Introduction

South Central Colorado is teeming with mountain peaks, deep canyons, and historic towns. The landscape is varied, offering views of flat plains with a backdrop of numerous mountain ranges including the San Juans, Collegiate Peaks, La Garitas, and Sangre de Cristos.

The Arkansas River meanders through the center of the 10.7 million-acre region, providing irrigation and various recreation opportunities. Rafters and kayakers are drawn to the Arkansas, which is the most commercially rafted river in the U.S. Anglers and other recreationists are drawn to the Arkansas and Rio Grande Rivers in addition to many other streams and lakes in the South Central region.

Physiographic Description

The South Central region contains some of Colorado's most spectacular mountain scenery, including 14,000-foot peaks, dramatic canyons, and high plains. The lower elevations of this region consist of rugged tableland, high grasslands, and pinyon-juniper woodlands. Mountainous areas are heavily forested – Rio Grande, Gunnison, Pike, and San Isabel National Forests all lie partially within this region. The natural vegetation of these higher regions includes pinyon pine, ponderosa pine, and large stretches of montane grasslands.

Major Recreation Attractions

National Park Lands: Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument, Great Sand Dunes National Monument

US Forest Service Lands: San Isabel National Forest, Pike National Forest, Gunnison National Forest, Rio Grande National Forest

Bureau of Land Management Areas: Special Recreation Management Areas: Arkansas Headwaters, Arkansas Valley Upland, Gold Belt Tour, Grape Creek Community, Penrose Community, Penitente Canyon, Zapata-Blanca, Rio Grande

Fish and Wildlife Service Lands: Alamosa/Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge

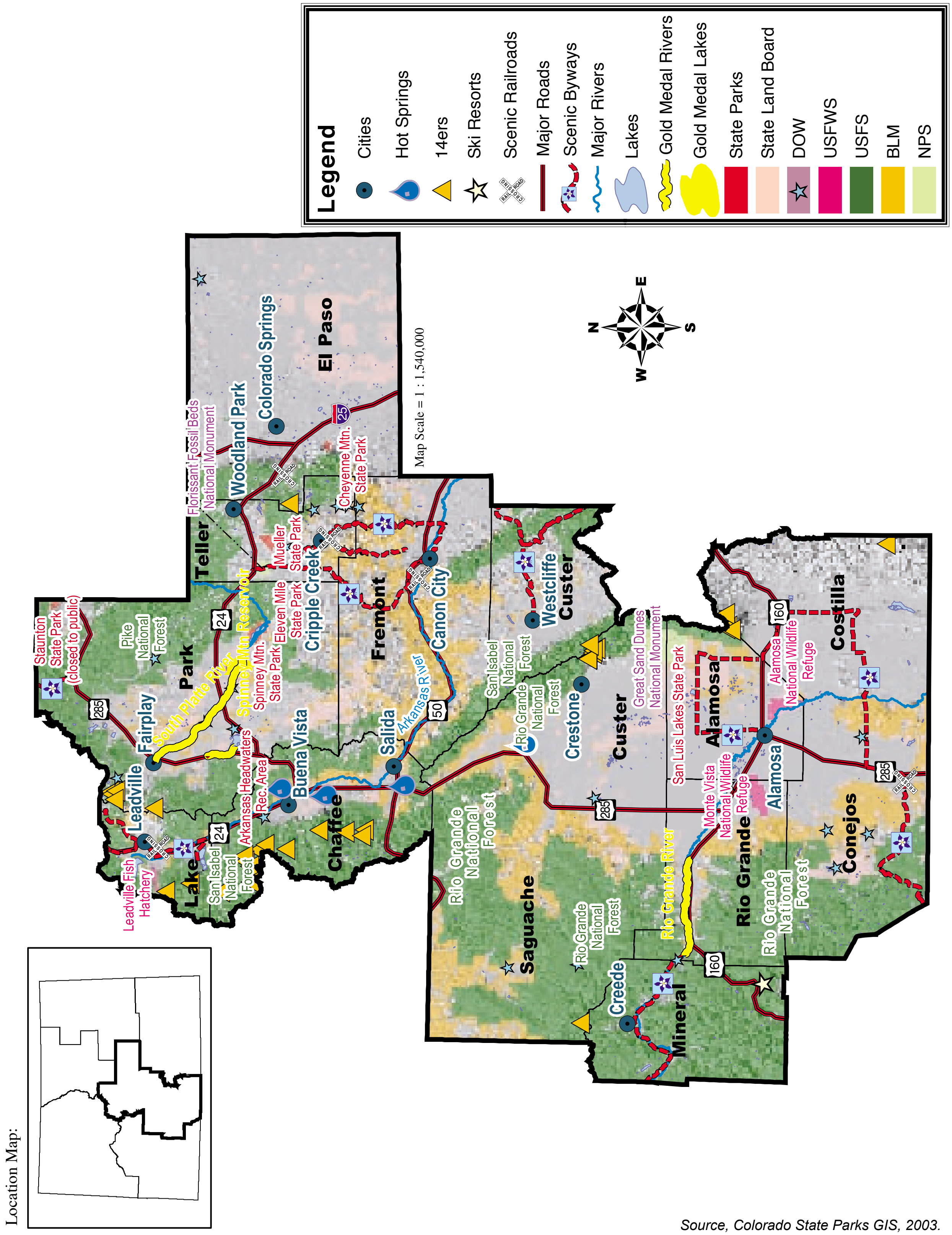
State Parks: Spinney Mountain, Eleven Mile, Mueller, Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area, San Luis Lakes, Cheyenne Mountain

Table 77: Projected Population Estimates and Percent Changes for the Region

County	July - 2002	July - 2005	July - 2010	July - 2015	% Change 2002 - 2015
Alamosa	15,418	16,147	17,647	19,218	19.8%
Chaffee	16,767	17,100	18,036	19,010	11.8%
Conejos	8,428	8,420	8,440	8,500	0.8%
Costilla	3,752	3,697	3,700	3,720	-0.9%
Custer	3,774	4,043	4,737	5,502	31.4%
El Paso	540,855	565,600	611,700	658,300	17.8%
Fremont	47,452	48,191	50,103	52,164	9.0%
Lake	7,921	8,669	10,512	12,222	35.2%
Mineral	868	857	856	856	-1.5%
Park	15,827	18,731	26,753	39,339	59.8%
Rio Grande	12,580	12,452	12,485	12,485	-0.8%
Saguache	6,235	6,238	6,318	6,391	2.4%
Teller	22,158	22,904	24,312	25,141	11.9%
Regional Totals	669,852	699,802	759,916	824,620	18.8%

Source: DOLA, Demography Section 2003.

