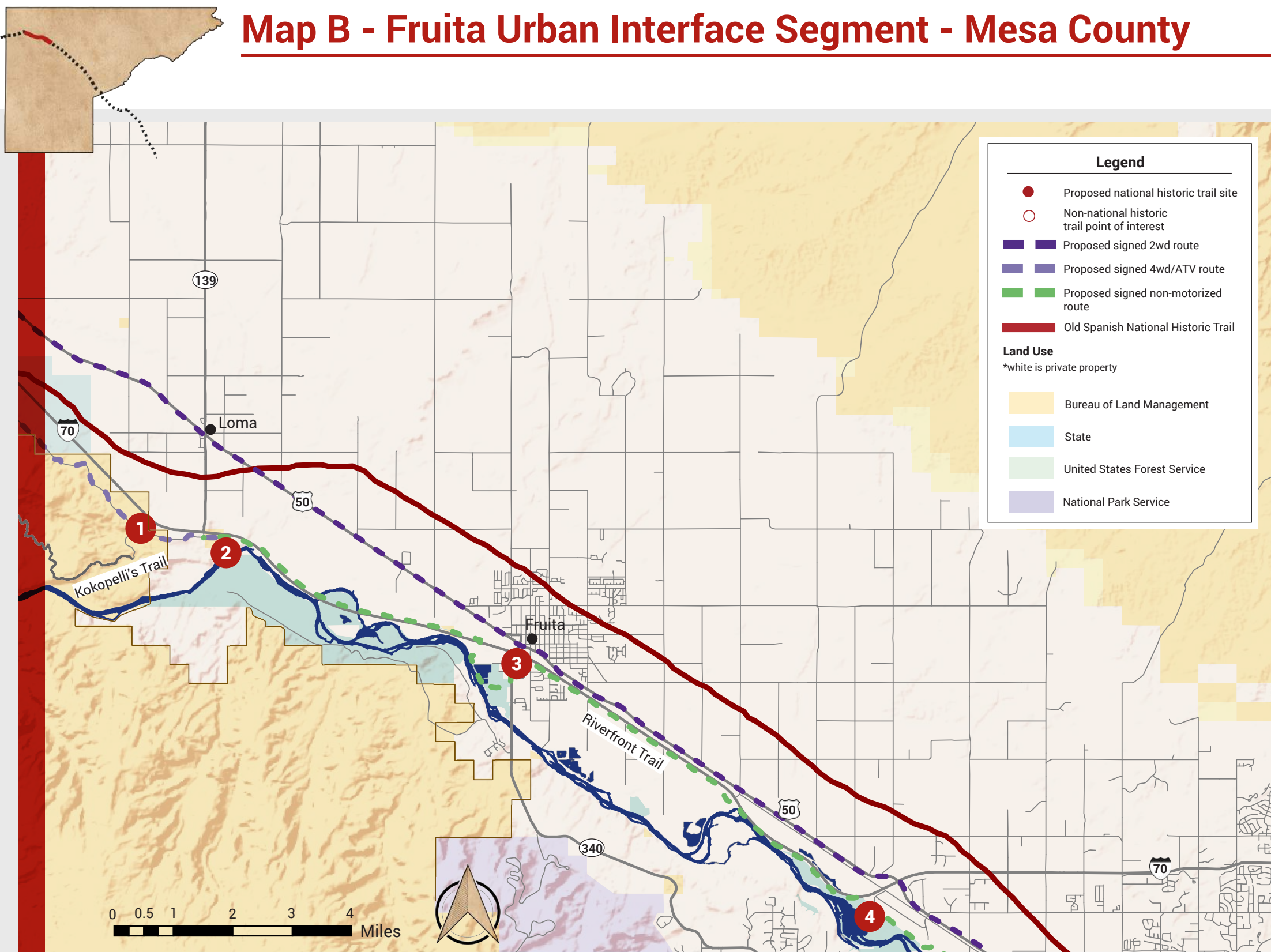


Joufflas Horse trail entry gate





Map B - Fruita Urban Interface Segment - Mesa County



Existing Trail Elements:

None

Proposed Trail Elements:

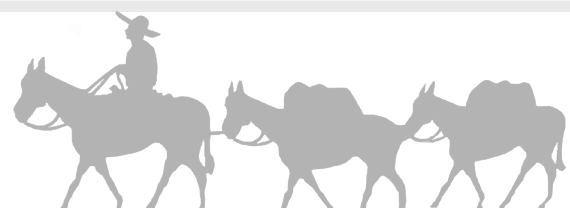
- 1 Kokopelli's Trailhead
- 2 Colorado Riverfront Trailhead
- 3 Colorado Welcome Center
- 4 Walter Walker State Wildlife Area

Other Points of Interest Along the Trail:

(Non-Old Spanish National Historic Trail related)

None

See pg. 44 for detailed trail element descriptions

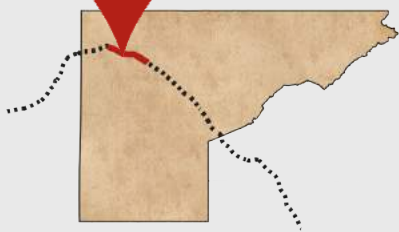




Mesa County- North Branch of the Old Spanish NHT

Map B - Fruita Urban Interface Segment Proposed Trail Elements

1



Kokopelli's Bike Trail

Development Opportunities:

The Kokopelli's Trail runs parallel and in some parts directly on the historic route of the Old Spanish NHT. This popular mountain biking destination has a variety of clearly marked trail loops for various skill levels located within the McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area. This is an excellent opportunity to inform visitors at the trailhead of the history involving the Old Spanish NHT, by marking Hawkeye Road and portions of the trail network, and connecting the various parking lots and trailheads.

Suggested Actions for Implementation:

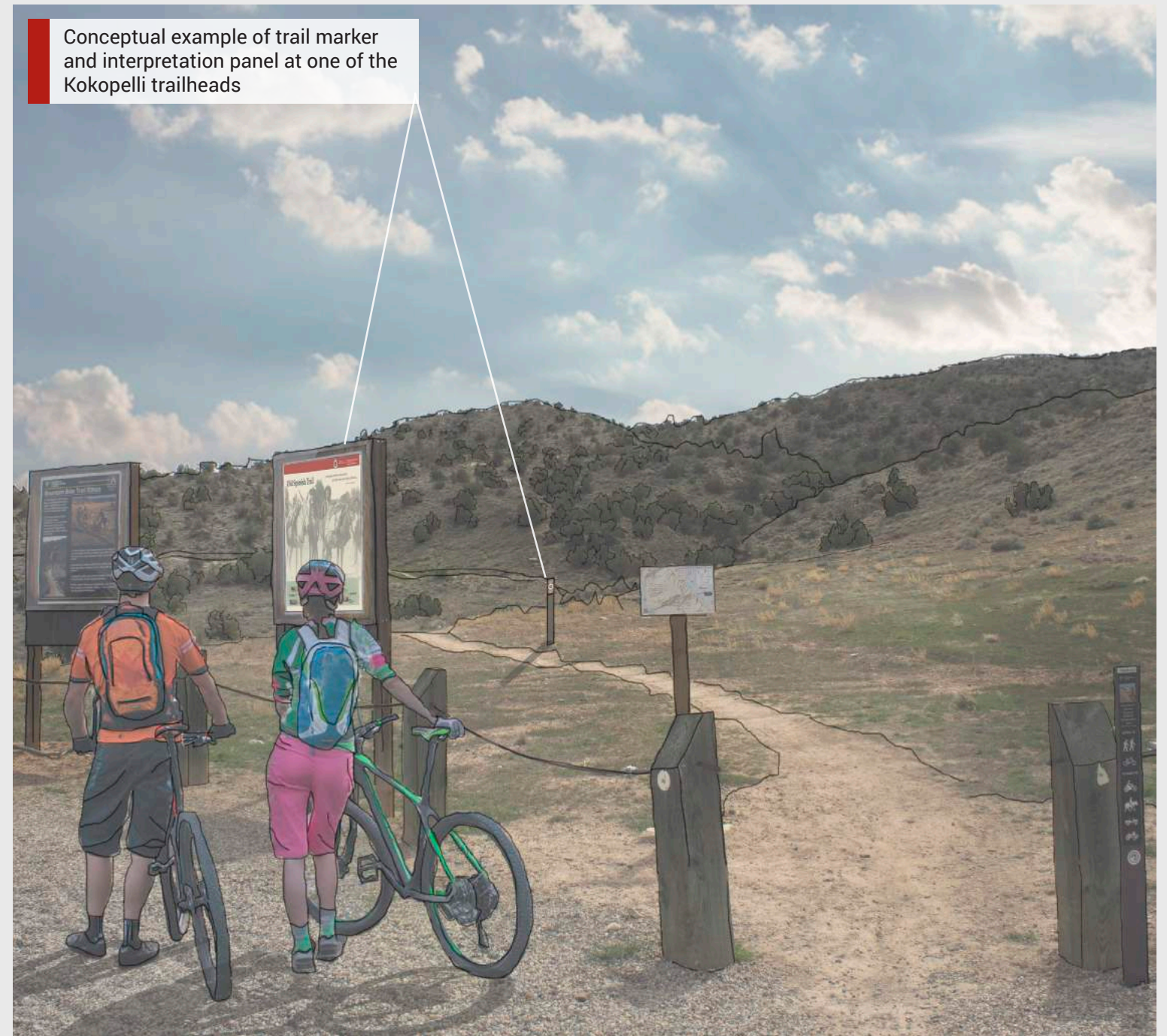
- Develop a sign plan to mark the trail as historic route or Old Spanish NHT (See sign example to the right).
- Order and install Old Spanish Trail signage



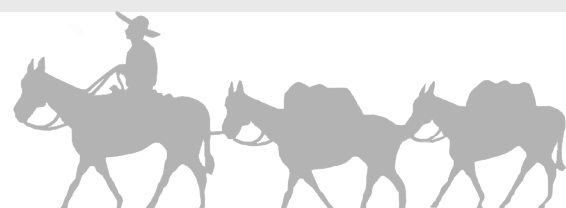
The main parking area and trailhead for the Kokopelli's Trail network



Old Spanish NHT fiberglass posts and stickers - typically used in rural areas along segments of trail



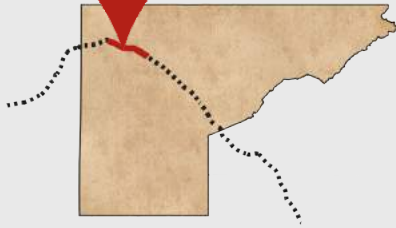
Conceptual example of trail marker and interpretation panel at one of the Kokopelli trailheads



Mesa County- North Branch of the Old Spanish NHT

Map B - Fruita Urban Interface Segment Proposed Trail Elements

2



Colorado Riverfront Trailhead

Development Opportunities:

An new parking lot, north of the Loma Boat Launch has been constructed as parking for the Colorado Riverfront Trail. Its proximity to the Colorado River is an opportunity to implement Old Spanish NHT interpretive media to inform users of the importance of the Colorado River to the Old Spanish NHT expeditions and later users of the trail trace.

