



STRATEGIC PLAN

Adopted May 2021



*San Juan Mountains
Association*

EXPLORE ♦ LEARN ♦ PROTECT

VISION

The communities of Southwest Colorado and visitors to the San Juan Mountains will explore, learn and practice healthy conservation ethics that sustain the valuable land, water and cultural resources of the region.

MISSION

Inspire and empower connection to and responsible use of the spectacular public lands of Southwest Colorado.

VALUES

- **Inclusivity:** We reach out to all ages and demographics of people and respect all users of public lands, striving for equitable access to public lands and our programs.
 - **Connection:** We approach teaching and learning with empathy and curiosity, working hand-in-hand with the people, partners and communities we serve to understand and involve them.
 - **Problem Solving:** We face challenges head-on, using science-based knowledge and creativity to find innovative and effective solutions.
 - **Excellence:** We are dedicated leaders with strong commitments to collaboration, teamwork, accountability, and producing a high standard of work products and services.
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WHO WE ARE

Founded in 1988, the San Juan Mountains Association (SJMA), promotes the exploration and protection of public lands in Southwest Colorado through stewardship and conservation education for people of all ages. Through numerous programs and offerings, we help people to:

- Explore: We help people discover the special places of the San Juan Mountains through our various visitor information centers, where we provide guidance on where to go and how to enjoy the outdoors safely and responsibly.
 - Learn: We provide education programs for youth and adults ranging from in-school lessons, field trips, summer camps and afterschool programs to interpretive hikes and community events to inspire conservation ethics in all ages.
 - Protect: We help people get their hands dirty and give back through paid and volunteer stewardship programs that protect natural and cultural resources, and teach public lands visitors the importance of minimizing impacts.
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GOALS

Education and stewardship programs are impactful and contribute to meaningful change in participants' actions on the landscape.

Public lands visitors responsibly use the land while minimizing impacts to natural resources.

Stewardship efforts are of value to federal land partners and make a noticeable improvement on the landscape.

People of all cultures, backgrounds have equitable access to the San Juan Mountains.

SJMA is a top-end nonprofit organization, reflecting best practices in organizational management and financial stability.



GOALS - STRATEGIES - OBJECTIVES

Education and stewardship programs are impactful and contribute to meaningful change in participants' actions on the landscape.

- Invest in building strong partnerships with school districts (Mancos, Cortez, Durango 9R, Ignacio, Bayfield) and federal land management agencies
- Expand education partner relationships to include secondary education - Ft. Lewis College - to engage students in programming and projects
Strengthen partnerships with outdoor agencies and businesses that interact with the public
- Strengthen programming offered to our membership base and the local community
Invest in volunteer training to strengthen our volunteer base
Improve/increase volunteer outreach, communication and recognition
- Develop curriculum that engages participants via all modes of education from in-person to virtual and DIY activities
- Create a cohesive marketing plan that provides clarity in the work that SJMA does and its impact

- Education progress success measured by how many served (2021-2022 School Year, pending COVID-19 restrictions):
 - Montezuma Inspire Coalition: Serve 500 youth in Montezuma County via combined programs
 - Afterschool: 15 kids/week; 75% capacity
 - Summer camp: 20 kids/week; 75% capacity
 - 9-R: at a minimum reach every 3rd, 5th and 7th grader
- Stewardship impact will increase each year, based on the following 2020 baselines:
 - Volunteers: 3,500 hours, 55 individuals volunteering and 4400 of public contacts by volunteers.
 - Paid crew: 1920 hours and 213 hours of public contacts
 - Stewardship crew naturalized 198 campsites, cut 178 trees, removed 185 pounds of trash.
- Measure participant satisfaction via surveys.
- Track volunteer retention and recruitment rates to maintain a healthy balance between new and returning volunteers.
- Track the ongoing student engagement from learner to volunteer to staff member; 1/3 of students engage in another program in the future.
- Engage program alumni in development/fundraising for organization; measure what amount of members have previously been through the programs; anecdotal accounts of students becoming involved in careers in environmental conservation, education, policy, or management.
- Conduct surveys to measure the value of programming or what participants learned to gauge continued interest in outdoors.

GOALS - STRATEGIES - OBJECTIVES

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- Train all employees and volunteers on how to incorporate responsible use into visitor interactions
- Align staff, board and volunteers' messaging on responsible use through development of talking points and website updates
- Prioritize constructive conversation with visitors specific to minimizing negative impacts and maximizing positive impacts of their land use
- Engage with federal land partners (USFS, BLM) to strengthen collaboration and relationship.
- Work with land partners to identify regional goals for forest/watershed health and understand how SJMA can contribute and advance these goals.
- Establish a stewardship program evaluation process to understand and quantify on-the-ground impact.
- Consider extension of the stewardship program to better meet land partners' needs (e.g., to include monitor/steward recreation sites).

- In 2021, increase face to face contact with visitors (10,000 face to face at Ice Lakes in 2020) to reflect the additional locations.
- Measure the number of website hits on responsible use content pages, developing a baseline in 2021.
- Measure number of views for Spring Education Series for Adults, establishing baseline in 2021 to set goals for future years.
- Number of Leave No Trace products sold to visitors at the bookstores, establish baseline 2021 with the goal to increase over time.
- Land partner satisfaction survey or annual interview/check-in.
- Monitor progress of conditions on the ground (i.e., impact of users on the landscape) at distinct locations where impact can be linked to SJMA efforts.

GOALS - STRATEGIES - OBJECTIVES

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- Expand partnership with tribal communities and other underserved or under-represented groups to understand and help meet their needs for inclusion, education and stewardship.
 - Reach out to identified/prioritized communities to include them in programming.
 - Incorporate history and culture of the land and its people into all activities and programs, membership communications, etc.
 - Identify and incorporate diversity, equity and inclusion strategies into hiring and volunteer recruitment practices.
 - Engage with community groups that can connect SJMA with diverse audiences.
- Scholarship funds for underserved/underrepresented community members are utilized on an annual basis.
 - Participants (Board, staff, students, volunteers) reflect the local demographic (race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, age, people with disabilities) and geographic diversity of the region served (e.g., X% of program participants are Tribal youth in). Establish baselines in 2021 and meet and set realistic goals to be reviewed on a quarterly basis.

GOALS - STRATEGIES - OBJECTIVES

SJMA is a top-end nonprofit organization, reflecting best practices in organizational management and financial stability.

- Develop internal documents and processes to support clarity of roles and responsibilities.
- Collaborate closely with federal land management agencies and education partners to understand, plan for and incorporate funding constraints and opportunities.
- Evaluate opportunities to expand administrative staff capacity (e.g., grant administration, CRM, registration process).
- Create messaging strategy to better promote and advertise fee-based education programs.
- Continue to invest in continuing education and professional development for staff and Board of Directors
- Develop staff-wide understanding of financials and participation in fundraising.

- Increase the diversity and reliability of funding sources, baselines and goals to be established in 2021.
- The Board of Directors has a strong understanding and fluency in SJMA finances.
- The Board of Directors engages and contributes to fundraising activities.
- Maintain a reasonable staff turnover /retention rate.
- Staff performance reviews take place on an annual basis.
- Establish a board recruitment process and document a high level of interest from prospective Board members.
- Feeling of inclusion/cohesion among staff, board, volunteers (measure w annual satisfaction survey)

COMMITMENT

The staff leadership and Board of Directors commit to creating action plans to support implementation of the strategic plan. Leadership will evaluate progress toward stated objectives on a quarterly basis with a formal review that will coincide with the annual budget review.