Map 15: South Central Recreation Attractions



Source, Colorado State Parks GIS, 2003.

State Wildlife Areas: There are 62 SWAs in the region.

14er's: Mt. Bierstadt, Pike's Peak, Humboldt, Crestone, Crestone Needle, Blanca, Ellingwood Point, Kit Carson, Little Bear Peak, Ellingwood Point, Mt. Lindsay,Culebra Peak, Sunshine, Redcloud, Handies, Mt. Shavano, Mt. Antero, Tabeguache, Mt. Princeton, Mt. Columbia, Mt. Harvard, Mt. Yale, Missouri Mountain, La Plata, Huron, Mt. Oxford, Mt. Sherman, Mt. Belford, Mt. Elbert, Mt. Massive, Mt. Democrat, Mt. Bross, Mt. Lincoln,

Ski resorts: Wolf Creek, Monarch

Scenic and Historic Byways: Gold Belt Tour, Top of the Rockies, Frontier Pathways, Highway of Legends, Los Caminos Antiguos, Silver Thread

Cultural and Historic sites: South Park City, Miramont Castle, Colorado Territorial Prison, Fort Garland/Pikes Stockade, Matchless Mine and Baby Doe's Cabin, Stations of the Cross

Ghost towns: St. Elmo, Winfield

Hot springs: Cottonwood Hot Springs, Mt. Princeton Hot Springs Resort, Salida Hot Springs Aquatic Center, Mineral Hot Springs, Valley View Hot Springs

Points of interest and other recreation options: Wheeler Geologic Area, Royal Gorge, Garden of the Gods, Windy Ridge Bristlecone Pine National Scenic Area, Garden of the Gods, U.S. Air Force Academy, Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad, Leadville Colorado and Southern Railroad, The Royal Gorge Route Train, Cripple Creek and Victor Mallet Steam Engine, Pikes Peak Cog Railway, Mission Wolf Sanctuary

Table 78: 2000 Census Data by County

Median Household Income	
Alamosa	$29,447
Chaffee	$34,368
Conejos	$24,744
Costilla	$19,531
Custer	$34,731
El Paso	$46,844
Fremont	$34,150
Lake	$37,691
Mineral	$34,844
Park	$51,899
Rio Grande	$31,836
Saguache	$25,495
Teller	$50,165
Regional Average	**$35,057**
Colorado Average	**$47,203**

Median Age	
Alamosa	30.6
Chaffee	41.8
Conejos	34.2
Costilla	42.1
Custer	44.9
El Paso	33
Fremont	38.8
Lake	30.5
Mineral	45
Park	40
Rio Grande	37.3
Saguache	36.9
Teller	39.4
Regional Average	**38.0**
Colorado Average	**34.3**

Persons Below Poverty Level (%)	
Alamosa	21.30%
Chaffee	11.70%
Conejos	23.00%
Costilla	26.80%
Custer	13.30%
El Paso	8.00%
Fremont	11.70%
Lake	12.90%
Mineral	10.20%
Park	5.60%
Rio Grande	14.50%
Saguache	22.60%
Teller	5.40%
Regional Average	**14.38%**
Colorado Average	**9.30%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.

Local Profile

Major Communities

The South Central region consists of 13 counties: Alamosa, Chaffee, Conejos, Costilla, Custer, El Paso, Fremont, Lake, Mineral, Park, Rio Grande, Saguache, and Teller.

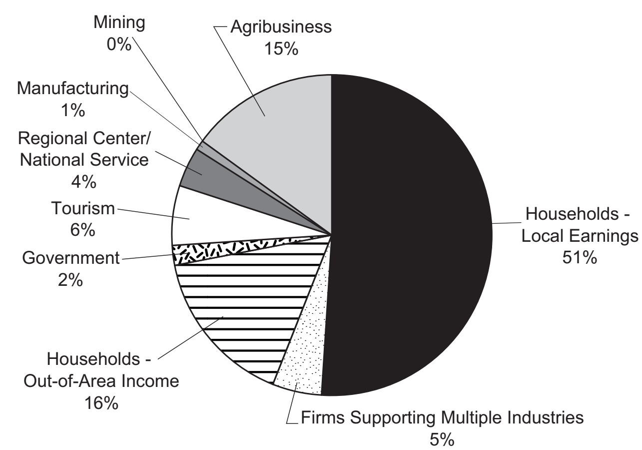
Major towns and cities within these counties include Alamosa, Buena Vista, Canon City, Colorado Springs, Leadville, Manitou Springs, and Salida.

Sub-region Descriptions

Wide-ranging populations, divergent landscapes, and dissimilar economic influences justify dividing this expansive region into smaller sub-regions.

Sub-region	Counties
San Luis Valley	Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, Saguache
Arkansas River Valley	Chaffee, Custer, Freemont, Lake, Park, Teller
Colorado Springs/El Paso County	El Paso

Figure 62: San Luis Valley Employment Shares by Major Industry & Household Groups, 2001



Source: DOLA Demography Section, 2003.

Sub-Region: San Luis Valley

Economic Profile

Located in the center of the region, the San Luis Valley is one of the largest valley basins in the U.S. and is heavily supported by agribusiness. Unemployment has been a problem in the valley, often running 10% or more; in 2002 the unemployment rate was 14.0%.