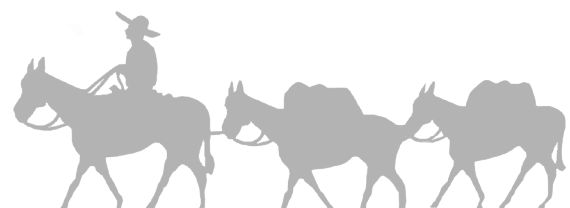
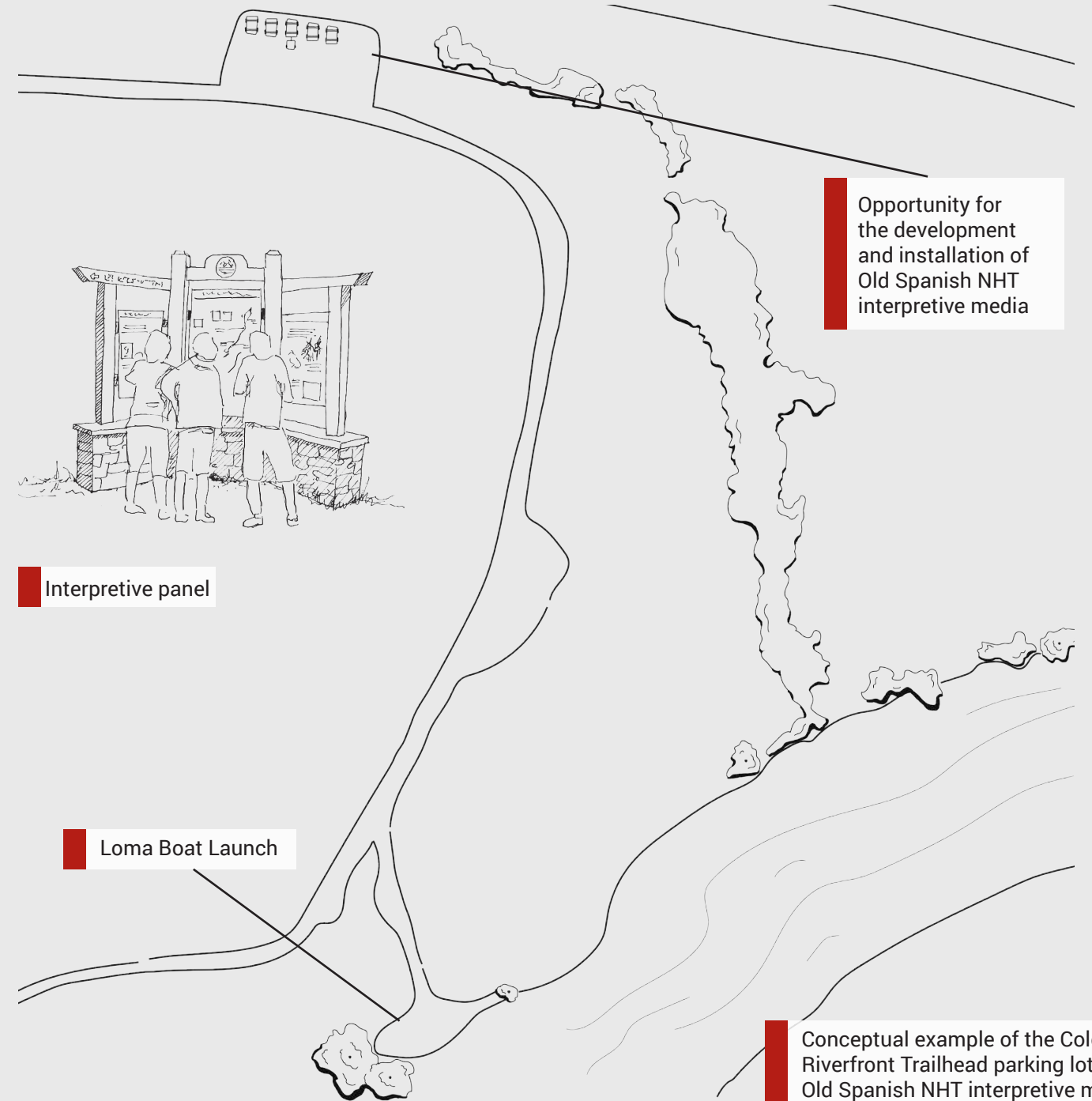


Suggested Actions for Implementation:

- Choose appropriate interpretive media
- Determine if need is orientation, interpretation, or both
- Consult an interpretive media specialist or contractor



Parking for Colorado Riverfront Trailhead





Mesa County- North Branch of the Old Spanish NHT

Map B - Fruita Urban Interface Segment Proposed Trail Elements



Colorado Welcome Center



Development Opportunities:

The city of Fruita, CO was established in 1884. Beginning with the creation of the Colorado National Monument in 1911, outdoor activities began to attract more people to the small community of Fruita. Today, along with the appeal of the scenic public lands, Fruita is a popular mountain biking destination. The Colorado Welcome Center is located right off the Old Spanish NHT and is a great location informing visitors about Fruita and the

history of the Old Spanish NHT. The Colorado Riverfront Trail also connects to the Welcome Center and could be signed with Old Spanish National Historic Trail signs.

Suggested Actions for Implementation:

- Consider making the Welcome Center a certified interpretive site on the Old Spanish NHT



Colorado Welcome Center



Walter Walker State Wildlife Area

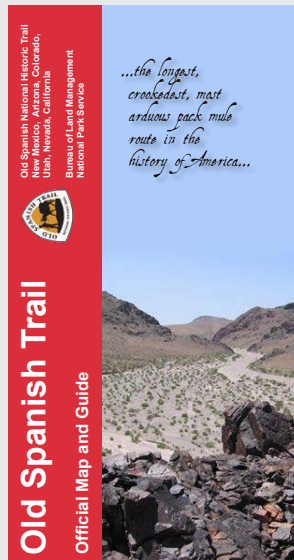


Development Opportunities:

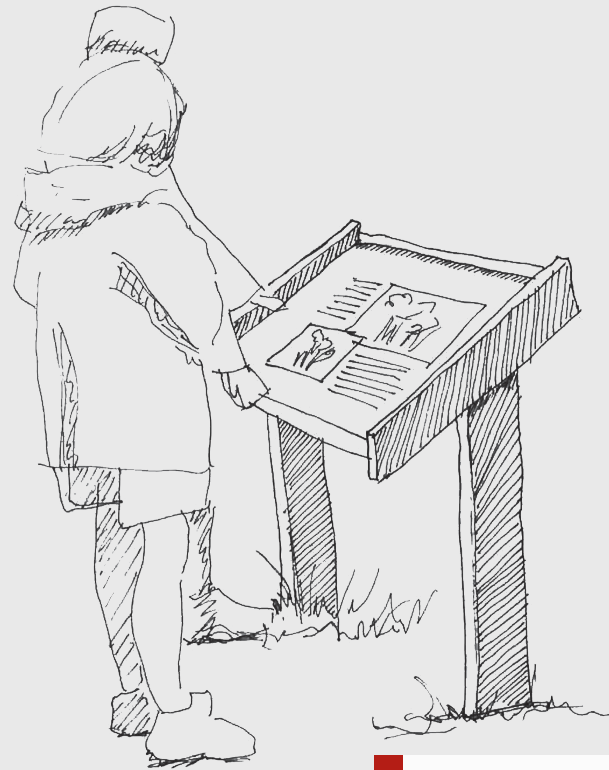
The Walter Walker State Wildlife Area site sits on the Colorado River just west of Grand Junction, CO. It covers 489 acres of land with various paths and access to the popular Riverfront Trail which leads up to Fruita and down through Grand Junction. Low profile interpretive exhibits for the Old Spanish NHT could allow users to learn about the historical context of the area.

Suggested Actions for Implementation:

- Choose appropriate interpretive media
- Determine if need is orientation, interpretive, or both
- Consult an interpretive media specialist or contractor



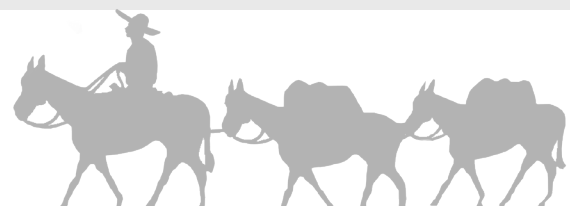
Above: Examples of Old Spanish NHT materials that could be provided to the Welcome Center



Wayside exhibit

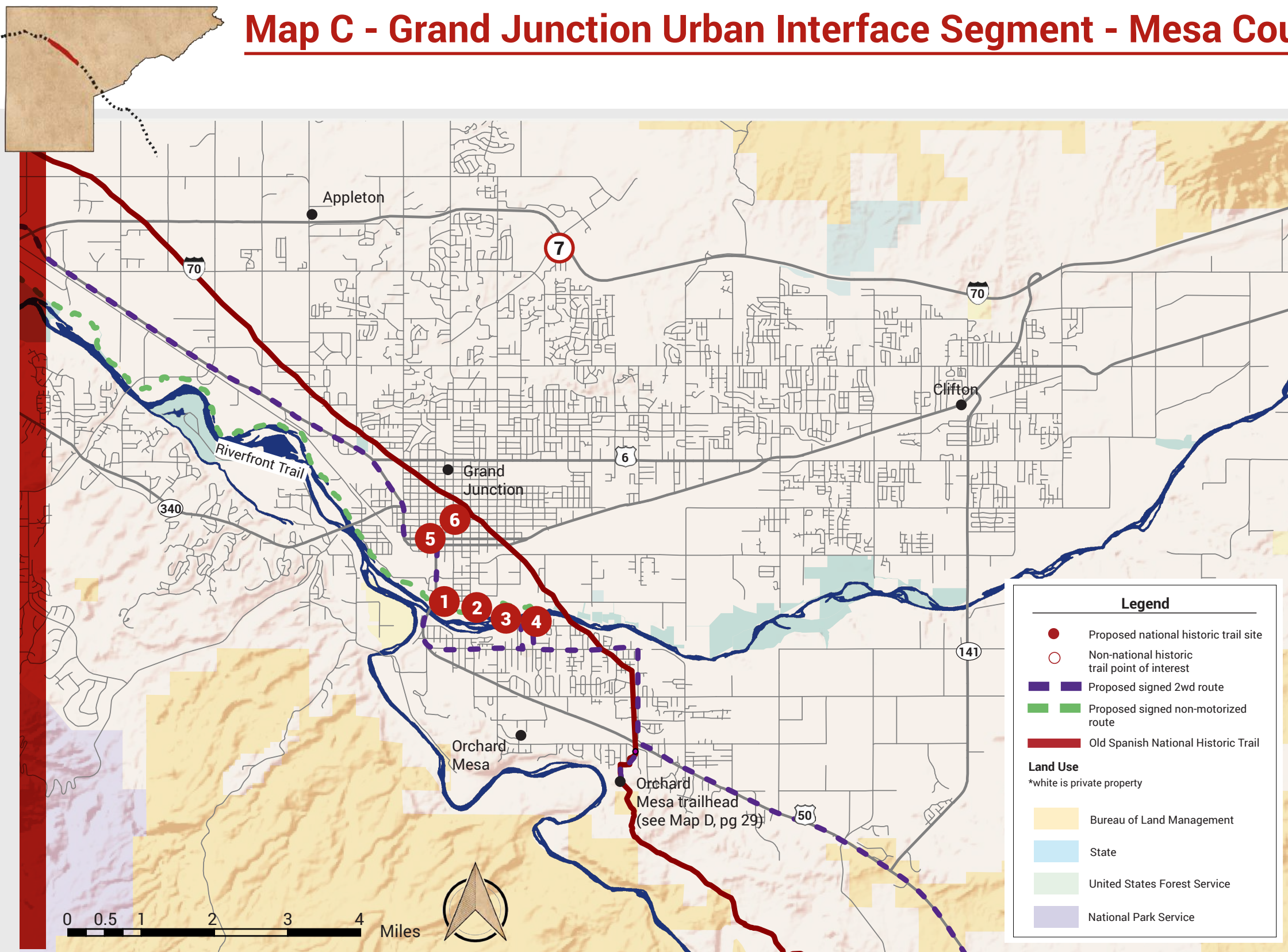


View down path in the Walter Walker State Wildlife Area





Map C - Grand Junction Urban Interface Segment - Mesa County



Existing Trail Elements:

