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*Photo by Tom Pitch*

**NEA National Heritage Fellow Eppie Archuleta**
Introduction

The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area encompasses more than 3,000 square miles in the San Luis Valley. The Area includes the headwaters of the Rio Grande and its intricate network of tributary creeks, lakes, wetlands, artesian springs, and irrigation canals. In addition, it includes the stunningly beautiful natural resources of the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, Baca National Wildlife Refuge, Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge, Alamosa National Wildlife Refuge and Los Caminos Antiguos Scenic and Historic Byway. Our Area also includes all of Alamosa County, Conejos County, and Costilla County; public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management; a portion of the Rio Grande National Forest; and a host of smaller sites protected by the State of Colorado.

The administration of President Ronald Reagan supported the concept of National Heritage Areas as a cost-effective way to tell America’s story and conserve the nation’s natural and historic resources. Former Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar, former Congressman John Salazar, and Senator Michael Bennet played critical roles in establishing Colorado’s three National Heritage Areas in 2009. Historic preservation through the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area has created jobs, stabilized historic districts, assisted in heritage tourism strategies for the region and state, and contributed to rural economic development plans.
Mission Statement

The mission of the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area is to promote, preserve, protect, and interpret its profound historical, religious, environmental, geographic, geologic, cultural, and linguistic resources. These efforts will contribute to the overall story, engender a spirit of pride and self-reliance, and create a legacy in the Colorado counties of Alamosa, Conejos, and Costilla.
Three Primary Goals

1. Support development of a vibrant heritage tourism sector that stimulates preservation, economic development, and community revitalization.

2. Tell the stories of the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area in ways that build community pride and support preservation, living traditions, economic development, and community revitalization.

3. Cultivate excellent management that provides regional leadership, reflects community values, and achieves sustainability.

Inerpretive Themes

A High Desert Valley’s Wind, Water, and Sand Dunes
The interplay of wind, water, and sand have shaped the San Luis Valley’s unique landforms and its biological diversity. The Valley’s hidden aquifers support wetlands that are home to globally unique plant and animal species and are a migration stopover for many birds.

Land of the Blue Sky People
Interwoven with the Valley’s natural history is a very long and rich human history. The San Luis Valley served prehistoric and Native American cultures as a seasonal hunting ground where fowl, game, and edible and medicinal plants were bountiful. Select landscape features within the Valley have long been revered as sacred.

Interwoven Peoples and Traditions
The San Luis Valley is a place where different peoples have converged for thousands of years. The Valley’s profound historical, religious, and cultural convergence remains visible in the landscape and can be experienced in its communities, art, food, lodging, and events.

Hispano Culture: Folklore, Religion and Language
The lower San Luis Valley lies at the intersection of the Hispano Southwest and Anglo Rocky Mountain West where the flavor of Hispano culture thrives. The Valley’s relative isolation has preserved a living cultural tradition where art, language, architecture, folklore, and religious traditions remain evocative of the region’s early Spanish and Mexican settlers.

Learn more about the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area
www.sangreheritage.org
Dear Partners and Friends:

As of this report’s publication, the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area is one of 55 Congressionally-designated National Heritage Areas across the United States. A National Heritage Area is designated by Congress for its unique and nationally significant qualities and resources. It is a place where a combination of natural, cultural, historic, and recreational resources have shaped a cohesive, nationally distinctive landscape. The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area was designated by Congress in 2009 and has been through a rich learning and growing experience over the last 10 years. The National Park Service has been a tremendous support in guiding the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area in the right direction to meet the mission, goals, and themes identified in its Management Plan.

This report summarizes the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area’s progress before and since the adoption of the Management Plan, which was approved by the Secretary of Interior in February 2013. The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area’s first few years consisted of drafting the Management Plan, marketing the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area, and partially funding a few projects. During this time the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area also established a vital presence in the region by working to foster strong relationships with residents, other non-profits, private businesses, state and federal entities, municipalities, counties, partners, sponsors, visitors, and interested individuals.

Since February 2013, the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area has been busy developing programs and financially assisting projects that meet its goals and mission identified in the Management Plan. The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area Board of Directors, staff, residents, partners, visitors, and supporters have continuously worked on projects involving education, tourism, arts, humanities, historic preservation, oral histories, outdoor recreation, and interpretation to promote, preserve, and protect insightful historical, religious, cultural, and ethnic individuality of the United States. The rich mixture of Native American, Hispano, Japanese, German, Amish, and Anglo history in our area contributes to the nation’s story. In this report, you will learn about the programs and projects we’ve been working on to fulfill our goals and mission. Recognized at state and national levels for our programs, projects, and collaborations, it is clear that the standards of uniqueness have been successful and would not be possible without your support.