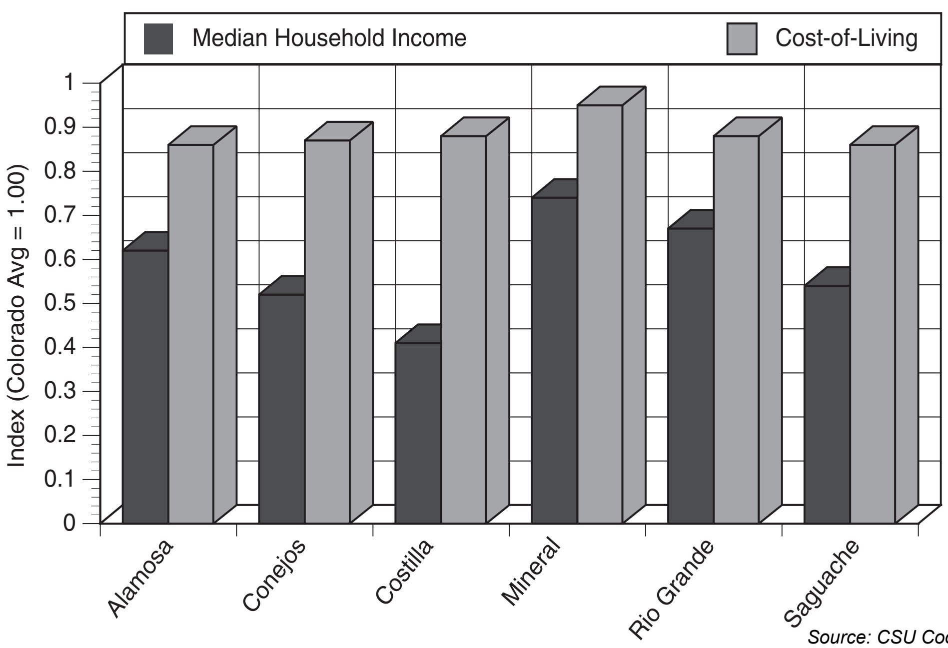
Hops are one of the main commodities that make agriculture the leading industry in the San Luis Valley. At least 15% of all jobs are generated by agribusiness, a greater percentage than all other industries combined, except household spending out-of-area income.

Tourism provides about 2,000 jobs in the valley, accounting for 6% of total employment. Much like the rest of Colorado, 56% of all employment is supported by local earnings and firms supporting multiple base industries.

Income generation in the valley is very similar to employment. While agribusiness employment accounts for at least 15% of all jobs, the industry accounts for 12% of all labor income. Tourism provides at least 5% of area income. Welfare and other transfer payments are relatively high in the valley, contributing to the income and employment that is credited to out-of-area income.

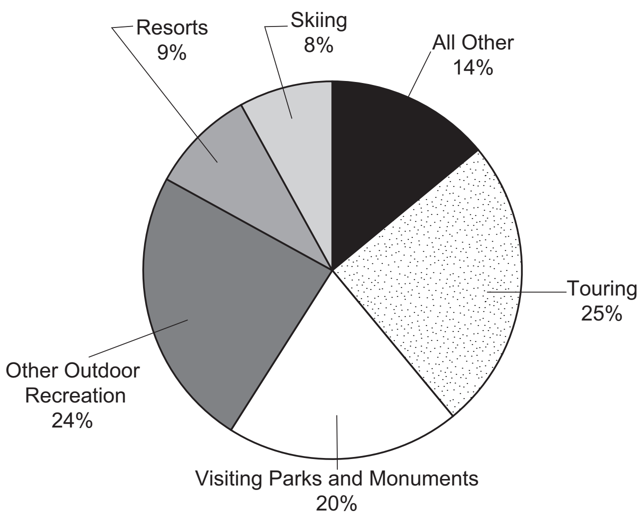
The San Luis Valley is a relatively inexpensive place to live, but it is also accompanied by low incomes. Median household incomes range from Costilla County at 41% of the state average to Mineral County at 74%.

Figure 63: San Luis Valley Median Household Income and Cost-of-Living Indices by County, 2001



Source: CSU Cooperative Extension, 2002.

Figure 64: San Luis Valley Employment Shares Generated by Tourism and Travel Categories,1999



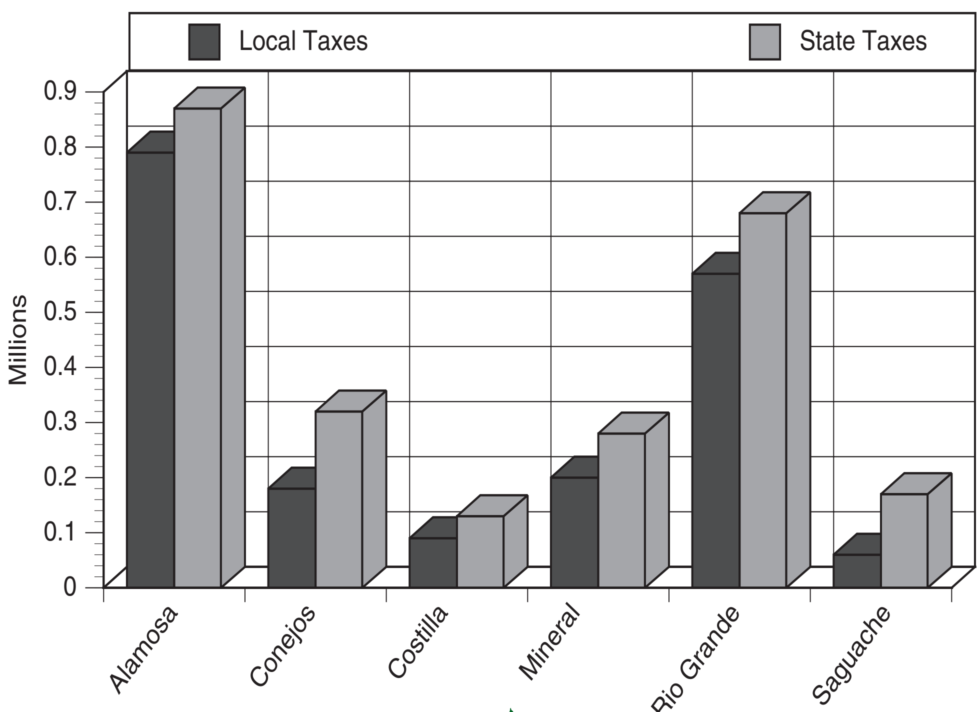
Source: DOLA Demography Section, 2003.

Economic Profile of Tourism

Tourism in the San Luis Valley is predominately outdoor-based and very balanced. A variety of attractions and activities, including the Wolf Creek Ski Area and Great Sand Dunes National Monument, provide for a stable tourism industry. Touring is particularly popular, generating a quarter of all tourism jobs in the valley.

