

TOWN OF GRAND LAKE
PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting 7:30 P.M.
February 1, 2012

AGENDA

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. ROLL CALL
- III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - None
- IV. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST
- V. ITEMS OF BUSINESS
 - A. QUASI-JUDICIAL Public Hearing: Consideration of a Planning Commission recommendation regarding the Spruce Drive Minor Subdivision Final Plat (*page 2*)
 - B. Consideration of an extension Planning Commission recommendation regarding the Grand Lake Lodge Employee Housing/ Laundry Facility Site Plan (*page 5*)
 - C. Consideration of a Planning Commission recommendation regarding a request for a One-Year Extension on the Rapids Planned Development (*page 7*)
- VI. OTHER ITEMS OF DISCUSSION
 - A. Commission Comments, Concerns or Inquiries
- VII. FOR YOUR INFORMATION
 - A. Mountain Town News, January 20, 2012 (*page 10*)
 - B. 'Summary of Results from a Study of Grand County Residents' Attitudes regarding Forest Management and Related Economic Development Options' by Chad Kooistra and Dr. Troy E. Hall, University of Idaho (*page 25*)
- VIII. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION
- IX. ADJOURNMENT

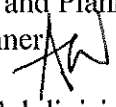
**To insure that the Planning Commission will have a quorum please contact
Chairman Southway if you will not be able to attend.**



TOWN OF
GRAND LAKE

QUASI-JUDICIAL

Date: January 26, 2012

To: Chairman Hayden Southway and Planning Commissioners
From: Abbi Jo Wittman, Town Planner 

RE: Spruce Drive Minor Subdivision Final Plat Public Hearing
Attached: Spruce Drive Minor Subdivision Final Plat (24"X36" Plat)
Comments from Jason Allen, GLFPD Lieutenant

On December 7, 2011 the Planning Commission reviewed the Spruce Drive Minor Subdivision Preliminary Plat. At that time the Commission had discussed the comments of the Town Water Department, Three Lakes, as well as comments from Public Works Director McGinn regarding plat notes for utilities and access to the property. At that time the Commission moved to set a Public Hearing for the Spruce Street Minor Subdivision with the following conditions: plat notes would be created for the utilities and access to be permitted down the public right-of-way (ROW) of Aspen Place and for fire department review of the access to the property.

Legal Notice # 7428627 was published in the Middle Park Times on December 12, 2011. Additionally twelve certified mailings, return receipt requested, were sent on January 1, 2012 notifying property owners, located within 200' of the subject parcel, of the date and time of the Planning Commission's Final Plat Public Hearing. To the date of memo development, the Town has not received comments from members of the general public. The Town has received comment from the Grand Lake Fire Protection District (attached) indicating they see no issues with the proposed access and recommend the drive have a grade no greater than 7%.

The Final Plat differs from the Preliminary Plat in that numerous plat notes now exist:

1. "A driveway easement is dedicated to the owner of Lot B through Aspen Place. This easement is to accommodate a 14' wide residential driveway, and may be adjusted slightly with the approval of town owner of Lot A and the local Fire District if the topography warrants such an adjustment." Staff additionally noted the driveway is depicted, as well as the snow storage for the entire drive. Another plat note indicates: "The driveway easement lying within the Aspen Drive right of way is authorized and conveyed by the Town of Grand Lake." Staff would strongly encourage the Commission to discuss this plat note. Currently the Town allows for driveways to be considered permitted through encroachment licenses and agreements; the Town often does not convey easements for these types of improvements; and
2. "The construction of, maintenance of, and disturbance reclamation for utility service lines within the Aspen Place right of way are the responsibility of the owner of Lot B"; and
3. "Any driveway built within the Aspen Place right of way shall only service Lot B. Maintenance, construction and snow removal of a driveway shall be the responsibility of the owner of Lot B. All snow storage shall lie within Lot B"; and

4. "The setback lines shown for Lot B define the Building Envelope for all structures built upon Lot B." The next plat note indicates the most restrictive setbacks between the plat and the Town shall be effective, if applicable.

The Commission should open the Public Hearing and take public comments, including from the developer or the developer's representative, if desired. Once all comments have been received, the Hearing should be closed and the matter should be turned over to the Commission for Commission discussion and action. Once all discussion has taken place, the Commission should make a recommendation to the Town Board of Trustees. The Commission may move to forward a favorable recommendation of approval, approval with conditions, or a denial of the Spruce Street Minor Subdivision Final Plat. The motion should also include directing staff to draft a Planning Commission Resolution and authorizing Chairman Southway to sign the Resolution.

