

Annual Report

Conservation Education Program



FY 2007

San Juan Public Lands

San Juan Mountains Association

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Am I really supposed to take care of this land? Well, I'm going to pick up that trash!

Saide H, first grader

Visitors were thrilled with the programs we offered.

Erin Gray, coordinator

The customers love the placemats—they're always asking if they can take them with them. The placemats have a lot of information about the area and kids love them!

Dolores, Colorado, restaurant owner

Thank you so much for setting up the field trip. We had a wonderful time and it was a great start to our science curriculum. We look forward to working with you again.

Dolores, Colorado, third grade teacher

The neighbor-to-neighbor approach is working to spread information about proactively reducing wildfire hazards.

Marsha Porter-Norton, coordinator

Direct Connections with the Land

Last year, we embarked on a revitalization effort of all Conservation Education programs—with a renewed focus on creating direct experiences on public lands. In FY2007, we evaluated each project and program for its experiential nature and time spent on public lands. Unstructured time out in nature is as important as the resource messages, as we provide visitors, residents, and students with the opportunity to develop their own stewardship values. For programs such as classroom visits, we incorporated pre- and post-activities, and encouraged teachers to send information home to parents in hopes that more family experiences will occur on public lands . . . the monthly e-newsletter for educators includes information on where to go . . . we are constantly looking for ways to encourage outdoor exploration.

The renewed focus has been two-fold, for the participants and the facilitators. As we spend more time outdoors, under golden leaves or crunching through the snow, we also remember our own connections to this public land, to the natural and cultural resources that we seek to conserve and manage.

We strive to streamline the administrative part of Conservation Education (the bean-counting, the correlating to State Standards, developing new program outlines, or identifying where a particular program fits into the overall direction) so that more resource professionals are able to come and participate in the authentic learning experience, to share in the excitement of being outdoors with six year olds. What a positive program!

Program Highlights

- The Ambassador program of the FireWise Council of Southwest Colorado was nominated for a Colorado Alliance of Environmental Education "Award of Excellence."
- A unique teaching method—the San Juan String Band—was formed and performed in several venues.
- The Learning on the Land e-Newsletter offers teachers and non-formal educators monthly information on specific natural and cultural resources and suggestions for connecting classrooms with direct public land experiences.
- In FY2007, the CE program pared down on programs designed to reach large numbers of people at one time, and instead focused on high-quality, life-changing experiences for smaller audience numbers.
- Visit with Respect—an 8-minute film—was produced by the Anasazi Heritage Center and the San Juan Mountains Association with a grant from the Colorado Historical Society.
- The Pagosa Springs District began a xeriscaping educational/modelling project outside their office.

Audience Count by Target Audience		
Program	Students and Teachers	General Public
Classroom Visits	1,951	
Field Trips & Service-Learning	4,448	405
Special Events	6,215	7,729
Interpretive Programs		1,996
Info-Programs		18,221
Written Media	3,414	59,675
Museum Experience		22,648
Visitor Information		142,815
Overall Coordination		6,495
Total	16,028	259,984

Audience Count by Age	
Preschool to fifth grade	12,312
Sixth grade to college	3,716
Adult and general public*	259,984
Total	276,012

*General public includes families and all ages, programs are not associated with formal school institution.

Programs for Schools and Teachers

Classroom Visits

The CE program revamped all classroom presentations in FY2007.

- 37 classroom presentations reached 862 participants
- 11 in-school presentations by Anasazi Heritage Center staff reached 307 participants
- 5 library programs reached 95 participants
- 7 after-school programs reached 186 participants
- 6 projects—including the Bayfield Elementary Science Club, Jungle Mobile, Arbor Day, Bayfield Beeps, a project at Park Elementary, and the mentoring of a Pagosa Springs wildlife habitat 4-H project—reached 501 participants

Field Trips and Service-Learning Opportunities

Learning while outside is the focus of all programs, all projects.

- 10 Winter Discovery Walks encouraged exploration of public lands—on snowshoes—and reached 150 participants.
- 6 Dolores River Explorations got kids outside and exploring aquatic habitats with 60 participants.
- 20 Spring and Fall Field Trips to various public land sites reached 1,062 participants.
- 5 walk-from-school field trips reached 97 participants
- 276 programs went through the on-site program at the Anasazi Heritage Center and reached 2,877 participants.
- 5 field explorations were offered for various Boy Scout groups and reached 182 participants.
- 2 service-projects accomplished meaningful work in the Canyons of the Ancients Monument (CANM) and the Alternative Spring Break program and reached 20 participants.