To learn more about the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area, we invite you to visit our website, www.sangreheritage.org, and to follow us on Facebook and Instagram. On behalf of the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area Board of Directors and staff, thank you for your ongoing support, trust, and confidence. Please enjoy viewing our 10 Year Report.

Charles N. Saenz
Board President

Julie Chacon
Executive Director
Grants and signature projects of the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area are intended to encourage local cultural and historic heritage preservation activities and educational programs. These funds may support projects dedicated to interpretation and way-finding, conservation, or recreation with a heritage emphasis. The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area grants are awarded to help stimulate local discussion and participation and, at best, are the catalyst for community and partner collaborations. A small grant at the right time can go a long way toward inspiring a community or an organization to take action on a heritage project. These efforts will support heritage preservation and tourism, and promote the counties of Alamosa, Conejos and Costilla; the Alamosa National Wildlife Refuge; the Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge; the Baca National Wildlife Refuge; the Rio Grande National Forest; and the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve.

What is the difference between a grant and a signature project?

A grant is a project that the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area would like to see completed and approved as part of a competitive application process. A grant agreement is negotiated and signed by both parties. The grant recipient is responsible for ensuring that the project is successfully completed with monitoring by the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area.

A signature project is an initiative that the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area would like to see completed, and is involved in the planning and decision making, responsibilities, and completion. A signature project will be considered during the grant application process if the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area approaches organizations for their assistance or if the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area is approached by another organization. A memorandum of agreement will be negotiated and signed by both parties. All parties are responsible to see that the project will be successfully completed with monitoring conducted by the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area.
Costilla County Economic Development Council, Inc.

Exterior Restoration of the San Luis Museum & Cultural Center

Exterior improvements were made to the museum, which has been renamed the Sangre de Cristo Heritage Center. The community will use the center for heritage-related exhibits and community gatherings.

Alamosa Convention & Visitors Bureau:

A Cooperative Media Film

An informational and marketing short film on the subject matter of the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area and Alamosa County. The film includes recreational activities, tourist destinations, and traveler accommodations available in Alamosa County & the heritage area.

Alamosa Masonic Philanthropic Foundation:

Alamosa Masonic Hall Preservation & Rehabilitation

Alamosa Masonic Hall improvements were made to the north storefront’s sidewalk, framing, flooring, ceiling, interior and exterior paint, and electrical services.

La Puente Home, Inc.: Alamosa Community Gardens, Horno Workshop & Educational Programs

This program provided lessons and educational materials on gardening, nutrition, health, and the environment. The project conducted an horno building workshop. Hornos are adobe-built, outdoor ovens used by early settlers of the Heritage Area.

Town of Antonito:

Interior Preservation & Rehabilitation of the Antonito Depot

Interior restoration and rehabilitation of the Antonito Depot included: plaster, carpentry, wood trim and fittings, wood floor, and mechanical systems to preserve historical uniqueness. This site was a part of the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad.

La Puente Home, Inc.: Preservation & Rehabilitation Construction Documents of the Emperius Building

Construction documents were created for historical preservation and rehabilitation of the exterior and interior of the 1909 historic Emperius Building, which allowed the organization to continue its ongoing public services within historic downtown Alamosa.
Los Caminos Antiguos Scenic & Historic Byway:

*Portal Signs*

Six interpretive panels and five low profile interpretive signs were fabricated and installed along the Los Caminos Antiguos Scenic and Historic Byway sharing the stories of culture and history in the Heritage Area.

Paleocultural Research Group:

*Landscape Analysis of the Baca Mountain Tract*

Archival research was conducted on Spanish mining activities in the San Luis Valley. Artifacts found at three separate sites included: a millingstone and handstone set, knife handles, spent musket balls, and copper points.

Adams State University:

*Fort Massachusetts Archaeology Field Study*

Students assisted with ongoing archaeological research and documentation at Ft. Massachusetts in Costilla County through Adams State University’s six-week archaeological field school. Students were introduced to standard archaeological techniques such as test unit excavation, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) analysis, and total station survey.