- 1 Western Heritage Garden

Proposed Trail Elements:

- 2 Las Colonias Park
- 3 Colorado Riverfront Trail
- 4 River Crossing / Eagle Rim Park
- 5 Museum of The West
- 6 Main Street Exhibit

Other Points of Interest Along the Trail:

(Non-Old Spanish National Historic Trail related)

- 7 Grand Junction Visitor Center

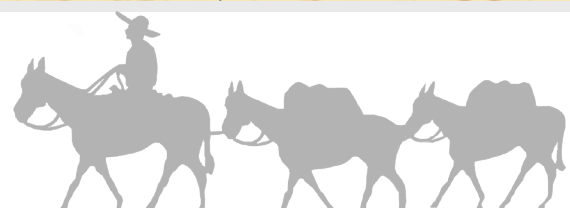
See pg. 44 for detailed trail element descriptions

Legend

- Proposed national historic trail site
- Non-national historic trail point of interest
- Proposed signed 2wd route
- Proposed signed non-motorized route
- Old Spanish National Historic Trail

Land Use
*white is private property

- Bureau of Land Management
- State
- United States Forest Service
- National Park Service



Mesa County- North Branch of the Old Spanish NHT

Map C - Grand Junction Urban Interface Segment Proposed Trail Elements



1 Western Heritage Garden

Development Opportunities:
The Western Colorado Botanical Gardens were first opened in 1997 with a tropical greenhouse. A butterfly house and various themed gardens soon followed, including the Western Heritage Garden. The Western Heritage Garden has a variety of displays that recapture the history of western Colorado. Currently, there is one interpretive panel that talks about the history of the Old Spanish NHT in the area.

Suggested Actions for Implementation:

- Add to and enhance interpretive media that is currently installed
- Use additional silhouettes of pack mules and travelers that would depict the Old Spanish Trail




Old Spanish Trail interpretive panel at the entrance of the Western Heritage Garden



Old Spanish Trail interpretive panel



Current silhouettes in Garden



2 Los Colonias Park

Development Opportunities:
While the amphitheater has been constructed and is already used for many events and concerts, other plans for Las Colonias Park such as gardens and a native arboretum, festival grounds, a disc golf course, and multiple business parks are yet to be implemented. There is currently interpretive media on site which highlights the history of the area, and displays about the Old Spanish NHT could be added to inform visitors of this part of the history of the area.



Suggested Actions for Implementation:

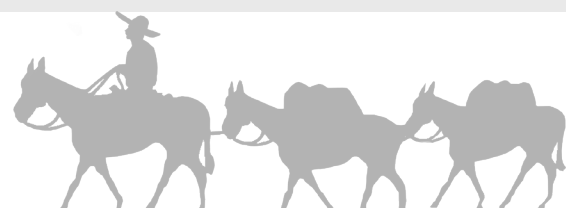
- Choose appropriate interpretive media
- Determine if the need is orientation, interpretive, or both
- Consult an interpretive media specialist or contractor.



Old Spanish Trail bench in Las Colonias Park



Current view of interpretive media at the amphitheater in Las Colonias Park



Mesa County- North Branch of the Old Spanish NHT

Map C - Grand Junction Urban Interface Segment Proposed Trail Elements



Colorado Riverfront Trail



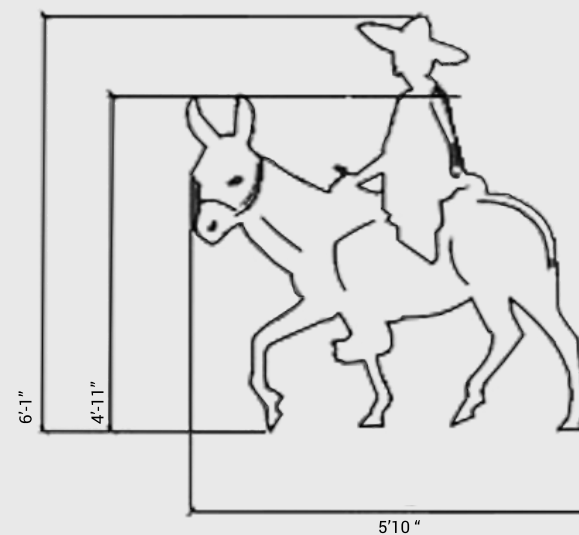
Development Opportunities:

The Colorado Riverfront Trail currently follows the river for about 22 miles through the cities of Fruita, Grand Junction, and Palisade. There are plans for trail extensions in either direction, expanding the use of this popular recreational resource. Due to the accessibility and proximity of this path to

the Old Spanish NHT, it could be an appropriate location for Old Spanish NHT signage. This could be an opportunity to place Old Spanish NHT logos on the trail surface, designed to inform users of the historical context of the trail without obstructing the surrounding scenery. Silhouettes are also a viable option, sparking visitor's imaginations.

Suggested Actions for Implementation:

- Choose appropriate interpretive media
- Determine if need is orientation, interpretation, or both
- Consult an interpretive media specialist or contractor



The Old Spanish NHT silhouettes are a commonly used method to display the connection between an area and the travelers once present.

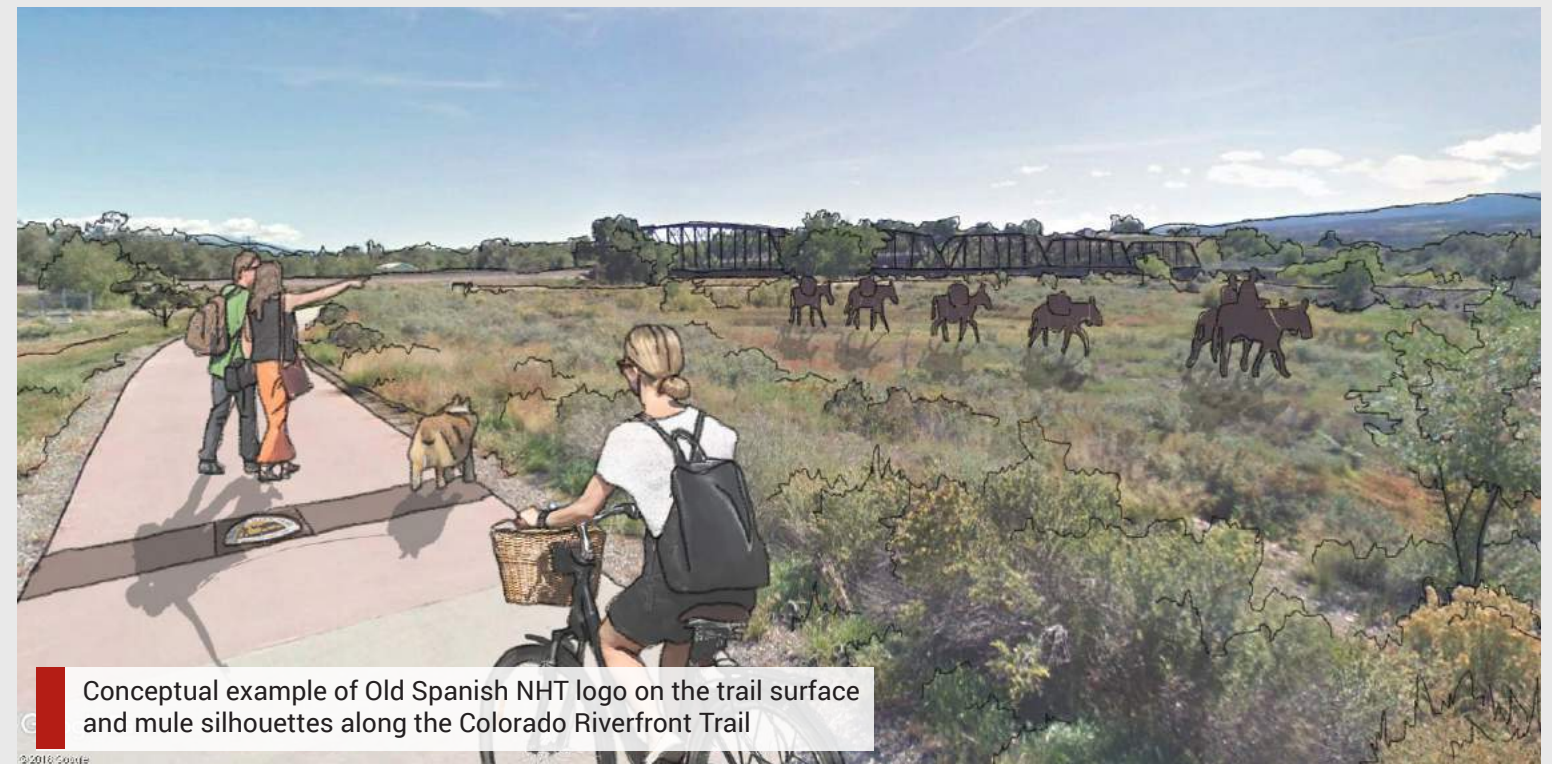
The repeated use of these silhouettes creates a consistent visual associated with the Old Spanish NHT, that users can recognize throughout the states it passes through.

A location as scenic and diversely used as the Colorado Riverfront Trail would be a great opportunity to install silhouettes, creating a sense of place in history for users.

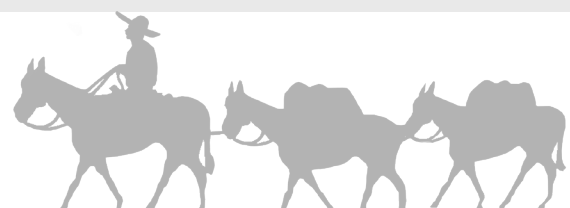
The Old Spanish NHT logo placed on the trail surface is another feature that can create a low profile method of marking the Old Spanish NHT.



Conceptual example of Old Spanish NHT logo on the trail surface and interpretation panel along the Colorado Riverfront Trail




Conceptual example of Old Spanish NHT logo on the trail surface and mule silhouettes along the Colorado Riverfront Trail



Mesa County- North Branch of the Old Spanish NHT

Map C - Grand Junction Urban Interface Segment Proposed Trail Elements



4 River Crossing / Eagle Rim Park

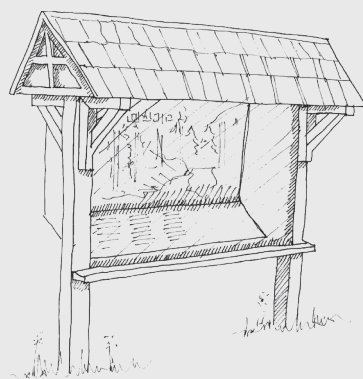
Development Opportunities:
Eagle Rim Park sits above the the Colorado River, connecting to the Colorado Riverfront Trail. It has open space, picnic tables, a playground, and skate facility. This location is significant point where expeditions crossed the Colorado River. As a popular recreation destination, Eagle Rim Park provides an excellent opportunity to bring attention to the relevance of the Old Spanish NHT through kiosks, signs, or sidewalk tiles.