Special Events for Schools and Teachers

- Area water festivals reached 500 participants.
- The Maasai visit—which included information on the use of natural resources in a nomadic culture and a spectacular opportunity to learn about social and cultural differences—was co-sponsored by the Durango Public School District and many other partners, and reached 5,650 participants.
- 2 teacher workshops (Project Learning Tree and Project WILD) reached 65 teachers.

Written Media for Schools and Teachers

- The Learning on the Land e-Newsletter is focused for educators and non-formal educators, intended to provide information on a variety of natural and cultural resources, and further encourage direct learning out on San Juan Public Lands. This monthly electronic newsletter reaches 140 teachers every month, for a direct outreach of 1,680 recipients in FY2007.
- The Anasazi Heritage Center has a well-developed loan program that provides unique teaching kits, with artifact replicas and curricula. These popular kits were utilized by 1,734 teachers.

Classroom Visits—1,915 direct contacts

Field Trips and Service-Learning—4,448 direct contacts

Special Events for Schools and Teachers—6,215 direct contacts

Written Media for Schools and Teachers—3,414 direct contacts

16,028 teachers and students participated in conservation education activities in FY2007.

Programs for the General Public

Field Trips and Service-Learning

These are outdoor learning opportunities and service-work projects for the public to be involved in management activities on public lands. One goal of the CE program is to increase the number of people who want to participate in active-stewardship.

- 7 Field Seminars reached 91 participants. Topics included geology, medicinal/edible plants, noxious weeds, map and compass classes, and wildflower studies.
- 4 work projects (including Dunton Cemetery, Redvale, Cripple Creek, and the Family Stewardship Project) reached 215 participants.
- 5 work projects (including National Public Lands Day, Elk Park, Emerald Lake, National Trails Day, and Wilderness Monitoring Training) reached 99 participants.

Special Events for the General Public

- 3 events reached 1,860 participants (The Ute Mountain Mesa Verde Birding Festival, Sounds Fishy Family Event at Mancos State Park, and the Tour de Fat)
- 3 Wonders of Nature story hours (in partnership with the Mancos Public Library and Valley Inn Nursing Home) reached 60 participants in early FY2007 (September 2006).
- 2 Durango Farmer's Markets and 10 Third Street Markets reached 220 participants.
- The Bear Walk and Art Auction distributed bear-safety information to 150 participants.
- 12 special events, including Fourth of July parades, County Fairs, and Home and Garden shows throughout the area, reached 4,700 participants.
- 13 additional special events reached 739 participants. Events included the San Juan Natural and Cultural Institute at Fort Lewis College; Silverton Plate and Palette; Heritage Celebration Project; Volunteer Coordinator training; Wilderness Workshop presentation in Evergreen, Colorado; Ute-Hopi Speaker Panel; Growing Voice literary festival; a wildflower program; Lyon's Club presentation; and VIS and Ambassador trainings.

Interpretive Programs

These are walks and talks, offered on a variety of natural and cultural resource topics, that typically take place in an outdoor setting.

- 22 interpretive programs were offered at Mancos State Park, in partnership with SJMA, and reached 316 participants.
 - 6 Full Moon Walks reached 69 participants and were offered in partnership with Durango Nature Studies.
 - 13 programs were offered at Durango Mountain Resort, including llama hikes, nature walks, and Ski Naturalist programs and reached 142 participants.
 - The Pagosa Springs district presented 13 formal programs, reaching 360 participants.
 - 6 additional interpretive programs (Victoria Melodrama, Dykeman presentation, trail roundtable presentations, program on Wild Horses, orientation trainings, and a Lizards program) reached 285 participants.
 - 12 guided hikes and 19 children's interpretive programs at Mancos State Park reached 112 participants.
 - 13 off-site programs were presented by Anasazi Heritage Center and reached 276 participants.
 - 6 additional programs (Anasazi Heritage Center) included lectures from John Fielder, Craig Childs, Paul Reed, Jim Potter, Steven Nash, and Rich Wilshusen reached 436 participants.
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Info-Programs

Info-programs use staff and trained volunteers to provide educational and interpretive information to the public. This information is typically distributed in a one-on-one manner.

