



*San Juan Mountains
Association*

EXPLORE ♦ LEARN ♦ PROTECT

2024 IMPACT REPORT

*Inspire and empower connection to and responsible
use of the spectacular public lands of
southwest Colorado*

EXPLORE!

SJMA connects with people so they know before they go! With interactive and interpretive services, maps, personal advice and more, SJMA is your personal guide to the public lands of Southwest Colorado.

SJMA Visitor Information Services

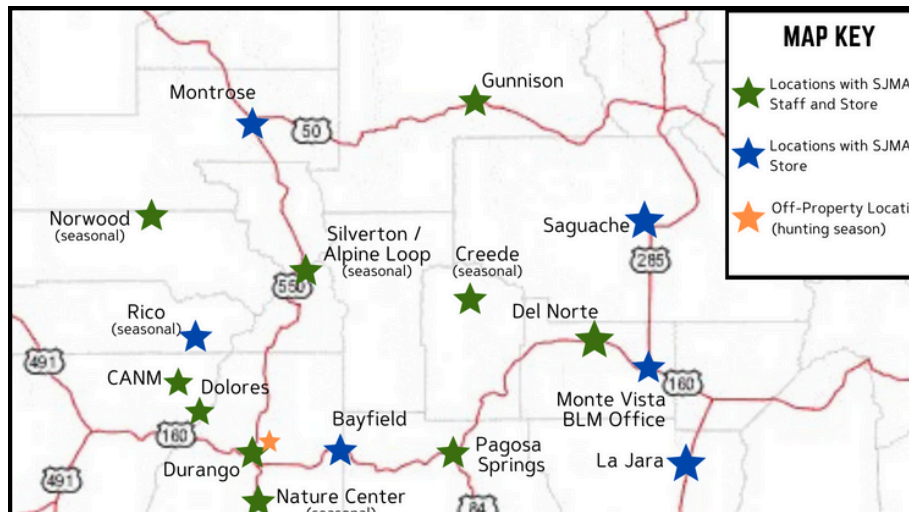
SJMA Visitor Information Services (VIS) Specialists are located in Public Lands Centers throughout southwest Colorado, serving as educational entry points to our public lands. Working with the US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, our Specialists help visitors and locals plan their outdoor adventures, provide maps and guidebooks, keep them up-to-date on forest regulations and fire restrictions, all while encouraging Leave No Trace (LNT) principles.

SJMA Visitor Center Locations

78,187 Total Visitor Contacts made!

Public Land Agency	Phone Calls	In-person Contacts
San Juan NF	19,231	22,932
Rio Grande NF	3497	4915
Uncompahgre NF	1317	997
BLM (Canyons of the Ancients & Gunnison)	25,253	45 (Gunnison Nov/Dec only)

New! SJMA started working with the BLM Gunnison Field Office in fall 2024 to provide information, products, and advice to both locals and visitors. SJMA is excited to extend our message of recreating responsibly to visitors starting the popular Alpine Loop from the north in addition to the visitors starting from the south in Silverton.



LEARN!

SJMA engages youth and people of all ages to learn about history, the natural environment, and ecology through programs and hands-on exploration. We focus on immersive and comprehensive education to inspire the next generation of stewards.

Conservation Education

SJMA's Conservation Education programs and people we serve continues to increase through our interpretive events, school programs, and nature camps.

Location	Ed Programs	Youth	Adult
Montezuma County (Mancos, Dolores, Cortez, Towaoc)	64	877	483
La Plata County (Durango, Bayfield, Ignacio)	84	2,546	371
Other San Juan Mtn Locations (Dove Creek, Silverton, Ridgway, Montrose, Telluride, Aztec, Farmington, Paonia, Aspen, Colorado Springs)	10	714	109
Archuleta County (Pagosa Springs)	18	934	174
Totals	176	5,071	1,137

***2024 Scholarships = \$16,422 to kids in need, ↑ 33%
Thanks to SJMA Donors and United Way's Team Up***

NEW! Pagosa Springs Programming

With a dedicated educator now based in Pagosa Springs, we are increasing outdoor education opportunities, connecting students and adults alike, to local ecosystems.

- Participated in place-based science programs through our partnership with Audubon Rockies
- Built new relationships with area schools to expand outdoor learning opportunities



- Offered summer interpretive hikes highlighting the Pagosa Springs' unique geology

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SJMA engages youth and people of all ages to learn about history, the natural environment and ecology, through programs and hands-on exploration. We focus on immersive and comprehensive education to inspire the next generation of conservationists.

SJMA's conservation education programs took place at our Nature Center and throughout Southwest Colorado's public lands, including Sand Canyon, Canyon of the Ancients National Monument (CANM), Chicken Creek, Havaland Lake, Andrews Lake, Piedra River Trailhead, and many more locations.

Interpretive Programming

Our education staff and passionate volunteers promote experiences for people of all ages to learn about the San Juan Mountains.