Adams State University Cultural Awareness & Student Achievement:

*Roots Run Deep*

Efforts supported the revival and education of Hispano and Native American heritage of the San Luis Valley for students of Adams State University’s Cultural Awareness and Student Achievement (CASA) Center. This project completed a *matanza* butchering at Salazar Farms for the preparation of cultural and traditional food. A historical sheepherder trailer was purchased and is permanently located at the CASA Center to be used in conjunction with a community weaver for educational projects. Two *hornos* were completed outside of the CASA Center to be used for traditional food preparation. A field trip was taken to participate in the traditional harvesting and drying of *chicos*, which are dried white corn kernels.
**Costilla County Economic Development Council, Inc.:**

*Interior Restoration of the San Luis Museum & Cultural Center*

Construction documents were created for interior restoration and rehabilitation of the Sangre de Cristo Heritage Center. Interior improvements were made to the museum, which has been renamed the Sangre de Cristo Heritage Center.

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**Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association:**

*2013 Congreso de Acequias*

This program was a one day event, which provided professional legal information and educational materials to members of Colorado’s acequia communities. Acequias are still in use today and are the oldest irrigation system used in the United States.

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**Town of San Luis:**

*San Luis Mural Project*

This mural creation and restoration project involved three local artists and four murals on Main Street in San Luis, Colorado’s oldest town. Four murals, two of which are reliefs, tell the history of San Luis. This visual representation brings awareness to visitors, which helps transform San Luis into a center for arts and Hispanic culture.

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**San Luis Valley Local Foods Coalition:**

*Healthy Habits*

A mobile kitchen increased access to locally grown foods in the San Luis Valley and provided cooking demonstrations and take-home recipes at San Luis Valley farmers’ markets, and focused on local cultural and traditional meals.

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**Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust:**

*Garcia Ranch Conservation*

A conservation easement was created for the protection of the historic Garcia Ranch and wildlife habitat located on the Conejos River. The property encompasses 762 acres, which include 552 acres of wetlands, over a half a mile of river corridor, and substantial senior water rights. The Garcia Ranch is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

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**Southwest Conservation Corps:**

*Connection Corps Program*

Six local youth and two adult crew leaders were recruited and trained for four weeks to complete conservation projects within the Heritage Area. Recruits gained a variety of job skills, outdoor living experience, leadership development, education, and knowledge of local culture, history, and traditions.
Canto al Pueblo Cultural Arts:
Santa Ana Fiesta Novela Project
Traditional and cultural entertainment was provided for the historic Santa Ana Days Fiesta in San Luis, Colorado’s oldest town. Performances included: traditional live music, cultural dance, historical theatrical performances, and audience-participation activities. This traditional event takes place annually and is free to the public.

Adams State University:
Fort Massachusetts Archaeology Field Study
Students assisted with ongoing archaeological research and documentation at Ft. Massachusetts in Costilla County through Adams State University’s six-week archaeological field school. Students were introduced to standard archaeological techniques, such as test unit excavation, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) analysis, and total station survey.

Boys & Girls Club of the San Luis Valley:
Positive Sprouts Garden Program & Wehe Green House Dome
A greenhouse dome was installed to support efforts to reconnect local youth with the Heritage Area’s agricultural roots. This dome hosts hands-on learning experiences on topics ranging from cooking to native edible plants species of the Heritage Area, which includes leadership development, healthy living, and STEM courses.

Trujillo Homestead:
Horse Stables Stabilization
In partnership with the National Park Service, National Trust for Historical Preservation grant, and Nature Conservancy, stabilization of the horse stables at the historic Trujillo Homestead was completed. The historic homestead provides a representation of the Hispanic American expansion into the American southwest.

Colorado Humanities:
The Great Divide
This is a comprehensive and authoritative film about the history of water in the State of Colorado. The film includes information about Spanish settlements, acequia systems, and historic water issues that have affected communities throughout the State. The film also looks at the human relationship with water and the critical need to cross the “Great Divide” by promoting cooperation over conflict.

Colorado Open Lands:
Acequia Conservation
This grant ensured the permanent protection of two acequia-irrigated farms and surface water rights along the Rio Culebra in Costilla County. This conservation easement protects 181 acres of land near San Luis and the People’s Ditch, which holds Colorado’s oldest water rights. The Culebra Creek Ranch protects 160 acres of farm land adjacent to La Sierra, and water rights in the Felipe Vialpando and Gabino Atencio acequias.
Conejos County Tourism Council:

**Murals of Conejos County**

Murals were restored and conserved within Conejos County. Work was completed by one of the original artists, master muralist Fred Haberlein, who created over 85% of the murals that are included in the Conejos County self-driving mural tour. Fred created more public murals in the United States than any other artist. Workshops were available to school districts located in Conejos County.

