

Scope of Work Brief:

Flat Tops Trail Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan

Project Summary

We are a team of graduate students in CU Boulder's MENV program, a professional Master's program that engages students in complex environmental issues. For our Capstone Project, we are partnering with the Northwest Colorado Cultural Heritage Program (NWCOCHP) to develop a Corridor Management Plan (CMP) for the Flat Tops Trail Scenic Byway (FTTSB). Our purpose is to create a conservation-oriented scenic byway CMP that will contribute to the well-being of regional communities, support their economic development, and aid their ability to provide amenities for residents and visitors.

Background Information

The FTTSB Committee released their most recent CMP in 1994, but the Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways Commission requires each byway to update their CMP every 10 years. Without an updated CMP, the FTTSB may lose its status as a Colorado Scenic Byway. Keeping the Flat Tops Trail as a Scenic Byway will extend the opportunity for communities near the Byway to gain economic benefits from the visitor spending that byways can bring. From 2009 to 2014, the FTTSB generated \$130.8 million for Northwest Colorado.



NWCOCHP

With current administrative oversight of the Byway, the NWCOCHP is in charge of creating a new CMP. Since its inception in 2010, NWCOCHP has worked to diversify the local tourism market throughout Northwest Colorado, promoting recreation opportunities and the importance of cultural heritage tourism. In past projects, the organization created plans for interpretive signage and wayfinding materials for various sites in the region.

Project Deliverables

1. Marketing and Promotional Plan

Some initial goals for the promotional plan include social media improvements, a sustained marketing campaign, a unified goal for the region, and a centralized message emphasizing the multidimensional assets of the Byway. The document will be a part of a broader management plan that ensures the Byway is maintained as a sustainable tourism destination for years to come. Along with the methods listed below, we will conduct a social media analysis of Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and blog posts that geotag or write about the FTTSB to understand visitation patterns and tourism assets.

2. Flat Tops Trail Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan (CMP)

The CMP is a guiding document for the management of the FTTSB's cultural and natural resources, complete with recommendations and action items for the FTTSB Leadership Team and regional stakeholders/partners. The CMP will contain the following sections:

- Byway Location and Description
- Mission, Vision and Goals
 - Natural resource management and conversation
 - Cultural heritage and historic asset preservation
 - Community economic development in the portal towns of Meeker and Yampa
 - Outdoor recreation tourism impact and stewardship
- Inventory and Assessment of Byway Resources
 - Asset maps: This will provide a template for better management, understanding, and protection of the Flat Tops Scenic Byway.
 - Stakeholder interview questionnaire
 - Background research on the Byway by reading local newspapers, interviews, federal and regional agency resources, and studying updates since the previous CMP.
- Promotion
 - Interpretation: This will complement the marketing and promotion plan and highlight the unique educational opportunities along the byway.
 - Destination and sustainable tourism management plan
- Rubric to measure success and sustained action plan
- Federal Register Requirements

3. Communication Plan and Stewardship Workshop

Our work will involve the expertise of local stakeholders and your knowledge is invaluable for developing a successful CMP. As we interview and work with different groups of stakeholders, we plan to send a monthly newsletter to everyone involved to provide updates and progress reports on our project throughout the year. In the Fall, we will host a workshop on each side of the FTTSB. It will consist of a presentation of the management plan and workshop regarding how the different communities can uphold this plan.