New this year, we were happy to expand our programming at the Nature Center, Wolf Creek, and Pagosa Springs.

- *Star Parties at Durango Nature Center with Durango Astrological Society*
- *Nature Center Sunday Strolls & Birding Event*
- *Pagosa Geology Hikes*
- *Winter Shelters / Snow Caves at Wolf Creek*



In addition, we brought back our popular interpretive hikes, many led by volunteers.

- *Snow Science & Socials with Mountain Studies Institute*
- *Wild Chicken Cross-Country Day*
- *Full Moon Howlers with Durango Nordic Center*
- *Mushroom Foraging Hike*
- *San Juan Nature Hikes*

Our partnership with Canyons of the Ancients National Monument results in many shared events full of history, ecology, beauty and wonder.

- *Wildflower Hike*
- *Star Party*
- *Full Moon Hike*
- *Luminaria (new this year and wildly popular!)*



Teacher Workshops

- *CANM Project Archaeology Workshop*
- *Forest to Faucets Teacher Workshop*

PROTECT!

SJMA ensures our shared resources are protected through volunteer and staff engagement in projects and public education throughout the San Juans. SJMA encourages the public to explore and protect their public lands through educational and hands-on stewardship.

Stewardship

While volunteers continue to be at the heart of SJMA's stewardship initiatives, for the fourth year in a row, our organization hired seasonal staff focused on local recreation and natural resources. In 2024, we employed a host of seasonal employees including a four-person Wilderness Crew, seven Forest Ambassadors, a Snow Ambassador, and two Alpine Ambassadors. Despite fewer ambassadors than 2023, this stewardship crew managed to connect with more visitors.



Forest Ambassadors

Number of Ambassadors: 7
Number of SJNF trails: 16
Number of GMUG trails: 7
Visitor Contacts: ~28,700
Trash packed out: 1,194 lbs

Trail drainages cleaned: 674
Fire rings naturalized: 324
Downed trees cleared: 177
Miles of trail covered: 3,668
WAG bags and PACT kits distributed: 300+



Weminuche Wilderness Crew

Number on Crew: 4
Public contacts: 340
Campsites monitored: 402 (!)
Campfire rings naturalized: 18

Down trees removed from trail corridors: 345
Miles of social trail monitored: 112
Trail brushing (tread work, social trails removed): 1,180 feet



Alpine Ambassadors

Silverton BLM office, Animas Forks, Alpine Loop

Number on Crew: 2
Visitor Contacts: 11,700
Fire rings naturalized: 39

Fire rings cleaned: 59
Bathrooms regularly cleaned & restocked: 3



Snow Ambassador

Molas Pass/ Andrews Lake winter parking area & Wolf Creek Pass (*new in 2024!*)

Molas Pass Area Visitor Contacts (promoting LNT and avalanche awareness): 1,890
Wolf Creek Area Visitor Contacts (promoting LNF and avalanche awareness): 1,992
Number of individuals on SJMA's winter, interpretive hikes: 90

CONNECT!

Recognizing that we are “stronger together,” SJMA actively connects with communities and connects community members to the San Juan Mountains.

Through volunteer engagement, outreach and communication, participation in collaborative efforts, and participation in partners’ events, we help activate the broader community.

Volunteers

Since 1988, volunteers have been a critical asset to all of SJMA’s programs. 2024 saw an increase in volunteer programs from a brand new Adopt-a-Road Program in the Rio Grande National Forest to the adoption of 11 miles along the Colorado Trail from Molas Pass to Rolling Mountain Pass.



NEW RGNF Adopt-a-Road



Christmas Tree Harvest Crew



NEW CO Trail Cleanup/Maintenance

TOTAL VOLUNTEERS = 216

TOTAL VOLUNTEER HOURS = 4,313

VALUE OF VOLUNTEER TIME (Independent Sector) = \$ 144,442



Did you know that from May through October we have an outstanding, one-woman team that patrols Pagosa District Forest Roads? Patti Brady, an integral part of SJMA for the last 26 years, not only started our Adopt-a-Road program but single-handedly keeps visitors inline by ensuring they 1) follow forest/fire restrictions; 2) clean up their campsites; and 3) make sure they do not overstay their welcome. Although mostly, she befriends everyone she meets!

In 2024 alone, Patti put in 672 hours!