- Mountain Express programs reached 450 participants in early FY2007 (Sept 2006).
- The FireWise Council of Southwest Colorado has implemented an ambassador program, which trains volunteers to provide wildfire mitigation and wildfire risk reduction information at the homeowner association and neighbor level. These volunteers also set up speaking engagements, bringing professional foresters and fire specialists in to do programs, set up community-wide chipping and mitigation projects, and serve as a contact during a wildfire event. Currently, 54 ambassadors are active in Archuleta, La Plata, and Montezuma counties. They have contributed 2,592 volunteer hours, have reached 1,830 households and 150 HOAs (direct 5,894 participants).
- Hunter patrol, hunter information booths (in partnership with the Colorado Division of Wildlife), and road patrol reached 1459 participants.
- 37 trained Wilderness Information Specialists (WIS) reached 3,040 visitors in-the-field.
- 17 trained Trail Information Specialists reached 517 visitors out on public lands.
- Roving interpretation efforts at Mancos State Park reached 300 participants.
- Info-programs at Chimney Rock reached approximately 6,000 participants.
- Additional outreach through info-programs and the Anasazi Heritage Center reached an additional 271 participants.
- The Ski Partnership at Wolf Creek Pass Ski Resort (and the Pagosa Springs Ranger District) reached 130 participants.
- 4 additional meetings provided information to the public and reached 160 participants.

Written Media for the General Public

Direct contacts for written media is more difficult to ascertain. Distribution assumes direct participation. Additional contacts are made through indirect participation.

- A Public Lands Menu—3,250 distributed
 - Junior Forest Ranger (national program) - 1,320 distributed
 - Forest Keepers (San Juan/Rio Grande program) - 350 distributed
 - Interpretive calendars—100 distributed
 - "Teaser" of Forest Keepers online—50 direct hits
 - Puma coloring sheet, as part of Pumas on Parade program—300 distributed
 - 5-part Living with Wildfire series—250 sets distributed
 - Distribution of Fire Information to architects, defensible space packets distributed to households—8,930 distributed
 - Durango Herald monthly column, low estimate of 15,000 reached per year
 - Durango Herald, Mancos Times, Pagosa Sun, Cortez Journal, Dolores Star articles—including Ambassador feature (December), July and September articles, feature on Dolores River Explorations—low estimate of 15,000 reached per year
 - Additional efforts including DCAT video, Leave No Trace cards and bandanas reached 1,050
 - Junior Explorer—a junior archaeology program—500 distributed
 - Visit with Respect, attendance at film premiere—75 participants
 - Visiting Cultural Sites on Public Lands, 2 1/2 minute video clip developed
 - SJMA outreach, including weekly e-news reached 12,000 participants in FY2007; spring newsletter—1,500 distribution
 - Anasazi Heritage Center released an additional 14 media releases; SJMA released an additional 12 media releases.
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Additional written media developed this year includes new VIS handouts in Pagosa Springs—*Things to do along Williams Creek Road* and *Dispersed Camping*. Revised handouts include the ATV Use sheet used by the Pagosa Springs Ranger District. Additional outreach occurs through Law Enforcement contacts; the Public Affairs Office (press releases, additional articles, public meetings); and non-personal interpretation.

Museum Experience

The award-winning Anasazi Heritage Center offers a high-quality experience for all people. Visitation for FY2007 (school programs are included in the Programs for Schools and Teachers section) was 22,648 participants.

- 2,631 visitors viewed the Historic Photos of Mesa Verde exhibit
- 4,260 visitors viewed the Archaeology Grows Up exhibit
- 1,962 visitors viewed the Grand Gulch Rock Art photography exhibit
- 13,795 visitors viewed the America’s Priceless Heritage exhibit

Field Trips and Service-Learning for General Public—405 direct contacts

Special Events for the General Public—7,729 direct contacts

Interpretive Programs—1,996 direct contacts

Info-Programs—18,221 direct contacts

Written Media for the General Public—59,675 direct contacts

Museum Experience—22,648 direct contacts

110,674 participants were involved in Conservation Education activities in FY 2007.

Visitor Information Services

The CE program has worked closely with visitor services, to find ways to make visitor contacts more educational and interpretive in nature, and creating closer connections for our visitors to their public lands. Total Visitor Information Services requests reached 142,815 visitors.