Suggested Actions for Implementation:

- Choose appropriate interpretive media
- Determine if the need is orientation, interpretive, or both
- Consult an interpretive media specialist or contractor



Bridge crossing the Colorado River to Eagle Rim Park



Eagle Rim Park

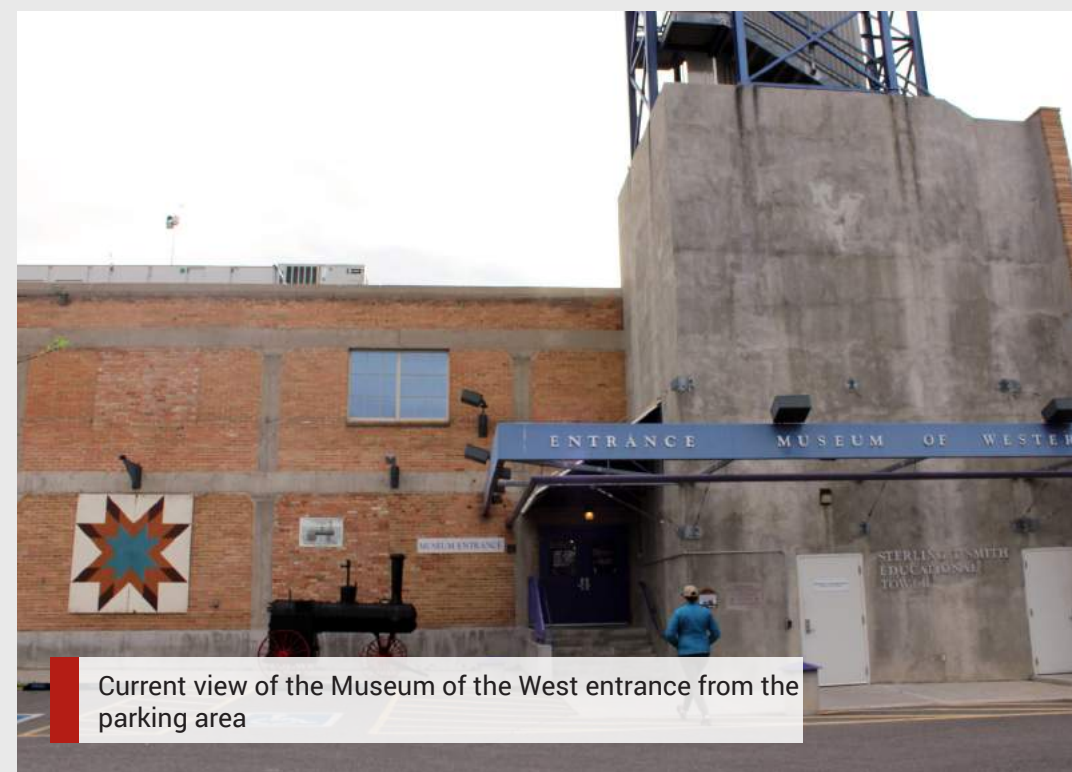


5 Museum of the West

Development Opportunities:
Located in Grand Junction, CO, the Museum of the West offers a variety of exhibits showcasing regional history. Visitors can experience the area's past as they "ride" in a stagecoach, "fly" a 1958 Cessna, gaze upon ancient Anasazi and Fremont art and pottery, sit in a one-room schoolhouse, and visit a 19th century saloon. Also featured at the museum is a 'Spanish Exploration and Distant Treasures in the Mist' gallery that tells the story of the Spanish explorers who journeyed into what is now western CO. This could be expanded to elaborate on the Old Spanish NHT and it's connection to current day western CO.

Suggested Actions for Implementation:

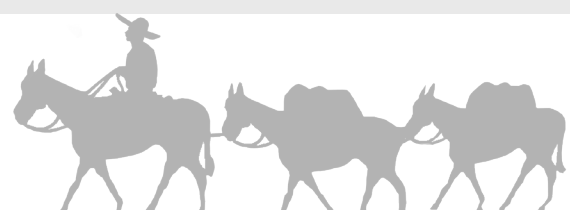
- Reach out to the museum to have the Old Spanish NHT incorporated into their current Spanish exhibit
- Certify the site once Old Spanish NHT interpretation is included in permanent exhibits



Current view of the Museum of the West entrance from the parking area



Current view of the Museum of the West from the street



Mesa County- North Branch of the Old Spanish NHT

Map C - Grand Junction Urban Interface Segment Proposed Trail Elements and Other Points of Interest



6 Grand Junction Main Street Exhibit 

Development Opportunities:
Main Street in Grand Junction has a unique and beautiful display of various statues. A statue depicting traders from the Old Spanish Trail could create additional appeal to the area.

Suggested Actions for Implementation:

- Choose appropriate statue design
- Determine appropriate location
- Consult a contractor/sculptor



Statute of John Otto on Main Street



7 Grand Junction Visitor Center 

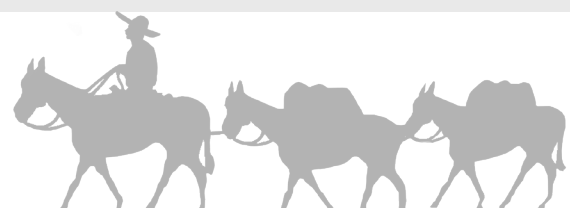
Development Opportunities:
Enhancing the presence of the Old Spanish NHT within Grand Junction, CO, could bring the history of this community alive to both residents and visitors. The Grand Junction Visitor Center could be an excellent outlet for providing ample information on the Old Spanish NHT through interpretative pamphlets or the installation of an Old Spanish NHT information kiosk. Providing information on the Old Spanish NHT before users go into the landscape would allow visitors to imagine Mesa County in a whole different light.

Suggested Actions for Implementation:

- Choose appropriate interpretive media
- Determine if the need is orientation, interpretive, or both
- Consult an interpretive media specialist or contractor.

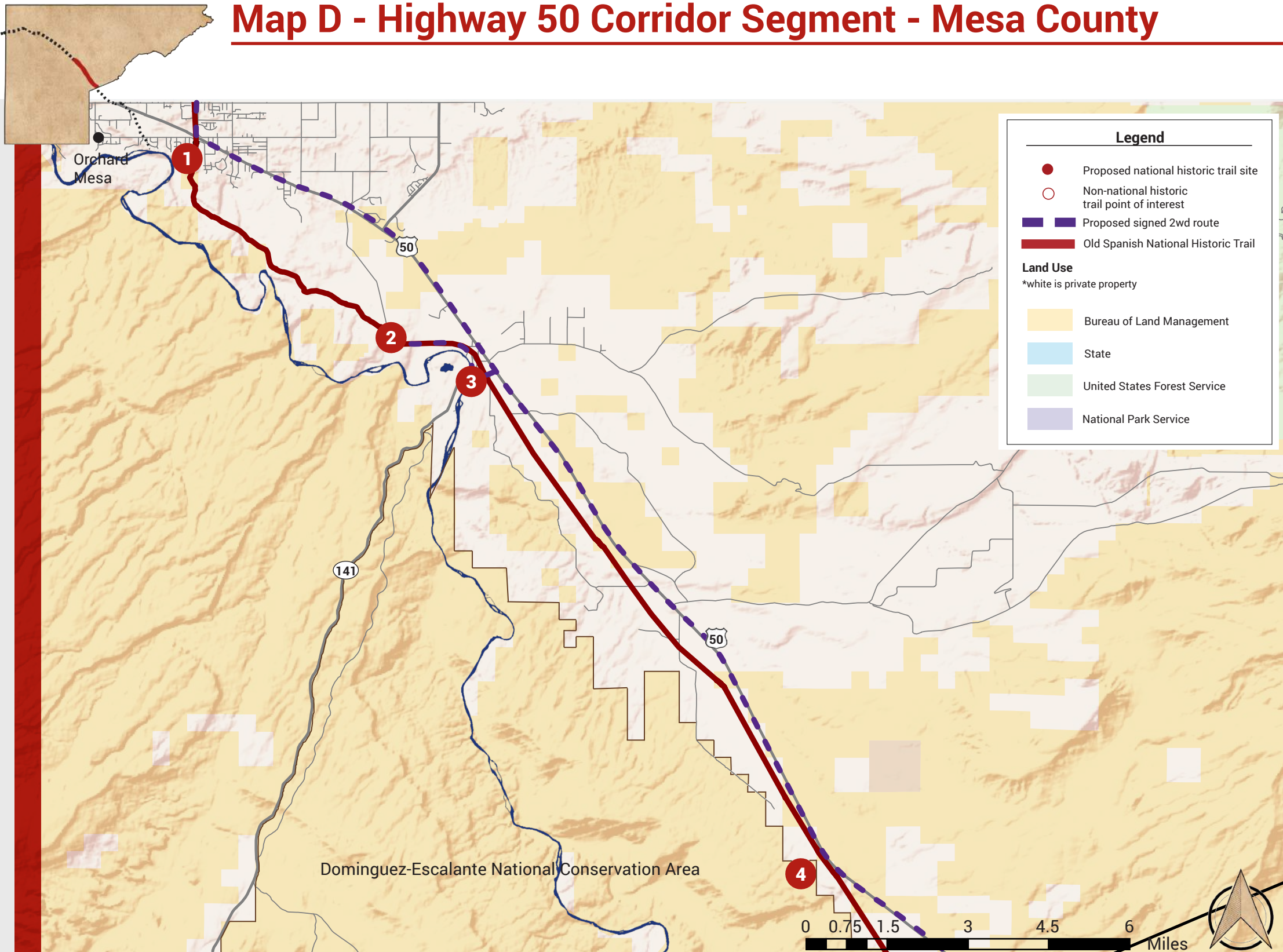


Entrance to Grand Junction Visitor Center





Map D - Highway 50 Corridor Segment - Mesa County



Existing Trail Elements:

- 1 Orchard Mesa Trailhead
- 2 Whitewater Trailhead

Proposed Trail Elements:

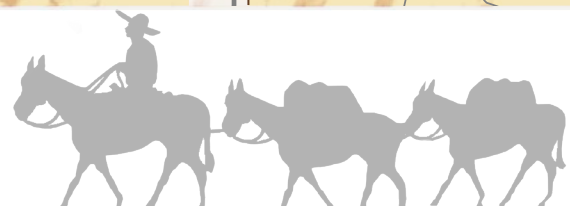
- 3 Whitewater Boat Launch
- 4 Entrance to Hunting Grounds on Bean Ranch Road

Other Points of Interest Along the Trail:

(Non-Old Spanish National Historic Trail related)

None

See pg. 44 for detailed trail element descriptions





Mesa County- North Branch of the Old Spanish NHT

Map D - Highway 50 Corridor Segment Proposed Trail Elements



Orchard Mesa Trailhead

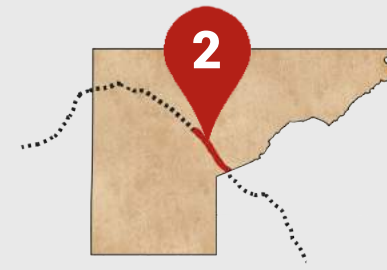
Development Opportunities:

The Orchard Mesa Trailhead is clearly marked from Highway 50 to direct users to the highly trafficked parking area. This leads visitors to a 5 mile trail, which connects to the Whitewater Trailhead. This trail directly follows the nationally designated route for the Old Spanish NHT. Old Spanish Trail signage and an orientation panel have been added to the trailhead.



Suggested Actions for Implementation:

- Maintain current interpretive media



Whitewater Trailhead

Development Opportunities:

The Whitewater Trailhead connects directly to the Orchard Mesa Trailhead. They are in fact both entrances to the same trail. This trail directly follows the nationally designated route for the Old Spanish NHT. The interpretive information at the trailhead could be improved and increased.