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Volunteer Project	Description	Volunteers per Project	Hours
Christmas Trees for Conservation	Cut and transported white fir, organized and tended the tree lot by selling trees, & wreaths	156	1,564
Chicago Basin Basecamp	Engaged the public to help spread LNT practices in this increasingly popular location	24	1,120
Blue Lakes / Mt. Sneffels Wilderness	Engaged the public to help inspire much-needed LNT practices	7	34
Ice Lake	Public engagement and education at trailhead, on trail and at the lakes	15	156
Weminuche Solitude Monitoring	Followed USFS monitoring protocols to help ensure wilderness qualities are retained	26	231
Education Programs: Youth	Aided educators on school field trips & after-school programs	11	125
Education Programs: Interpretive	Guided interpretive events such as Nature Hikes, and Snow Science & Socials	22	341
Adopt-a-Road	Kept Forest Roads (FR) clean - San Juan & Rio Grande National Forests	SJNF: 8 groups, 15 individuals RGNF:19	SJNF: 847 RGNF:101
Nature Center Site Committee	Dedicated time and energy to caring for SJMA's 140-acre nature preserve all year long	12	240
Colorado Trail	Adopted Segment 25.1 to keep the trail clean and well-maintained	11	295

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Communications

- Bi-weekly enews: 5,060 subscribers (average 50% open rate)
- Social media updates: 7,100 Facebook (up 9%) and 2,790 Instagram (up 16%)
- Biannual Newsletter Mailings: 1,445
- Durango Herald / Cortez Journal *Stewards of the Land* columns: 1 per month

Collaborations

- Convening a new Regional Partnership to bring conservation and recreation stakeholders together - the Southwest Colorado Conservation & Outdoor Recreation Roundtable (SCCORR)
- Sustainable Tourism: San Juan Skyway Byway Committee, Visit Durango Destination Management Committee
- Forest Health: Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative, Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Plan
- Education: Southwest Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education, Montezuma Inspire Coalition, La Plata County Wellness in Nature

Community Events

- Hardrock 100
- Durango Farmer's Market
- Pagosa Springs Farmer's Market
- 4Corners Climate Summit (FLC)
- Water Festival for 5th Graders (FLC)
- Animas River Days
- Monte Vista Cinco de Mayo Celebration
- National Public Land Day clean up at CANM
- National Forest Week Campfire Naturalization
- 4th Grade Natural Resource Festival (Montrose)





YOUR SUPPORT

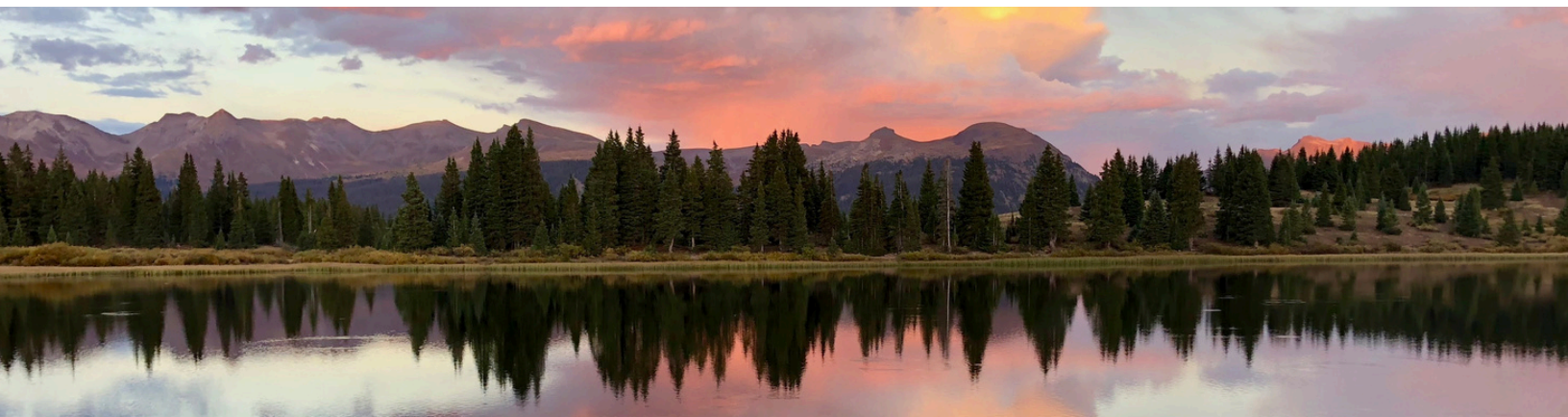
We cannot do all that we do without the generous financial support from our partners, sponsors, members, and grantors.

2024 Agency Partners

BLM - Canyons of the Ancients National Monument
BLM - Gunnison Field Office
Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, & Gunnison (GMUG) National Forest
Rio Grande National Forest
San Juan National Forest

2024 Grantors

100+ Women Who Care - La Plata
Borman Family Foundation
Bridging Nations Foundation
Colorado Department of Human Services
Colorado Parks & Wildlife
Colorado Tourism Office
Great Outdoors Colorado
Hardrock 100 Endurance Run
Katz Family Fund
La Plata County
La Plata Electric Association
National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance
United Way
Visit Durango



YOUR SUPPORT

We cannot do all that we do without the generous financial support from our partners, sponsors, members, and grantors.

2024 Corporate Sponsors



2024 SJMA Members

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If you are not a current SJMA member, please join today.