Tax receipts associated with tourism varied by county from less than $100,000 to about $800,000 in 2001. Alamosa and Rio Grande Counties draw most of the tourist dollars, and consequently most of the tax receipts. While no county is solely dependent upon tourism-based tax revenues, these collections provided between 17% and 27% of total tax receipts in Conejos, Alamosa, Mineral, and Rio Grande Counties in 2001. Costilla and Saguache Counties relied upon tourism-based taxes for about 6% of total collections.

Figure 65: San Luis Valley State and Local Taxes Generated by Tourism and Travel, 2000



Source: Dean Runyan and Assoc., 2001.

Sub-Region: Arkansas River Valley

Economic Profile

The Arkansas River Valley sub-region includes the upper Arkansas Valley, along with Park and Teller counties. Households spending out-of-area income generate at least 22% of total employment. Retirees and "amenity migrants" make up most of this influential group.

Tourism, the second largest industry, provides at least 8,000, or 10% of all jobs.

The next largest industries are Government and Regional Center activities, generating only about half the employment provided by tourism.

In terms of income, Government rises to 9% and Tourism drops to 7% of labor income. Many state correctional facilities are located in this sub-region, and likely account for the higher ranking of Government.

Household spending of out-of-area income is the main provider of income in the sub-region.

Park and Teller Counties are more strongly influenced by the Front Range economy than other counties in this sub-region. These two counties have median household incomes and cost-of-living indexes that match or exceed the statewide average. Surrounding counties have cost-of-living indexes slightly below the Colorado average and median incomes that are about 75% of average.

Economic Profile of Tourism

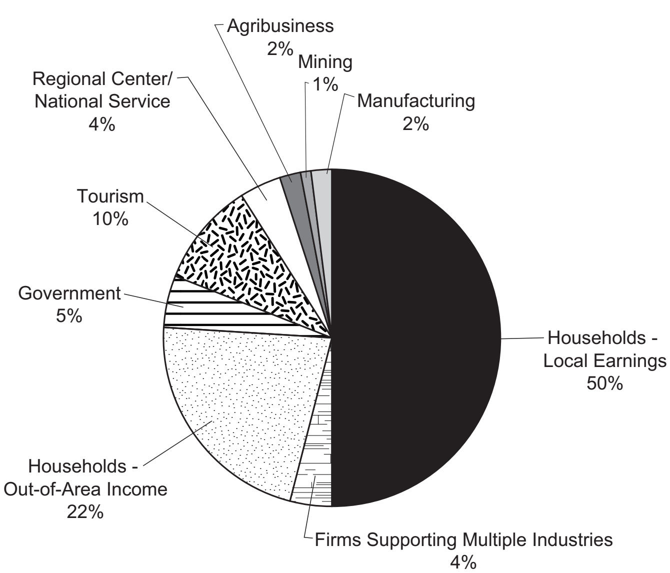
Although the Monarch Ski Area provides winter activities, the majority of tourism occurs in the summer. The Arkansas River is a significant contributor to the economy of the South Central region drawing rafters, kayakers, and anglers. Over $60 million revenue is generated annually from the Arkansas rafting industry.

Outdoor-based employment provides at least 45% of 8,500 tourism jobs in the sub-region.

The gaming industry in Cripple Creek provides nearly 2,000 jobs, contributing greatly to tourism and travel employment in the area.

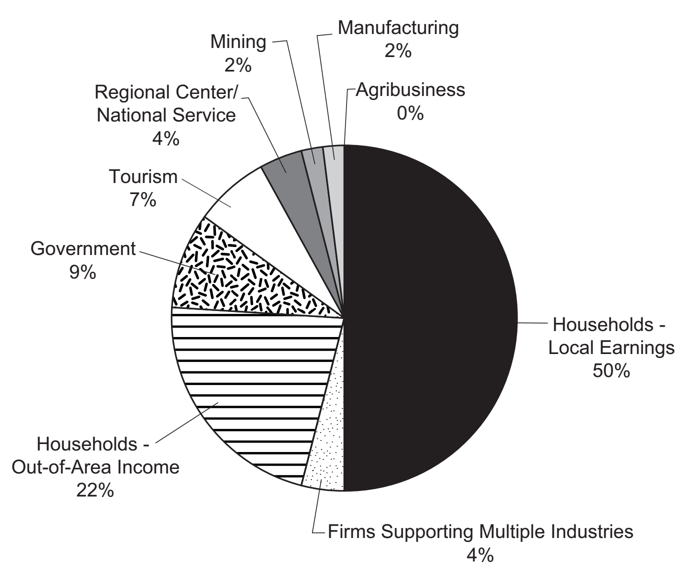
Chaffee and Fremont Counties collected over $1 million in local taxes generated by the tourism industry in 2001. Custer County received the least at just under $200,000. Chaffee County is by far the most dependent upon tourism-based tax receipts, as they amounted to over 35% of total tax collections. Park County was the least dependent in 2001 at only 7% of total tax revenues.

Figure 66: Arkansas River Valley Employment Shares by Major Industry & Household Groups, 2001



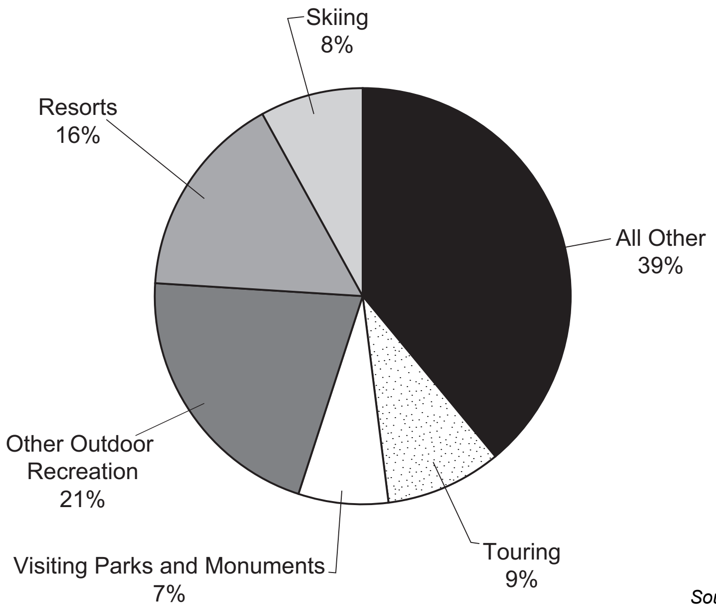
Source: DOLA Demography Section, 2003.