Costilla County Economic Development Council:

**Construction Documents & Stabilization of the Nasario Gallegos House**

Construction documents to preserve, restore, and stabilize the adobe walls of the Nasario Gallegos house were developed. The restoration and preservation of this iconic building will serve as a public exhibit and showcase the historic Hispanic way of life from the early 1800s.

Fort Garland Museum:

**History of Japanese Americans in Costilla County**

The Fort Garland Museum conducted an oral history of Japanese American descendants from Costilla County. This collection is archived at the Milton Mueller Library at the Fort Garland Museum, and the Stephen H. Hart Library & Research Center at the History Colorado Center in Denver.

Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust:

**Rainbow Trout Ranch Conservation**

Work with the owners of the Rainbow Trout Ranch in Conejos County protected the Ranch through a permanent conservation easement. This historic 590 acre guest ranch has been in operation for over 85 years. It is located on the Conejos River and provides a substantial wildlife habitat.

Rio Grande Water Conservation & Education Initiative:

**The Envirothon**

Students developed environmental resource knowledge and skills in the areas of soils and land use, aquatic ecology, forestry, and wildlife. This natural resource education program focused on students in grades 9-12, students formed teams of five and competed against other resource teams at the regional, state, and national levels.

San Luis Valley Ecosystem Council:

**The Enduring Legacy**

Two presentations were created in collaboration with the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve, the Rio Grande National Forest, the Bureau of Land Management, the Volunteers for Colorado Outdoors, and the San Luis Valley Economic Council, and shown at six locations. The program gave an overview of national wilderness history and focused on the five wilderness areas of the San Luis Valley.
Southwest Conservation Corps:
Careers on the Land
This program took 16 local youth through the heritage area for two separate, four-week conservation and educational programs. It exposed participants to culture, traditions, and career opportunities in agriculture and natural resource conservation while they completed public lands stewardship and community projects in the heritage area.

San Luis Valley Local Foods Coalition:
Rio Grande Farm Park
This grant supported creation of a management plan for Rio Grande Farm Park to preserve the rich agricultural heritage of the Rio Grande corridor as a legacy for future generations. The plan featured a working farm, botanical gardens, production greenhouses, a performance stage, and walking trails.

San Luis Valley Local Foods Coalition:
Seeds of Learning
The Valley Education Gardening Initiative provided home gardens and mentoring to local families in need. It also provided nutritional education nights at local schools in collaboration with the Integrated Nutrition Education Program of Colorado, which offers family nutrition education through school programming.

Colorado Rio Grande Restoration Foundation:
Lower Rio Grande Study
This study and analysis of the reach of the Rio Grande in the heritage area included: outreach to landowners, boating the entire reach, targeted surveying, recording data on streambank stability, riparian habitat condition, geomorphology, in-stream structures, aquatic habitat, and sediment transport. The data was used to collect, develop, and prioritize restoration projects along the study reach.

Hilos Culturales:
Cultural Film Module Series
This grant supported the creation of a cultural arts film module series on the Indio-Hispano arts, traditions, and culture of the upper Rio Grande Region. Individually produced resource guide booklets and promotional and marketing materials were also printed.

Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association:
2014 Congreso de Acequias
The congreso brought together the acequia community to celebrate and strengthen Colorado’s oldest farming community. Acequias are a critical piece of the heritage area’s living history, supporting the ancestors of those who settled under Mexican land grants. Topics include acequia improvement projects, bylaws, and information about GMO crops.

San Luis Valley Local Foods Coalition:
Seeds of Learning
This grant supported creation of a management plan for Rio Grande Farm Park to preserve the rich agricultural heritage of the Rio Grande corridor as a legacy for future generations. The plan featured a working farm, botanical gardens, production greenhouses, a performance stage, and walking trails.
Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association:

2015 Congreso de Acequias

Ninety people attended the 2015 Congreso de Acequias. Of those attendees, 25 were acequia irrigators who had not participated in previous congressos. A student poster contest was held on the theme “Family Traditions: Learning Responsibility with Land and Water.” Local group Mariachi San Luis provided traditional cultural music during the event.