Suggested Actions for Implementation:

- Maintain interpretive media



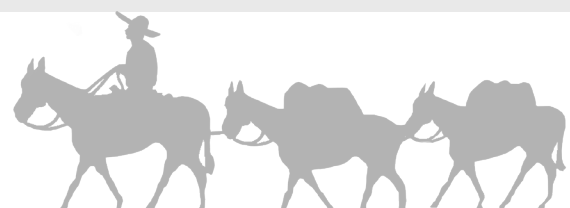
Old Spanish Trail Orchard Mesa Trailhead sign from the road



Orchard Mesa Trailhead parking area and signage



Whitewater Trailhead and signage for the Old Spanish NHT



Mesa County- North Branch of the Old Spanish NHT

Map D - Highway 50 Corridor Segment Proposed Trail Elements



Whitewater Boat Launch

Development Opportunities:

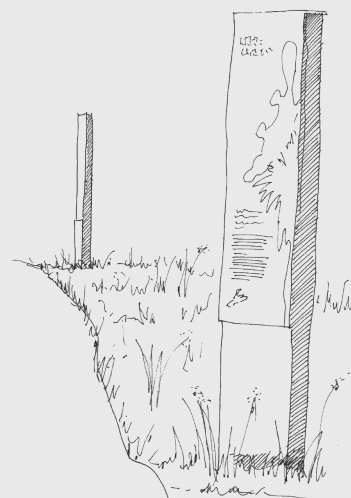
The Whitewater Boat Launch is a popular destination for residents and visitors of the surrounding communities. It is an opportunity to implement Old Spanish NHT interpretive media to inform users of the importance of the river to the Old Spanish NHT expeditions and later users of the trail trace.

Suggested Actions for Implementation:

- Choose appropriate interpretive media
- Determine if need is orientation, interpretive, or both
- Consult an interpretive media specialist or contractor



Whitewater Boat Launch sign



Entrance to Hunting Grounds on Bean Ranch Road

Development Opportunities:

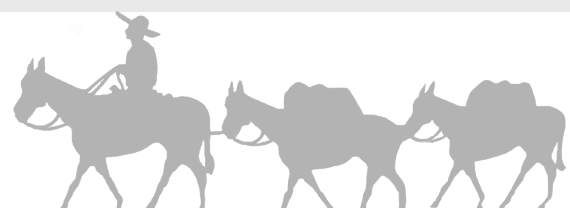
The Old Spanish NHT runs through a portion of these protected lands in the Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area. The parking area at the hunting grounds could be used to display interpretive media for the Old Spanish National Historic Trail, or it could be a location for digital media.

Suggested Actions for Implementation:

- Determine if the need is orientation, interpretive, or both
- Determine appropriate form of interpretive media



Hunting Grounds along Highway 50



Delta County

Trail Segment Details

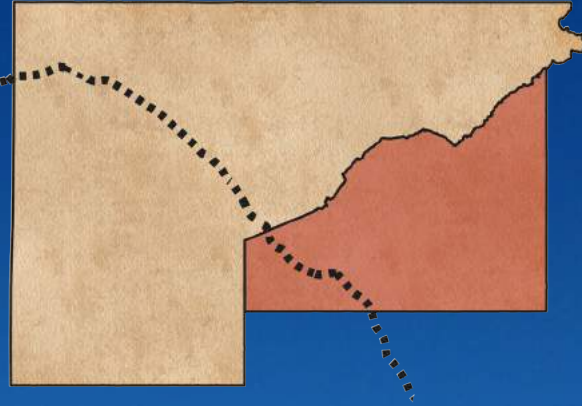
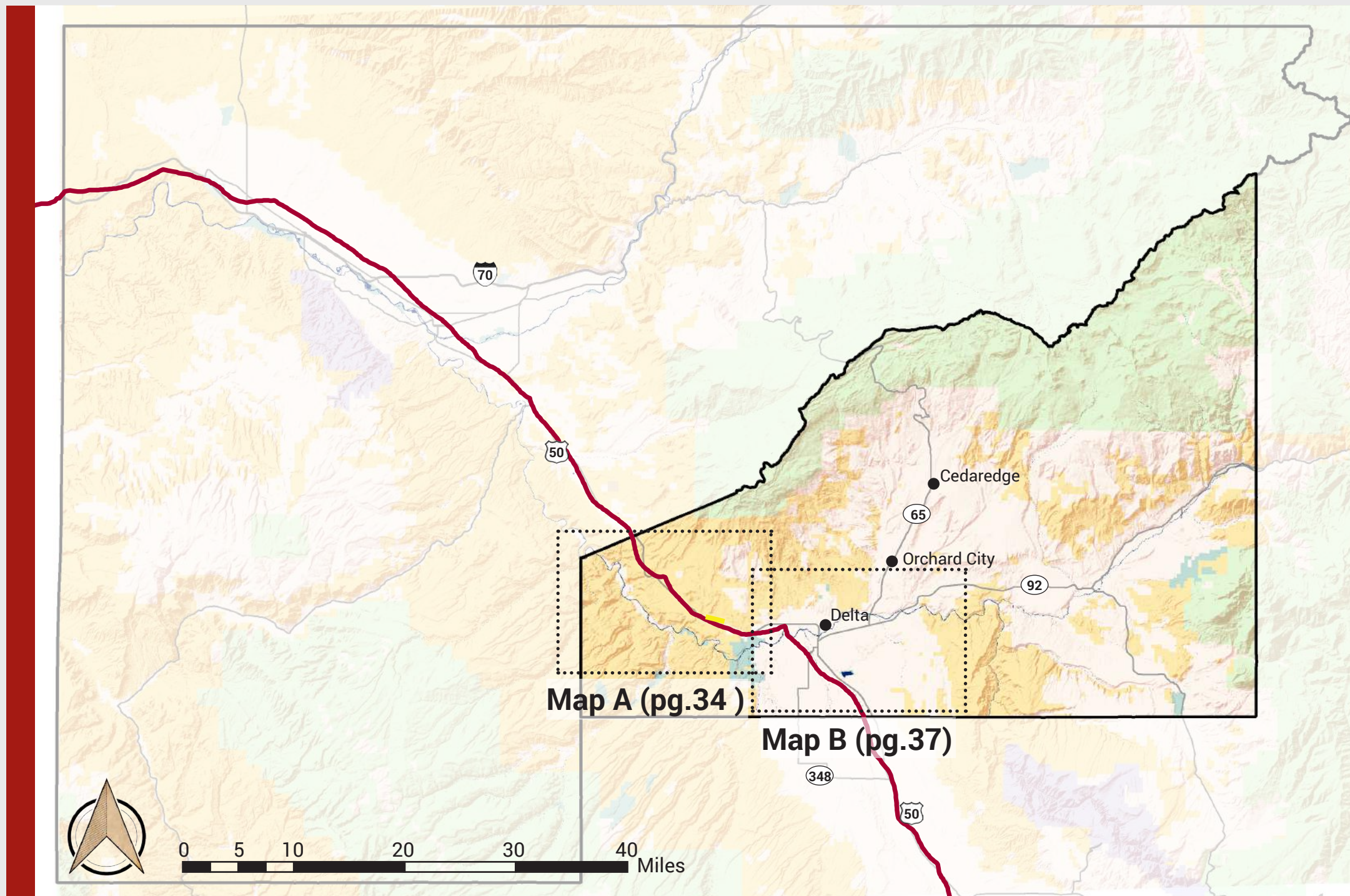
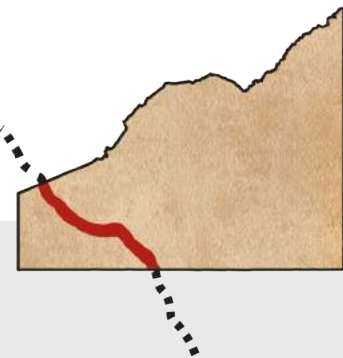


Photo: Escalante State Wildlife Area



Overview Map of Delta County

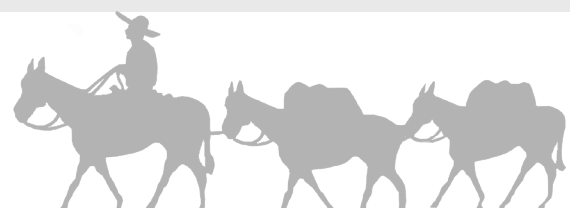


Legend

- Old Spanish National Historic Trail
- Map Sections
- City

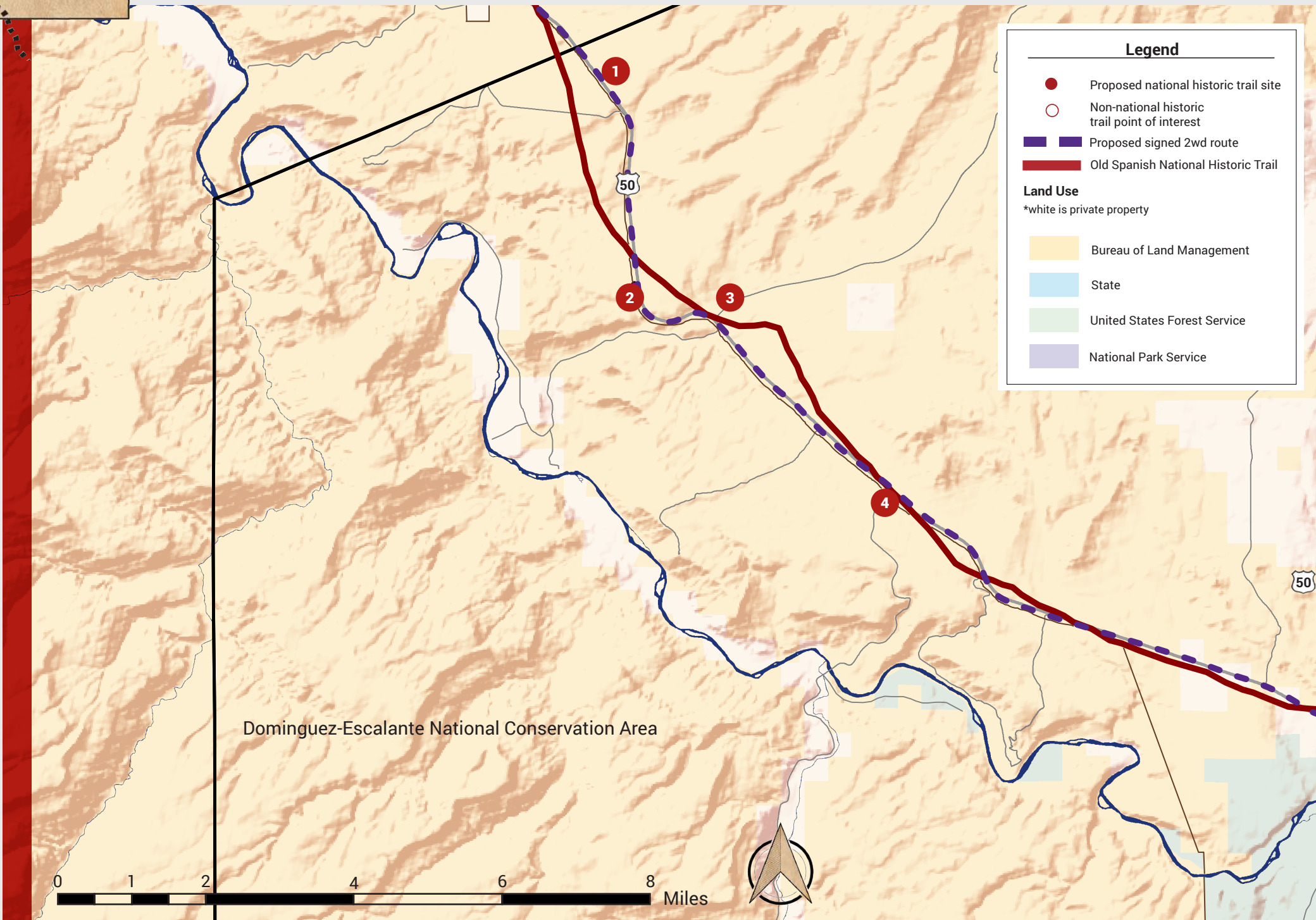
Land Use
*white is private property

- Bureau of Land Management
- State
- United States Forest Service
- National Park Service