Figure 67: Arkansas River Valley Income Shares by Major Industry and Household Groups, 2001



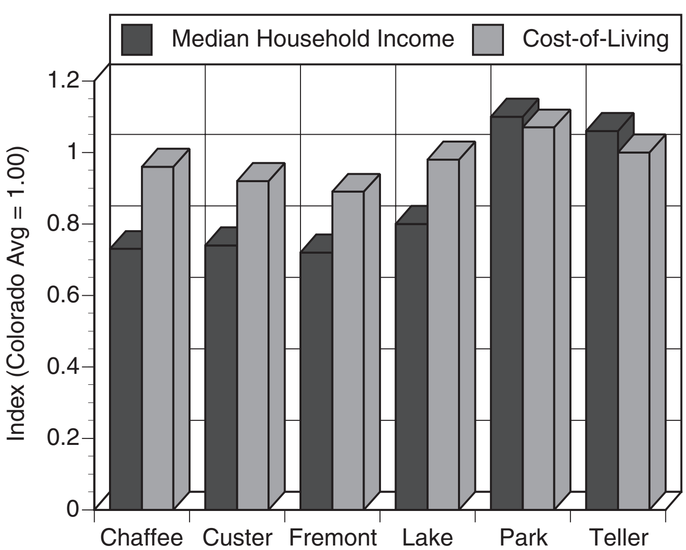
Source: DOLA Demography Section, 2003.

Figure 69: Arkansas River Valley Employment Shares Generated by Tourism and Travel Categories, 1999



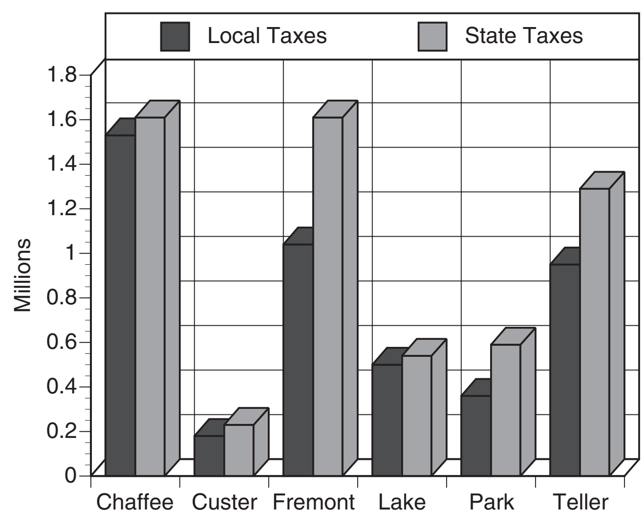
Source: DOLA Demography Section, 2003.

Figure 68: Arkansas River Valley Median Household Income and Cost-of-Living Indices by County, 2001



Source: CSU Cooperative Extension, 2002.

Figure 70: Arkansas River Valley State and Local Taxes Generated by Tourism and Travel, 2000



Source: Dean Runyan and Assoc., 2001.

Sub-Region: Colorado Springs/El Paso County

Economic Profile

The economy of El Paso County is characterized by its strong military presence and role as a sizable regional center.

Households spending out-of-area income generate 11% of all jobs, a proportion that is typical of urban areas in Colorado.

Although Colorado Springs is a well-visited tourist destination, tourism provides a relatively small percentage (3%) of total area employment in comparison to other industries. Nonetheless, this still translates to a significant 16,000 jobs in the sub-region.

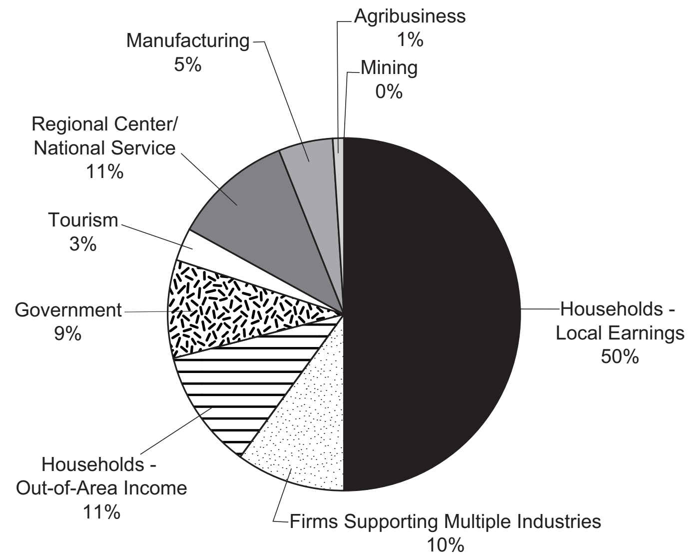
Sources of income in El Paso County closely mirror the major industries. Tourism accounts for about 2% of total area income. El Paso County is a very affordable place to live in Colorado. The cost-of-living index and median household income index nearly match.

Economic Profile of Tourism

Colorado Springs has been known as a popular tourist destination for over a century. Touring, resorts, and a variety of city-based business and leisure activities provide the biggest components of tourism and travel. About a quarter of all tourism employment is outdoor recreation-based, suggesting recreation is an important activity in the package of tourist attractions for visitors.

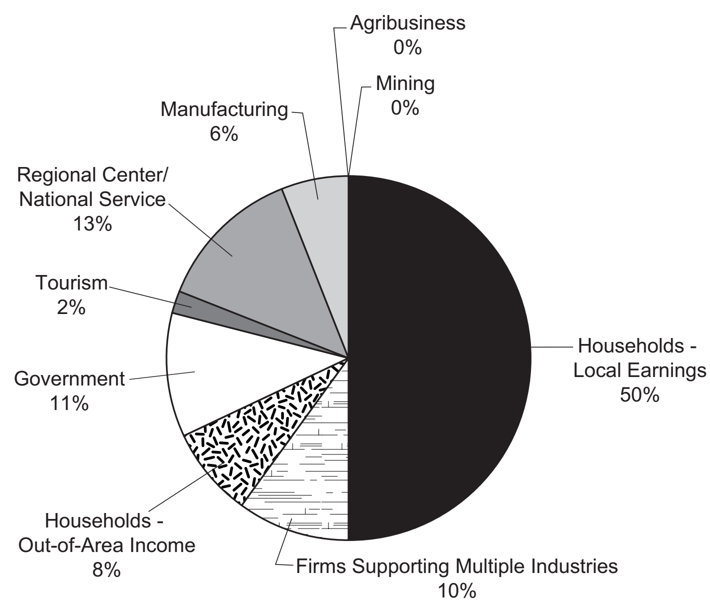
Local taxes of $18 million generated by travel and tourism expenditures account for about 19 percent of total El Paso County tax revenues. Tourism in this area provides an additional $26 million to state coffers.