Adams State University:

Lifeways of the San Luis Valley Course & Lecture Series

Attendees explored the cultural richness of the San Luis Valley within the context of Southwestern and Rio Grande traditions. The San Luis Valley geography, ecology, languages, literature, and other regional heritage aspects, such as acequia systems, were exemplified in order to better understand local values and spiritual expressions of place. Topics covered folk art, business, agriculture, the Chicano Movement, traditional healing arts, the Vietnam War and immigration.

Adams State University:

Latino Americanos 500 Years of History

A series of lectures were given by expert historians to commemorate Cesar Chavez Week at Adams State University. There were two demonstrations of artisan bread making and a Skype lecture with Doloras Huerta, a renowned figure in the United Farmworkers Union Movement.

Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area:

2015 Congreso de Acequias

Ninety people attended the 2015 Congreso de Acequias. Of those attendees, 25 were acequia irrigators who had not participated in previous congressos. A student poster contest was held on the theme “Family Traditions: Learning Responsibility with Land and Water.” Local group Mariachi San Luis provided traditional cultural music during the event.

Colorado Tourism Office:

Heritage Tour Brochure

A collaboration project between Colorado’s three national heritage areas: Cache la Poudre National Heritage Area, Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area, and South Park National Heritage Area, sought to increase visitation to all three national heritage areas by creating a Colorado National Heritage landing page that features a driving tour, the creation of a brochure, and the ability to share the unique heritage. www.coheritagejourney.com.

San Luis Valley Museum Association:

Colorado-Wyoming Association of Museums Conference

Four museums within the national heritage area and the president of the San Luis Valley Museum Association attended the annual conference held in Boulder, Colorado. The conference provided opportunities for attendees to improve social media skills, tips for label writing, fundraiser ideas, networking opportunities, and peer assessment programs.
Adams State University: 
\textit{Equity Through Music}

The Adams State University Music Department commissioned, performed, recorded, and marketed original musical compositions. The musical compositions were inspired by the Heritage Area’s history, culture, and landscapes. The pieces were performed by the Adams State University Winds and Percussion group at various events.

Paleocultural Research Group: 
\textit{Archological Inventory & Site Evaluation of the Rio Grande National Area & Punche Valley}

A baseline dataset was developed on the archaeological resources of the region, including Native American camps, historic homesteads, rock art sites, and other aspects of the cultural landscape. A research team led by the Paleocultural Research Group conducted a 16-day public archaeology project in Conejos County.

Colorado Department of Transportation: 
\textit{Entering the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area Signs}

Brown and white historical marker signs were placed on six of the main road entrances to the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area through collaboration with the Colorado Department of Transportation, which gave authorization and provided installation of the signs.

Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area, Great Sand Dunes National Park & Preserve & National Park Service

\textit{Internship}

Interns Zoe Rierson and Marissa Ortega helped to identify heritage assets and historic sites to provide the public with a deeper understanding of what makes the Heritage Area unique.

Adams State University: 
\textit{Voices of the Valley}

This oral history project explored and documented the relationship between culture and natural resources in the Heritage Area placing emphasis on the particular meanings that inhabitants associate with the communities they live in.

Costilla County Economic Development Council:

\textit{Additional Construction Documents of the Nasario Gallegos House}

Additional construction documents were required to address findings that did not fall within the period of significance and were not included in the previous construction documents for historical significance.
Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association:
2016 Congreso de Acequias

The congreso brought together the acequia community to celebrate and strengthen Colorado’s oldest farming community. Acequias are a critical piece of the heritage area’s living history, supporting the ancestors of those who settled under the Mexican land grants. Topics included acequia improvement projects, bylaws, and information about GMO crops.

Sociedad Protección Mutua de Trabajadores Unidos:
Construction Documents

Construction documents were developed for historic exterior and interior rehabilitation of the building. The building houses the oldest Hispanic civil rights organization in the United States: Sociedad Protección Mutua de Trabajadores Unidos. It was founded in Antonito in 1900 by Celdonio Mondragon and six others to fight discrimination in the fields, the mining industry, and the railroads, and to defend property and water rights.

Town of Antonito:
Exterior Rehabilitation & Restoration of the Denver & Rio Grande Depot in Antonito

Work included updated windows and doors: the interior and exterior of the sashes and frames were restored in the historic depot. The project also addressed the deterioration of the roof by providing a historically correct new roof and a restored galvanized ridge, the restoration of the fascia, surrounding woodwork, and braces, along with the exterior woodwork and repointing of a masonry chimney.