Map A - Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area Segment - Delta County



Legend

- Proposed national historic trail site
- Non-national historic trail point of interest
- ▬ Proposed signed 2wd route
- ▬ Old Spanish National Historic Trail

Land Use
*white is private property

- Bureau of Land Management
- State
- United States Forest Service
- National Park Service

Existing Trail Elements:

None

Proposed Trail Elements:

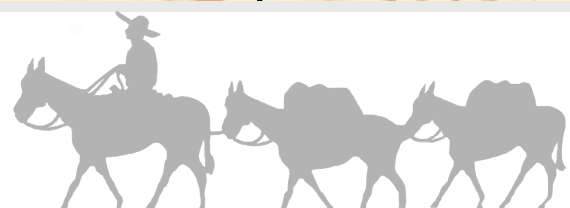
- 1 Big Dominguez Canyon Scenic Overlook
- 2 Fool's Hill
- 3 Well's Gulch
- 4 Escalante Canyon Parking Area

Other Points of Interest Along the Trail:

(Non-Old Spanish National Historic Trail related)

None

See pg. 44 for detailed trail element descriptions



Delta County- North Branch of the Old Spanish NHT

Map A- Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area Segment Proposed Trail Elements



Big Dominguez Canyon Overlook



Development Opportunities:

This is an existing pullout with space for four vehicles to park. Big Dominguez Canyon is one of the prettiest canyons on the Colorado Plateau. This location gives the viewer a great overlook of an undeveloped landscape where visitors can gain an appreciation for the setting experienced by historic travelers on the Old Spanish Trail. It would be a great opportunity to provide either digital

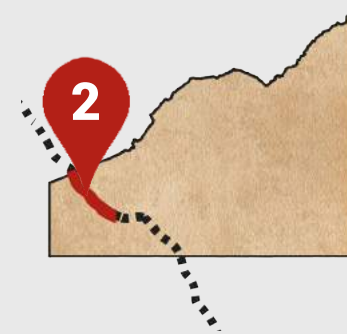
interpretive materials or an interpretive trail with Old Spanish Trail silhouettes.

Suggested Actions for Implementation:

- Choose appropriate interpretive media
- Determine if the need is for orientation, interpretation, or both
- Consult an interpretive media specialist or contractor



Big Dominguez Canyon overlook along Highway 50
Photo credit: Bob Wick



Fool's Hill



Development Opportunities:

Fool's Hill was a landmark that did not invoke many feelings of joy for traders on the Old Spanish Trail. It was a very difficult climb for the heavy-laden pack animals. Original trail trace can be seen across the highway. This site is popular among locals, who enjoy decorating a 'Christmas tree' and have erected an American flag nearby. Interpretive media and/or directional signage could be

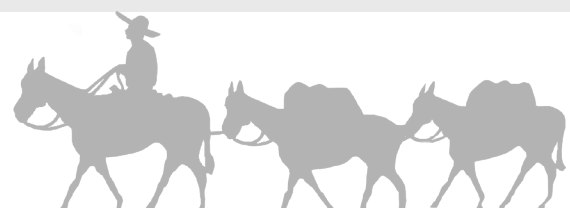
implemented in the area to point out the trail trace and explain other facts about the site.

Suggested Actions for Implementation:

- Choose appropriate interpretive media
- Determine if the need is for orientation, interpretation, or both
- Consult an interpretive media specialist or contractor



Fool's Hill / Christmas tree site along Highway 50



Delta County- North Branch of the Old Spanish NHT

Map A- Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area Segment Proposed Trail Elements



Well's Gulch



Development Opportunities:

Well's Gulch was the first spring of water that traders would have reached on the Old Spanish NHT heading west after passing the Gunnison River. It is located along Highway 50. There is currently a gravel pull out and an interpretive panel that has numerous bullet holes in it. Digital media could be used in this location to prevent further damage to displays. This type of interpretive media could also be used to

highlight other prominent sections of the trail between Well's Gulch and Rattlesnake Gulch.

Suggested Actions for Implementation:

- Update current interpretive media
- Use digital forms of interpretive media
- Determine if the need is for orientation, interpretation, or both



Existing damaged interpretive panel



Concept of digital interpretive media



Escalante Canyon Parking Area



Development Opportunities:

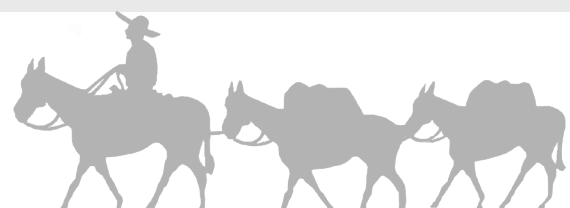
Along Highway 50, there is access to the Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area. It comprises 210,172 acres of protected public lands. The Old Spanish NHT runs through a portion of these protected lands. The parking area could be used as a trailhead, connecting to a retracement trail of the Old Spanish NHT.

Suggested Actions for Implementation:

- Choose appropriate interpretive media
- Determine if the need is for orientation, interpretation, or both
- Mark actual trail with carsonite markers

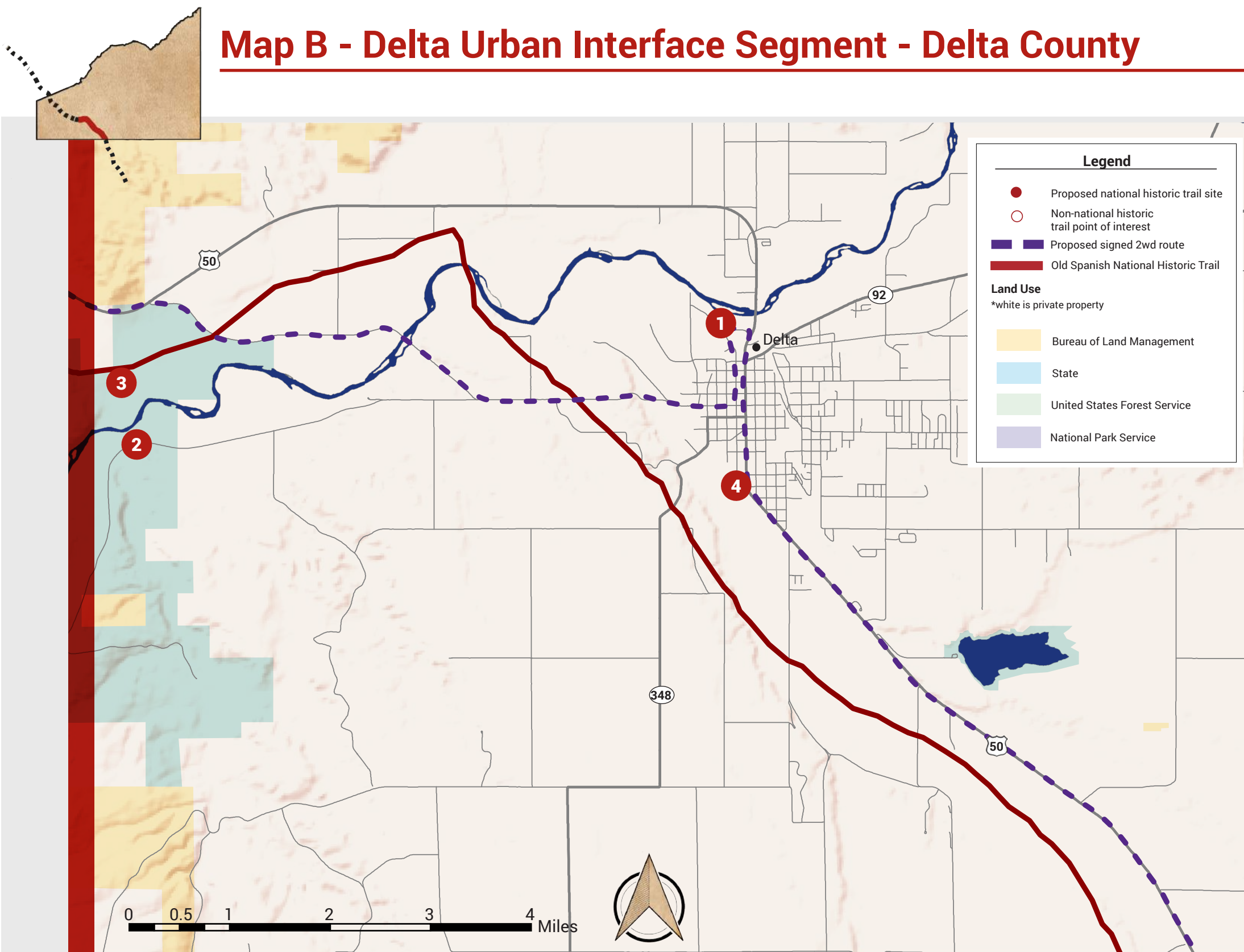


Escalante Canyon parking area





Map B - Delta Urban Interface Segment - Delta County



Existing Trail Elements:

- 1 Fort Uncompahgre Interpretive Center

Proposed Trail Elements:

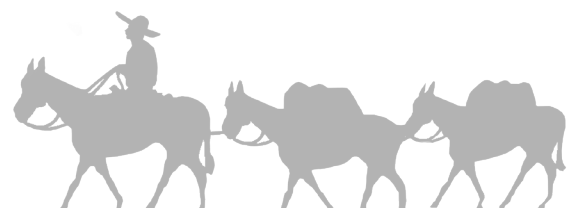
- 2 Escalante State Wildlife Area Overlook
- 3 Old Spanish Trail Scenic Overlook and Trail
- 4 Dominguez-Escalante Mural

Other Points of Interest Along the Trail:

(Non-Old Spanish National Historic Trail related)

None

See pg. 44 for detailed trail element descriptions



Delta County- North Branch of the Old Spanish NHT

Map B - Delta Urban Interface Segment Proposed Trail Elements



Fort Uncompahgre Interpretive Center



Development Opportunities:

Antoine Robidoux, an influential trader out of Santa Fe, established Fort Uncompahgre as a trading outpost in 1828. The location was a central hub for many trade and travel routes in the west, primarily the North Branch of the Old Spanish NHT. Although very successful, the trading post was attacked by Ute Indians in 1843, leaving it completely devastated. At the center, an Old Spanish National Historic Trail certified interpretive site, visitors can explore a reconstruction of Fort Uncompahgre and learn more about the Old Spanish NHT.