Figure 71: Colorado Springs/El Paso County Employment Shares by Major Industry & Household Groups, 2001



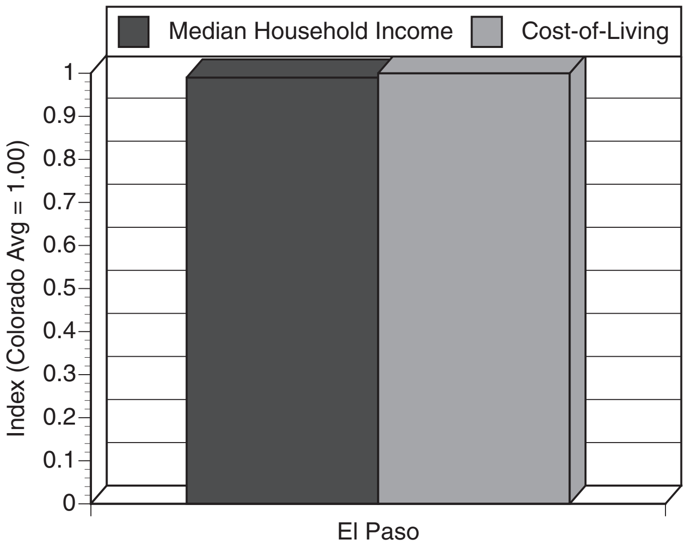
Source: DOLA Demography Section, 2003.

Figure 72: Colorado Springs/ El Paso County Income Shares by Major Industry & Household Groups, 2001



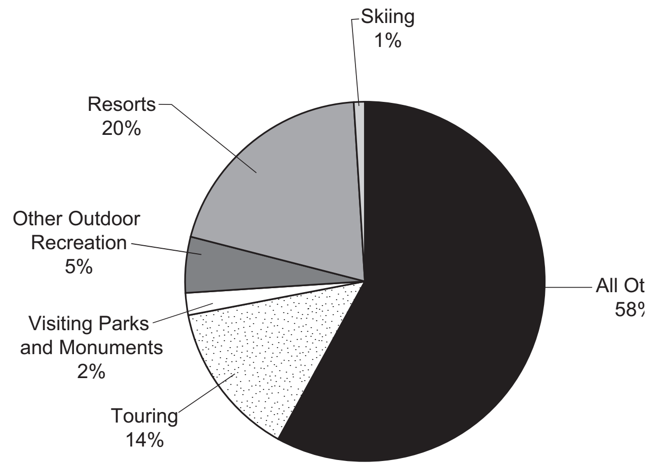
Source: DOLA Demography Section, 2003.

Figure 73: Colorado Springs/El Paso County Median Household Income and Cost-of-Living Indices by County, 2001



Source: CSU Cooperative Extension, 2002.

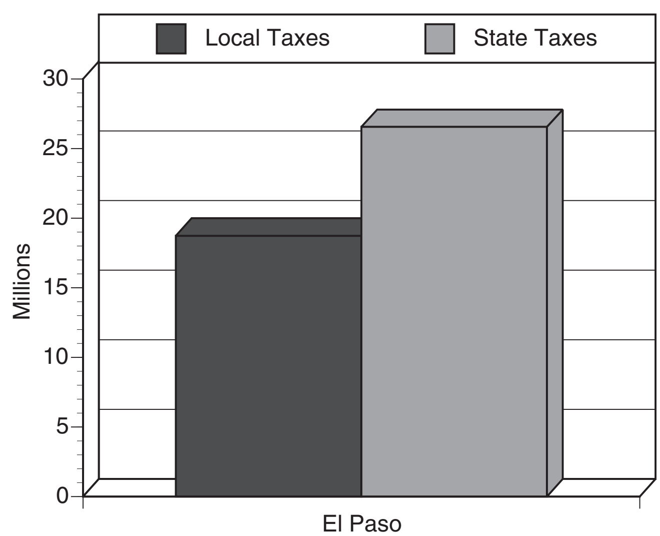
Figure 74: Colorado Springs/El Paso County Employment Shares Generated by Tourism & Travel Categories, 1999



Source: DOLA Demography Section, 2003.

Photo by Dr. Ron Rider

Figure 75: Colorado Springs/El Paso County State and Local Taxes Generated by Tourism & Travel, 2000



Source: Dean Runyan and Assoc., 2001.

Regional Tourism and Visitor Recreation

Visitor Profiles

Information provided in this section is gathered from the Colorado State Parks Market Assessment Study completed by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC). The following tables depict information on the demographics of survey respondents, preferred outdoor recreation destinations and activities, and increased visitation on the basis of proposed features. While this information was gathered specifically for State Parks, the answers demonstrate user preferences relevant for other recreation managers.

Distinguishing between visitors and local residents helps characterize the similarities and differences in activities, preferences, and needs. Visitors were defined as those that travel more than 50 miles to the area and locals are considered residents living in the region.

Table 79: Demographic Profile of State Parks Visitors

	South Central Region totals (%)	Local Residents (%)	Tourists (%)
Gender			
Male	53	52	54
Female	47	48	46
Age			
18 to 24	6	8	5
25 to 34	14	22	10
35 to 44	28	29	28
45 to 54	24	22	25
55 to 64	17	11	20
65 and older	10	9	11
Educations			
High school or less	17	14	19
Some college	36	40	34
College graduate	28	30	29
Post-graduate	18	17	19
Marital status			
Single, no children	14	16	13
Single, children	8	8	7
Married/living with partner, no children	19	18	19
Married/living with partner, children	60	58	61
Gross Annual Income			
Under $19,999 per year	7	10	6
$20,000 - $49,999 per year	35	37	35
Over $50,000 per year	58	53	60

Table 79: Demographic Profile of State Parks Visitors (Cont.)