Colorado Open Lands:
Valdez Rio Culebra Ranch Conservation

This conservation project protects a significant historical, environmental, and cultural resource in Costilla County. The 225 acre Centennial Ranch is located in Colorado’s oldest agricultural community. The easement protected critical acequia water rights, highly productive agricultural lands, and considerable scenic views. The conservation easement provides a buffer to La Vega, the only Common in the U.S. still used for community grazing.

Rio Grande Watershed Conservation & Education Initiative:
Environthon

The Environthon was designed to develop high school students’ knowledge and understanding of soil and land use, aquatic ecology, forestry, and wildlife and the significant role that culture has played in their use in the San Luis Valley. Students applied these skills to resolve current environmental issues.

Youth Archaeology

In collaboration with the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve and the Fort Garland Museum, a multi-day camp was held for local middle school and high school students from the San Luis Valley. Students were introduced to the discipline of prehistoric and historic archaeology through place-based learning as well as local history. Students went on several site visits on state and federal lands to experience hands-on field methods.

Sociedad Protección Mutua de Trabajadores Unidos:
Construction Documents

Construction documents were developed for historic exterior and interior rehabilitation of the building. The building houses the oldest Hispanic civil rights organization in the United States: Sociedad Protección Mutua de Trabajadores Unidos. It was founded in Antonito in 1900 by Celdonio Mondragon and six others to fight discrimination in the fields, the mining industry, and the railroads, and to defend property and water rights.
Adams State University:

Digitization Scanner for Archival & Digital Repository Initiatives

A digital scanner was jointly purchased for use in the creation of high-quality, digitized images of valuable regional historical photos, documents, and books, including those owned by Adams State University and the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area as well as items held in regional museums, by individuals, and by other institutions.

Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area:

Colcha Circle Documentary

In collaboration with the Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area, the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area contributed to the production of a documentary about traditional colcha folk art. Colcha is a traditional, wool-embroidered coverlet, a craft that is slowly disappearing. The film featured a candid discussion among 11 noted colcha embroidery artists.

Mormon Pioneer National Heritage Area, Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area & Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area:

Hello Neighbor Episode

The collaboration of three heritage areas created a Discovery Road episode that connects culture, religion, shared water practices, natural resource conservation and cooperation between ethnic groups through a historical narrative. It was the first collaboration between heritage areas from different states in the NPS Intermountain Region.

Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association:

2018 Congreso de Acequias

This grant supported a presentation on the Culebra Watershed ecosystem and its importance to the acequias. Breakout sessions included, “Understanding Aquifer Withdrawal and the Effects on Acequia Water” and “Watershed Health Issues.” A student poster contest was held.

Caminos del Valle:

Youth Guided Walking Experiences

Walk2Connect and Intrinsic Paths guided local youths who researched, developed, and presented free walking tours at eight significant locations. The tours covered the topics of local heritage, culture, history; land and water conservation; local stories and traditions; and the benefits of walking. Youth were taught leadership and public speaking skills.

Adams State University:

Repatriation of Remains

The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area partially funded the repatriation of human remains found in Alamosa County. Repatriation involves a return to one’s people. In the Native American context, repatriation involves returning Native American human remains and cultural objects to tribal members.
Education

Our education efforts coordinate with local school districts, teachers, parents, and students to increase understanding and appreciation of local history and culture, and how it relates to the long term sustainability of the region. These efforts engage young people in leadership development and the creation of a deep understanding of history, community functions, and needs.

Local history, arts, and culture are not emphasized at the K-12 level through any formal curriculum standards, and students often graduate without a full understanding or appreciation of the cultural significance that is unique to the San Luis Valley. Through curriculum, field trips, and scholarship opportunities, we help local youth not only to understand their past and define their self-identity within the region’s broader cultural context, but also to enrich their education by exploring ways in which they may personally contribute to the conservation of their communities and unique cultural traditions.

Field Trip Grants

The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area field trip grants encourage excursions that foster the study of land and water: local history, heritage, and culture; archaeology; an understanding of place; and the shared natural and human resources.

History Day Fair Scholarships

The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area is proud to provide an annual scholarship to students who participate in the District History Fair, part of the National History Day competition. Eligible student projects must be based on a theme involving local history, culture, or traditions within the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area.

Local Curricula

The Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area has partnered with Adams State University and the University of Colorado at Boulder to assist local educators in creating curricula in line with Colorado State standards that focus on the local culture, history, and heritage within the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area.
Former Board Members

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