Suggested Actions for Implementation:

- Maintain current interpretive media



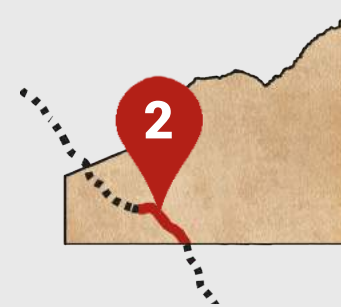
Inside a cabin at Fort Uncompahgre



Inside a trading cabin at Fort Uncompahgre



View of the entrance to Fort Uncompahgre



Escalante State Wildlife Area Overlook



Development Opportunities:

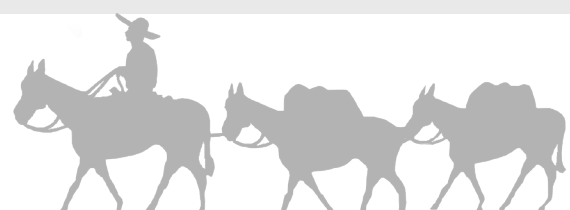
This was the actual site of the historic Fort Uncompahgre. Interpretive media could show visitors where the fort was located and recount the events that transpired during the period that it was in operation. A viewing scope could be installed to view the ruts coming down the slope from the north, and Loring's 1858 quote of, "easy going up, steep going down," could describe to visitors what they were seeing in the landscape.

Suggested Actions for Implementation:

- Choose appropriate interpretive media
- Determine if the need is orientation, interpretation, or both
- Consult an interpretive media specialist or contractor



Escalante State Wildlife Area Overlook / Original site of Fort Uncompahgre



Delta County- North Branch of the Old Spanish NHT

Map B- Delta Urban Interface Segment Proposed Trail Elements



Old Spanish Trail Scenic Overlook and Trail



Development Opportunities:

This location along the Gunnison River provides a great opportunity for interpretive media explaining the importance of the Gunnison River for traders following the Old Spanish NHT. There is also existing trail trace, which would create a unique experience for visitors to walk along the actual trail.

Suggested Actions for Implementation:

- Choose appropriate interpretive media
- Determine if the need is orientation, interpret
- Consult an interpretive media specialist or contractor



Concept for Old Spanish Trail Scenic Overlook and Trail



Dominguez-Escalante Mural



Development Opportunities:

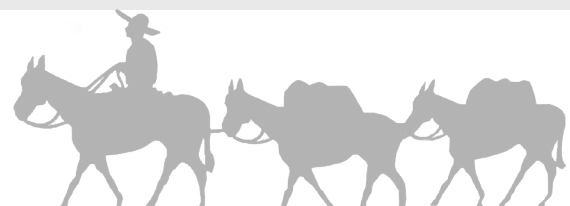
Delta is known for its stunning murals portraying images of the past. Below is a picture of the Dominguez-Escalante Mural on the side of a building in Delta. Delta could add to its collection of murals by creating a new mural depicting travelers on the Old Spanish Trail.

Suggested Actions for Implementation:

- Choose appropriate mural design
- Determine appropriate location
- Consult with an artist or other contractor



Dominguez-Escalante mural in Delta



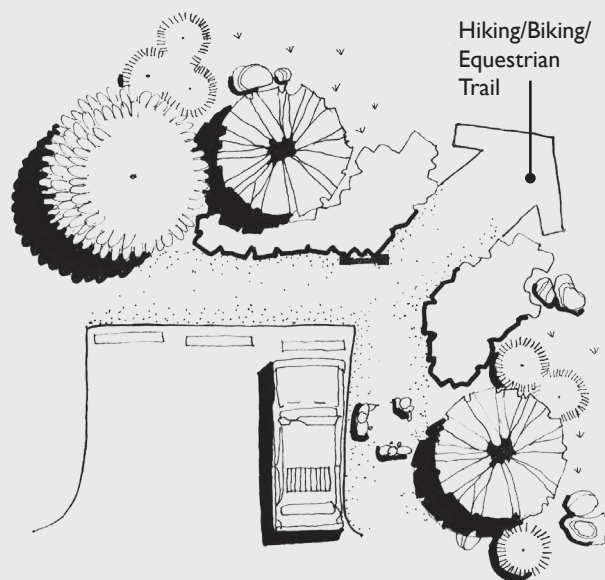
Appendix



Photo: View from Kokopelli Trail from the Colorado-Utah State line

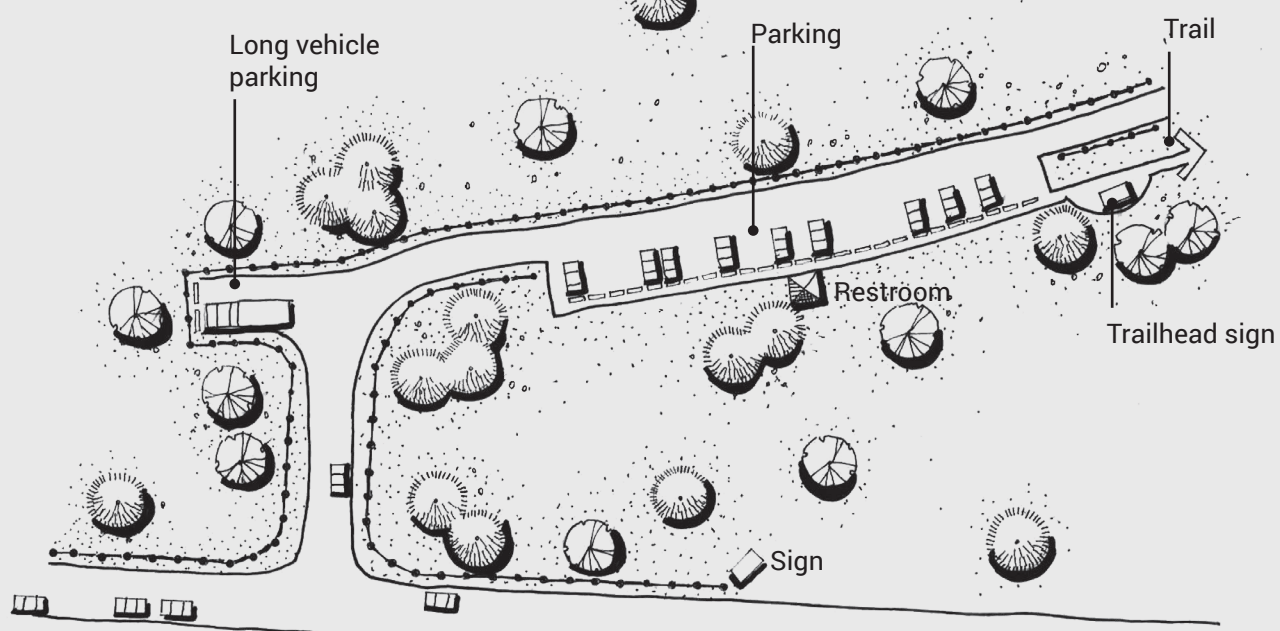
Typical Trail Elements and Alternatives

Trailheads



Trailhead for the Rabbits Ear trail

Simple trailhead concept appropriate for non-motorized trails.



Multi-use trailhead concept appropriate for off-highway vehicles, hiking, biking, equestrian, etc. trails

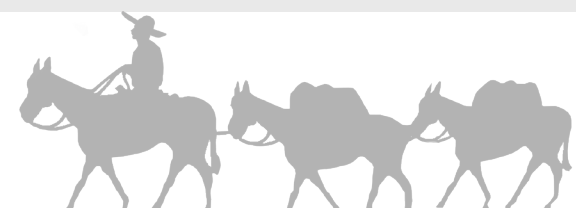
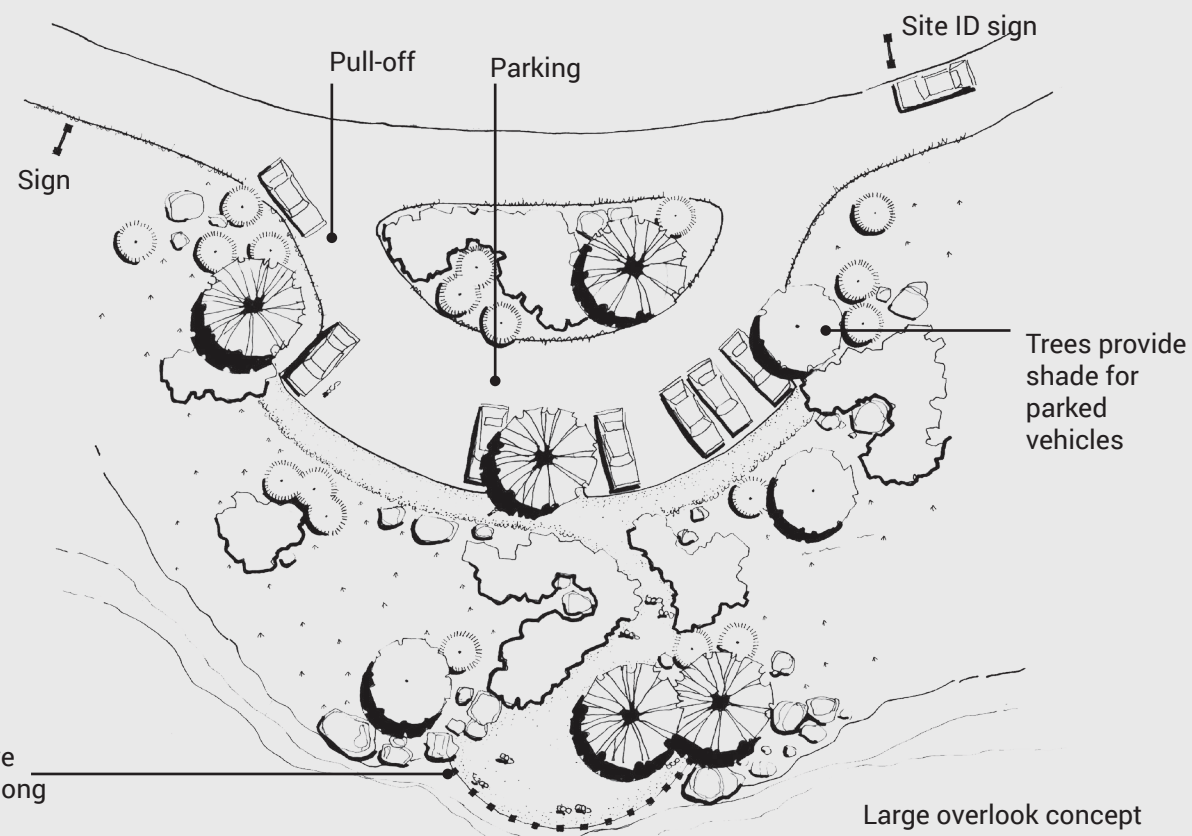
Waysides and Overlooks

Waysides and overlooks are areas along the trail where information and interpretation about the trail is provided. These spaces provide an opportunity to share the Old Spanish NHT's unique history with the public in the setting where the events took place. This will connect people to the experience of the Old Spanish NHT's original travelers.

Waysides/overlooks should be placed at locations that are easy to access from the main route of travel. They can be as simple as a parking spot and a sign, or they may be a day-use area that includes other elements such as restrooms, picnic tables, shade structures, etc.