Ethnicity			
White	94	93	94
Hispanic	4	5	3
Black	1	1	2
Asian	<1	<1	1
Other	<1	1	<1

Source: Colorado State Parks Market Assessment Study, 2003 *(N=458)* *(N=154)* *(N=304)*

Table 80: Why Locals and Tourists Visit State Parks

Reason for Visiting State Park	South Central Region totals (%)	Local Residents (%)	Tourists (%)
To unwind/relax	20	13	22
Spend time with family and friends	25	31	22
Spend time on my own/get away from crowds	3	4	2
To stay fit/exercise	1	2	<1
To blow off steam	<1	<1	<1
To be close to nature	5	7	4
View the scenery	6	7	6
To participate in a recreational activity that I love	31	25	34
To do something different	4	4	4
To get away form the usual demands of life	6	6	6

Source: Colorado State Parks Market Assessment Study, 2003 *(N=458)* *(N=154)* *(N=304)*

Table 81: What People Plan to do During State Park Visit(s)

Activity	South Central Region totals (%)	Local Residents (%)	Tourists (%)
Hiking/walking for pleasure	47	51	46
Fishing	46	27	56
Hunting	<1	<1	1
Picnicking	29	34	27
Photography	19	18	20
Dog walking	20	13	23
Looking at visitor center exhibits	12	7	15
Swimming	24	18	27
Motorized boating	27	20	31

Table 81: What People Plan to do During State Park Visit(s) (Cont.)

Bicycling	13	8	16
Horseback riding	<1	1	<1
Rock climbing	2	3	2
Non-motorized boating	5	3	6
Naturalist-led programs	5	7	4
Running	2	1	3
Rollerblading	<1	<1	1
Nature/wildlife observation	30	32	29
Camping	38	15	50
Dirt bike riding	3	4	3
Off-road vehicle activities	<1	<1	<1
Spending time with friends and family	<1	1	<1
Rest/relaxation	1	1	1
Work-related activity	<1	<1	<1
Attending special events/activities	<1	<1	<1
Other	1	1	1
Source: Colorado State Parks Market Assessment Study, 2003	*(N=458)*	*(N=154)*	*(N=304)*

Table 82: First Choice Outdoor Recreation Destinations

(State Parks users and non-users)

Preferred Destination	Statewide (%)	South Central (%)
Wilderness areas with little or no development	29	31
Large parks with a wide range of camping, trails, boating and fishing	27	25
Forests and lakes with limited trails, camping, boating and fishing	21	23
Rivers with boating and fishing	16	18
Community trails and community parks with ball fields and recreation centers	8	4
Source: Colorado State Parks Market Assessment Study, 2003	*(N=1613)*	*(N=286)*

Table 83: Information Sources Used When Planning Leisure Activities

(State Parks users and non-users)

Information Source	Statewide (%)	South Central (%)
Recommendation from family/friends	87	85
Newspapers	62	67
Television	43	48
Radio ads	37	42
Internet	40	33
Entertainment magazines	20	23
Billboards	18	29
Source: Colorado State Parks Market Assessment Study, 2003	*(N=1613)*	*(N=286)*

Table 84: Outdoor Recreation Activities Participated in During the Last 2 Years

(State Parks users and non-users)

Activity	% of Statewide Respondents	% of South Central Respondents
Picnicking	82	85
Trail recreation (hiking, biking, etc.)	74	76
Water recreation (swimming, sailing, etc.)	61	55
Tent camping	59	59
Fishing	53	62
Visiting historical sites	62	59
Motorized water recreation	29	28
RV/car camping	37	34
Bird/wildlife watching	52	56
Hunting	20	27
Winter sports (skiing, snowboarding, etc.)	36	32
Ball sports (golf, baseball, tennis)	44	39
Motorized trail recreation	31	45
Motorized winter sports	16	17
Source: Colorado State Parks Market Assessment Study, 2003	*(N=1613)*	*(N=286)*

Table 85: Participation in Leisure Activities

(average number of times per month)

(State Parks users and non-users)

Activity	Statewide Respondents	South Central Respondents
Surfing the internet	11.3	10.3
Participating in recreational activities for exercise	8.7	8.4
Working in the garden	8.7	9.2
Go to the gym/ indoor fitness activities	5.6	5.7
Outdoor leisure activities like camping, fishing, hunting	2.8	3.2
Go for dinner	5.3	4.9
Off-road driving	1.9	3.2
Go to shopping mall	2.6	2.1
Play team sports	1.5	1.7
Go to bar/night club	1.1	0.9
Go to movies	1.3	1.3
Casino, racetrack, or other gaming venture	0.4	0.4
Go to museum/art gallery	0.9	0.8
Go to concert or live theater	0.7	0.7
Source: Colorado State Parks Market Assessment Study, 2003	*(N=1613)*	*(N=286)*

Table 86: Motivations for Choosing Out-of-Home Leisure Activities

(State Parks users and non-users)

Motivation	Statewide (%)	South Central (%)
Unwind/Escape (average)	**82**	**83**
Give my mind a rest	82	83
Release tensions and anxieties	83	83
Get away from demands of life	86	85
To relax	92	92
Experience peace and calm	89	91
Get away from crowds	83	86
Be alone	54	58
To be close to nature	85	89
Self-fulfillment (average)	**70**	**73**
Learn about new things	74	77
Develop my skills and abilities	56	60
To exercise and keep fit	72	74
Experience new and different things	77	80
Thrill-seeking (average)	**51**	**58**
To take risks	32	38
To experience thrills and excitement	48	55
To experience new challenges	58	64
Be my own boss	64	73
Socialize (average)	**68**	**70**
To spend time with my family	88	89
Be with friends	79	76
To meet new people	38	45
Source: Colorado State Parks Market Assessment Study, 2003	*(N=1613)*	*(N=286)*

Table 87: Increased Visitation to State Parks on the Basis of Proposed Features

(State Parks users and non-users)

Feature	% of Statewide Respondents	% of South Central Respondents
Smaller crowds	83	87
More backcountry parks with minimal development	70	77
Better quality facilities	70	70
More trail opportunities	67	66
Greater range of recreational options	60	58
More education programs	57	60
More advertising	55	50
Theme parks	35	35
Lodges/conference centers	34	36
Golf courses	19	17
Source: Colorado State Parks Market Assessment Study, 2003	*(N=1613)*	*(N=286)*

Grant Allocations

The following table is a summary of total grant allocations since each grant program's inception. Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grants are awarded by Colorado State Parks with authority from the National Park Service. Both Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV) and Recreation Trails Grants (Trails) are administered by Colorado State Parks. Conservation Trust Fund (CTF) grants are a portion of lottery proceeds automatically distributed to local governments on the basis of population.