Visitor Services				
Office	Phone Calls and Fax	Visits	Hard-Copy Mail	E-mail
Durango	44,830	40,895	1,233	977
Bayfield	6,743	3,317	26	151
Dolores	4,132	4,587	24	22
Pagosa	6,130	10,437	92	65
Mancos	849	2,850	N/A	N/A
Silverton	1,655	11,970	N/A	N/A
Anasazi Heritage	44	1,712	50	24
Total	64,383	75,768	1,425	1,239

Forest-wide CE Coordination

- Participation is Success: Growing Education Program Audiences, a marketing workshop for resources professionals, facilitated by consultant Dave Welz; 45 participants from nearly 20 organizations
- Professional Conferences—ANROSP; Project Facilitator's Conference (120 participants)
- Rio Oso Advisors Board and visioning discussions, research, and grant-seeking
- Proposed Resolution rewrite for the Colorado State Board of Education (Sept 2006)
- Tours of High Desert Interpretive Museum and Sonoran Desert Interpretive Museum
- Planning for Collaboration 101 workshop (originally scheduled for Spring 2007; identified as a need at the Marketing workshop; postponed to fall/winter)
- Kids in the Woods proposal
- Virtual Work
 - Revamp of SJMA's website
 - Direct hits to SJMA's website
 - Direct hits to Voutdoors website
 - Direct hits to ANCRE searchable database
- Secured \$20,000 grant from La Plata County to enhance and build the Ambassador program (Marsha Porter-Norton, contractor—in conjunction with SJMA)
- Program coordination for each program includes work plans, goal-setting, grant-writing, and fund-seeking, evaluation and improvement, growth of program, and reporting.

6,495 direct contacts were made through Forest-wide CE Coordination activities.

Partnerships and Leverage

Conservation Education partnerships leverage money, time, and effort, and provide improved services and products to the public. We work collaboratively with many networks, including the Interpretive Alliance of Pagosa Springs, the Alliance for Natural and Cultural Resource Education, the FireWise Council of Southwest Colorado, and Mesa Verde Home Educators. Partners include the San Juan Public Lands (Forest Service and BLM), San Juan Mountains Association, the Anasazi Heritage Center, Canyons of the Ancients National Monument, Service-Learning, Durango Nature Studies, Mesa Verde National Park, Hovenweep National Park, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Durango Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, Durango Mountain Resort, the Colorado Division of Wildlife, the Colorado State Forest Service, Colorado State Parks (Mancos, Lone Mesa, Navajo), Rio Oso, Valley Inn Nursing Center, P&D Grocery, BearSmart of Durango, Home Depot of Durango, Fort Lewis College, Deer Hill Expeditions, the Southwest Conservation Corps, Colorado State Historical Society, Southern Ute Tribe, Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education, Whole New Concepts, Chimney Rock Interpretive Alliance, Aspen Gold Enterprise, Friends of Native Cultures, New Belgium Brewing Company, TARA, La Plata Electric Association, Mancos Public Library, Pagosa Springs Arts Council, Boy and Girl Scouts, PTA's, GOCO, Lake City DIRT, Water Information Program, Backcountry Horsemen, Cortez Cultural Center, Wolf Creek Ski Area, Welz Consulting, Children's Museum of Durango, Crow Canyon, local media outlets, local Chambers of Commerce, local municipalities and county governments, additional local public libraries, public and private school teachers and administrations, private businesses, additional parent-involved organizations, and individual volunteers including local farmers and ranchers.

Thank you for your work in creating direct experiences on public land.

The Plan for FY 2008

This renewed focus of offering direct experiences to build a sense of place with our youth and our residents is working! We will continue to improve our standard programming, and focus on high-quality experiences. Based on evaluations of our audiences and feedback through the year from participants and partners, we will implement a few new projects and programs, such as:

- A Five-Year Strategic Vision and Plan for the CE program;
- NightSky Interpretive Programs in place of Full Moon Walks;
- Keepin' Up—a passport program designed to get kids moving, win a prize for hiking several trails, this is a companion piece to Forest Keepers;
- An increased focus on visiting public lands all year round through more Explorers Programs;
- Research new avenues of information-distribution, intended to get families out and into the woods;
- Virtual Fact Sheets online, in partnership with Fort Lewis College;
- Continue to leverage time and funding, through unique partnerships.

For financial information specific to the CE budget, or with questions on this report, please email education@sjma.org or call 970-944-1160.

We welcome your thoughts, ideas, and energy! Let us know how we can help you meet your educational and interpretive needs. Please help improve the program by providing us with valuable feedback.

Is your program (or are you) currently using the CE program? If so, what programs and do you have suggestions for improvement?

What challenges make it difficult for you or your program to utilize the CE program?

Can we help mitigate those challenges?

Do you see any audiences that our programs should be reaching and are not? What ideas do you have for reaching this audience?

Do you have additional programming ideas or suggestions for existing or new efforts?

What are the educational and interpretive needs of our natural and cultural resource professionals?

*Please return to the San Juan Mountains Association, Education Program, PO Box 2261, Durango, CO 81302
or email feedback to education@sjma.org*