Wayside signage along Highway 50 in Colorado



Typical Trail Elements and Alternatives

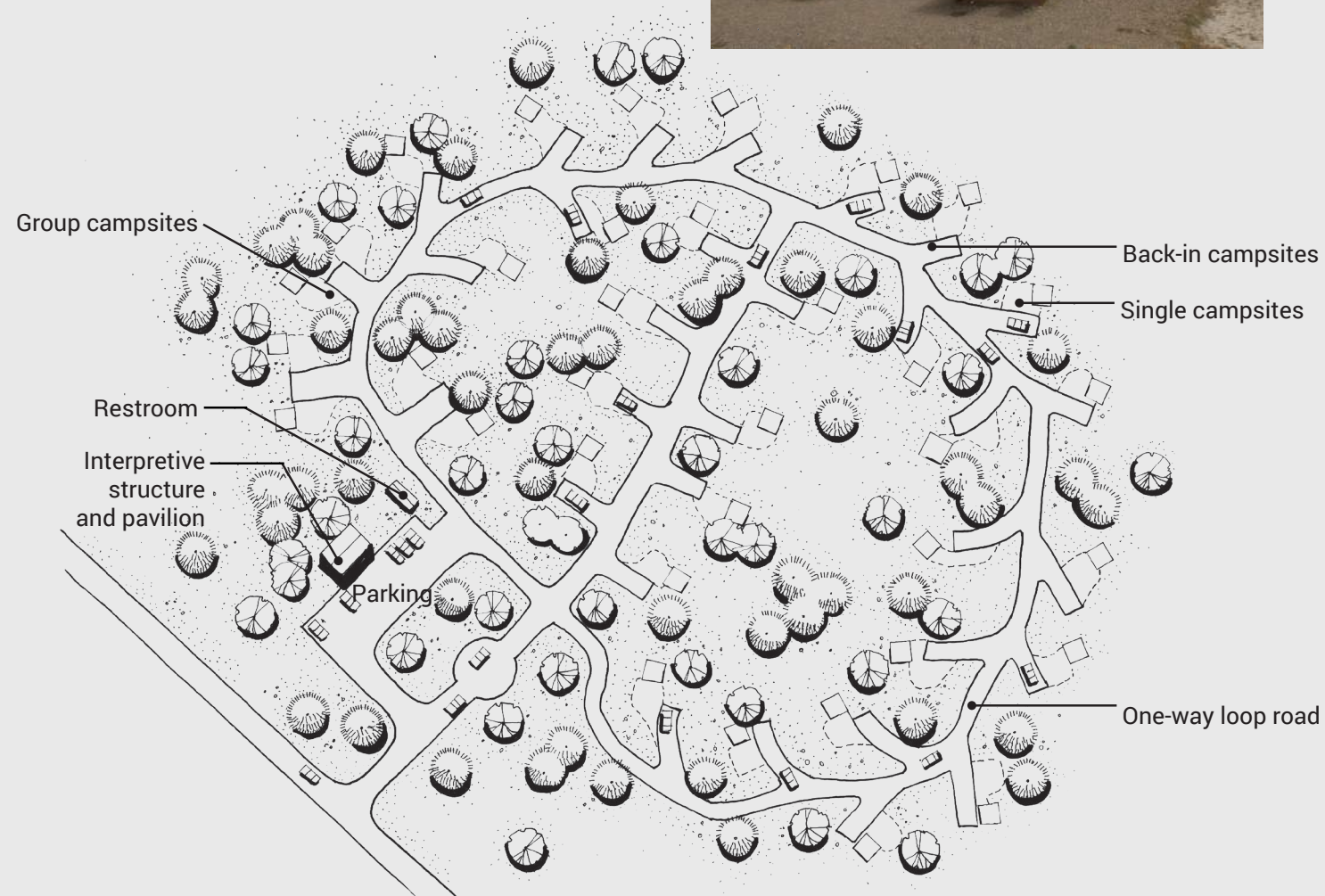
Campgrounds and Day-Use Areas

Campgrounds provide the opportunity to stay at a location overnight. They may be very simple—a designated area without amenities, or more established—with benches, fire-pits, tent pads, water, restrooms, picnic tables, etc.

There are several locations along the Old Spanish NHT in Mesa and Delta counties where campgrounds could be established. These would be connected to the recreational route of the trail.



Camping site at Joufflas Campground



Campground and day-use area concept plan

Kiosks and Interpretive Structures

Interpretive media provides the opportunity to educate people about the Old Spanish NHT's history and the landscape through which it passes.

The Old Spanish NHT has a remarkable history that creates many opportunities to bring the trail to life through interpretation and kiosks. Kiosks may be placed anywhere along the trail individually, or as features of trailheads, waysides, overlooks and campgrounds.



Wayside sign example at Fremont Indian State Park and Museum





Typical Trail Elements and Alternatives

Visitor Centers and Museums



Colorado Welcome Center

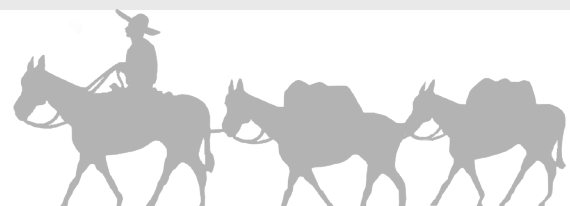


Graphic example of an Old Spanish Trail Museum



Above: Examples of Old Spanish NHT materials that could be provided to the various information centers

Visitor centers and museums along the Old Spanish National Historic Trail give travelers access to historic collections and detailed trail information.





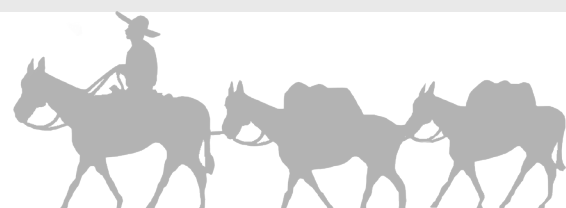
Trail Chart

Non-motorized Trails

Name	Location	Distance	Description	Difficulty
Salt Creek segment (Troy Built) of Kokopelli Mountain Bike Trail	West of Mack, CO, the trail starts at the Troy Built Trailhead	3.6 miles one way	This is a single track portion of the Kokopelli trail that starts at the Troy Built trailhead and then heads west on the main portion of the Kokopelli Trail	Difficult
Colorado Riverfront Trail; Mack to Fruita	The trail starts at the Loma boat ramp turn off and ends at the CO Welcom Center	5.6 miles one way	This is a paved walking, biking, and running trail; newly built portion	Easy
Colorado Riverfront Trail; Fruita to Grand Junction, Eagle Crest Park	There are two trailheads, one at the Colorado Welcome Center in Fruita, and the other at Eagle Rim Park	14.4 miles one way	This is a paved walking, biking, and running trail	Easy
Orchard Mesa/Whitewater Trail	The trail can be accessed at the Orchard Mesa Trailhead or the Whitewater Trailhead	4.6 miles one way	This is a dirt trail primarily used for biking and hiking, that closely follows the Old Spanish NHT	Intermediate
Gunnison River Crossing Overlook Trail	The trail starts at the Gunnison River Overlook in Delta	0.5 miles round trip	This is a simple out-and-back trail to see the Gunnison River	Easy

Driving Routes

Name	Location	Distance	Description	Difficulty
Rabbit Valley segment of Kokopelli Trail 4WD/ATV Route	Trail starts off exit 2 on I-70 and heads south on Rabbit Valley Rd	5.3 miles to Utah border one way	Route runs south/east from I-70 to the Utah border	Intermediate
Hawkeye Road 4WD/ATV Route	Inbetween the Kokopelli Trail parking lot to the Troy Built Trail parking lot	5.2 miles one way	A dirt frontage road running between Loma and Mack I-70 exits	Easy
McInnis Canyon segment of Kokopelli Trail 4WD/ATV Route	Stretches from exit 2 on I-70 to just south/west of Mack	7.5 miles one way	A country road portion of the Kokopelli mountain biking trail	Intermediate
Mesa County Driving Route	Follows US 50 from the Grand County line in Utah to the Delta County line	54.3 miles one way	This route follows the Old Spanish NHT through Mesa County	Easy
Delta County Driving Route	Follows US 50 from the Mesa County line on to the Montrose County line	24.7 miles one way	This route follows the Old Spanish NHT through Delta County	Easy





Old Spanish National Historic Trail

Sign Families

Road Signs

Historic Route Sign 36" x 48":
Marks the historic route of the national historic trail



Historic Route signs have the following lower panel options:



Directional Site Sign 36" x 48":
Directs people to sites associated with the national historic trail



Crossing Sign 36" x 48":
Marks where the historic route of the national historic trail crosses a road



Site ID Sign 72" x 42":
Marks a site associated with the national historic trail



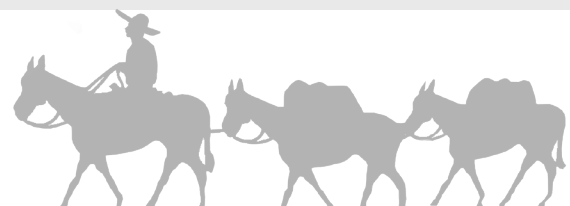
Pictures of Installed Signs



Trail signage at the Whitewater Trailhead



Trail signage in New Mexico





Old Spanish National Historic Trail

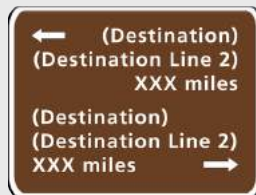
Sign Families

Pedestrian Signs

Historic Route Sign 18" x 24":
Marks the historic route of the national historic trail



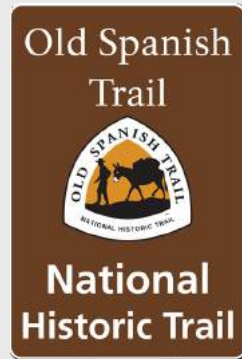
Historic Route - lower panel options:



Left: shows distance to the beginning and end of the trail from the location the sign is placed



Trail Sign 18" x 24":
Marks trail that is in close proximity and/or connects to the national historic trail, but is not on the actual historic route



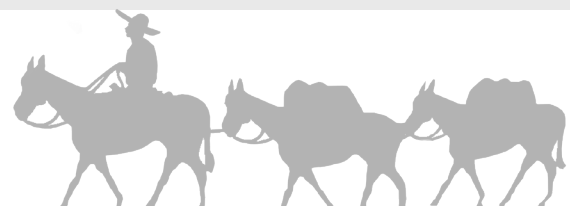
(Site Name Here) 18" x 24":
Directs people to historic sites associated with the national historic trail



Above signs come with lower panel arrow options:



Crossing Sign 18" x 24":
Marks where the historic route of the national historic trail crosses a trail





Old Spanish National Historic Trail

Sign Families

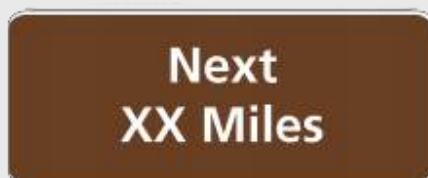
Pedestrian Signs

Historic Route Sign 12" x 12":

Marks the historic route of the national historic trail



Historic Route - lower panel options



Trail Sign 12" x 12":

Marks trail that is in close proximity and/or connects to the national historic trail, but is not on the actual historic route



(Site Name Here) Sign 12" x 12":

Directs people to historic sites associated with the national historic trail

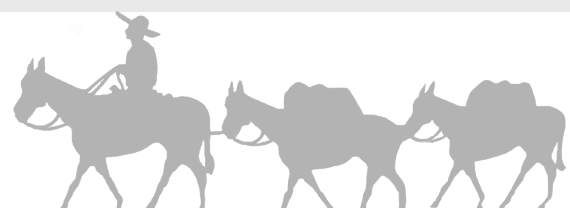


Above signs come with lower panel arrow options



Crossing Sign 12" x 12":

Marks where the historic route of the national historic trail crosses a trail





Old Spanish National Historic Trail

Sign Families

Pedestrian Signs

Historic Route Sticker 3" x 6.75":

Marks the historic route of the national historic trail



Historic Route - lower text and arrow options



Trail Sticker 3" x 6.75":

Marks trail that is in close proximity and/or connects to the national historic trail, but is not on the actual historic route



Above signs come with lower panel arrow options



(Site Name Here) Sticker 3" x 6.75":

Directs people to historic sites associated with the national historic trail



Crossing Sticker 3" x 6.75":

Marks where the historic route of the national historic trail crosses a trail