Table 88: Grant Information by County

County	GOCO grant total value	LWCF grants total value	OHV grants total value	Trails grants total value	CTF grants total value	County total
Alamosa	431,854	243,636	0	126,300	1,927,597	2,729,387
Chaffee	945,279	117,919	181,400	110,300	1,919,878	3,274,776
Conejos	142,816	32,090	0	4,100	1,058,888	1,237,894
Costilla	524,519	0	0	20,417	545,840	1,090,776
Custer	629,628	3,053	11,250	113,650	353,985	1,111,566
Fremont	660,895	330,964	95,200	160,000	5,009,572	6,256,631
Lake	837,440	80,690	25,000	201,350	969,851	2,114,331
Mineral	22,720	22,720	8,675	11,100	91,912	157,127
Park	4,309,360	220,523	119,610	36,250	1,316,798	6,002,541
Rio Grande	1,104,270	45,060	144,500	91,010	1,572,981	2,957,821
Saguache	2,081,694	52,489	73,036	90,990	688,736	2,986,945
Teller	1,699,841	4,746,608	23,200	118,000	2,104,483	8,692,132
Region Total	**$13,390,316**	**$5,895,752**	**$681,871**	**$1,083,467**	**$17,560,521**	**$38,611,927**

Source: Colorado State Parks, 2003.

Local Government Survey Results

The following tables are collective responses from all local governments in the region responding to the survey. There were 48 respondents in this region; the majority of which are jurisdictions with larger populations that provide substantial recreation services to the public.

Table 89: Land and Facilities by SCORP Region

Percentage of Colorado's population within region (2002) = 15.6%

Recreation Facility	South Central	Statewide	Percent of Colorado's Recreation Facilities within Region
Public parks	242	2,592	9.3%
Acreage public parks	14,141	99,299	14.2%
Open space areas	147	1,853	7.9%
Acreage open space (fee title)	15,008	183,272	8.2%
Acreage open space (easements)	2,080	92,789	2.2%
Golf courses managed by your agency	4	75	5.3%
Acreage golf courses	544	11,090	4.9%
Baseball/softball fields	166	1,467	11.3%
Basketball courts	115	656	17.5%
Multi-Use courts or gyms	7	193	3.6%
Picnic shelters	219	1,232	17.8%
Playgrounds	189	1,528	12.4%
Soccer fields	91	1,081	8.4%
Swimming pools	11	176	6.3%
Tennis courts	90	882	10.2%
Campsites	9	1,093	0.8%
Miles of multiple use paved trails	113	1,507	7.5%
Miles of multiple use of gravel or soft surface trails	204	1,231	16.6%
Miles of pedestrian only (hiking) trails	34	269	12.6%

Source: Colorado State Parks Local Government Survey, 2003.

Table 90: Agency Characteristics by SCORP Region

Characteristic	Summary of Responses	Percent of Respondents
Agencies with a plan for outdoor recreation sites, facilities and services	20	65%
Of the agencies with a plan, those recreation plans subject to public review and comment	20	65%
Of the agencies with a plan, those that have the outdoor recreation plan formally adopted by their overseeing government (e.g. city council, county commissioners, board of directors, etc.)	13	42%
Outdoor recreation plans that include a trails component	15	48%
Outdoor recreation plans that address natural resource management and protection (such as erosion control, noxious weed management, habitat protection, etc.)	9	29%
Agencies offering Interpretive or Outdoor Education programs	6	19%
Number of people attending Interpretive or Outdoor Education programs annually	413,060	NA
Agencies using volunteers to provide visitor services	3	10%
Agencies using volunteers for maintenance or construction work	16	52%
Estimated annual volunteer hours	138,850	NA
Agencies utilizing youth conservation corps crews for maintenance or construction work	1	3%
Estimated total number of annual crew weeks	1	NA
Agencies with dedicated funding sources (such as bonds or special purpose taxes) aside from lottery dollars, specifically for park, open space and trail investments	5	16%
Estimated total dollar value of capital improvements (such as land, facilities, trails) planned by agencies in the region for the five year period of 2003-08.	76,740,000	NA
Estimated dollar amount that can be funded by existing resources for proposed five year capital improvements	52,031,080	NA

Source: Colorado State Parks Local Government Survey, 2003.

Table 91: Ranked Priority Issues for Local Governments

Issue	South Central	State Rank
Liability protection for your agency	1	4
Insufficient resources to fund your agency's budget	2	1
Year to year stability of your agency's budget	3	2
Offer recreation programs for youth	4	7
Access for people with disabilities	5	5
Provide public information about facilities and programs	6	10
Vandalism	7	9
Capacity to serve growing population	8	8
Need for visitor safety and protection	9	3
Monitor natural resource conditions (e.g., vegetation, weeds, water quality	10	6
Completing community trail systems	11	11
Creating or updating your agency's parks and recreation plan	12	14
Need to create a dedicated funding source for acquisitions and facilities	13	12
Recreation programs and opportunities for seniors	14	15
Coordination/cooperation with other outdoor recreation agencies	15	13

Source: Colorado State Parks Local Government Survey, 2003.

Table 92: Ranked Priority Needs for Local Governments

Need	South Central	Statewide
Acquisition of trail corridors and rights of way	1	4
Picnicking	2	2
Playgrounds	3	3
Acquisition of parklands	4	9
Acquire water for recreation	5	11
Toilets and showers	6	17
Acquisition of natural open space	7	7
Baseball and football fields	8	8
Skateboard parks	9	12
Soccer fields	10	10
Nature study/wildlife sites	11	14
Community trail system	12	1
Trails connecting to public lands	13	5
Visitor center and program facilities	14	19
Trails connecting to adjacent communities	15	6

Source: Colorado State Parks Local Government Survey, 2003.