Abbi Jo Wittman

From: Jason Allen [jallen@grandlakefire.org]
Sent: Thursday, December 29, 2011 4:17 PM
To: 'Abbi Jo Wittman'
Cc: mlong@grandlakefire.org
Subject: Spruce drive minor subdivision

Good afternoon Abbi,

We reviewed the plat you sent us and we do not see any issues with it. We understand the width to be 14' and the overall length to be approximately 118'. As there is no grade listed we recommend keeping the grade under 7%, anything steeper than this can result in a significant delay to any fire/rescue or EMS response. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,

Jason Allen
Lieutenant

Grand Lake Fire Protection District
PO Box 1408
Grand Lake, CO 80447
970-627-8428
970-627-9323 (fax)



TOWN OF
GRAND LAKE

Date: January 26, 2012

To: Chairman Hayden Southway and Planning Commissioners
From: Abbi Jo Wittman Town Planner

RE: Grand Lake Lodge Employee Housing/Laundry Facility Site Plan
Attached: Site Plan (also electronically attached)

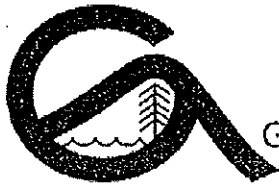
At the Commission's regularly-scheduled meeting in January, the Commission discussed with representatives of Grand Lake Lodge the site plan for the new employee housing and laundry area. At that time, the Commission determined that until a final site plan had been determined, the Commission would like to wait on the approval of the site plan and drive and parking area surfacing material.

Earlier this year the Planning Commission discussed access from Old Tonahutu Ridge Road to the Grand Lake Lodge property for an employee housing area. As discussed, Grand Lake Ventures (owners of Grand Lake Lodge) proposed a gravel cul-de-sac, off of Old Tonahutu Ridge Road, to access four (4) employee housing units as well as a centralized laundry facility. Staff informed the Commission of the Town's current regulations for drive and parking areas, citing those areas in the Commercial Transitional (CT) District are required to have paved (with asphalt or concrete) parking and drive areas. At the time, the Commission seemed favorable to the concept of gravel parking to this area.

Since the meeting the parking and drive areas for the employee housing and laundry areas has been proposed to be modified numerous times. As opposed to the originally-proposed cul-de-sac, the drive area was proposed to connect existing asphalt drive areas having a continuous driving surface from the rental cabins, through the employee lodging area, and accessing onto Old Tonahutu Ridge Road. The site plan has been modified to the final site plan design (as the attached depicts). The newly revised design includes the four (4) employee housing units and laundry facility only being accessed from Old Tonahutu Ridge Road. With this, twelve parking spaces are proposed to be located in this area whereas six additional spaces are proposed to be located to the south of the employee housing, connecting to the drive areas accessing the rental cabins.

The Commission must discuss: the overall site design; and the drive and parking surfacing material for the site design. As a reminder, though the Municipal Code indicates those properties located in the Commercial Transitional District (which is the *underlying* Zoning District) must have asphalt or concrete surfacing material, gravel may be permitted by the Commission for residential units in this district. If the Commission is not favorable to allowing gravel surfacing, the Commission should discuss the owner's previous request to allow for a conditional Certificate of Occupancy until after the 2013 summer season when asphaltting can occur when there will not be any employee or guest traffic.

Once all discussion has taken place the Commission should make a motion regarding the site plan and specifically addressing the drive and parking area surfacing requirements, conditions, etc. The Commission's motion should include directing staff to draft a Planning Commission Resolution outlining the Commission's consensus and to authorize Chairman Southway to sign the Resolution.



TOWN OF
GRAND LAKE

Date: January 25, 2012

To: Chairman Hoppe Southway and Planning Commissioners

From: Abbi Jo Wittman, Town Planner *AW*

RE: The Rapids Planned Development

Attached: Request from Tom Ludwig
Planning Commission Resolution 1-2011

On November 5, 2008, the Planning Commission approved Resolution No. 2-2008, forwarding a favorable recommendation to the Board of Trustees for the approval of The Rapids Planned Development. Since that time, the Planning Commission has since granted two (2) one-year extensions to the recommendation to the Town Board. The most recent extension expires on February 1, 2012. Tom Ludwig, owner and developer is requesting another one-year extension citing numerous reasons; please read the applicant's request.

The Commission should discuss this matter and make a motion regarding the extension. The Commission's motion should include directing staff to draft a Planning Commission Resolution and authorizing Chairman Southway to sign the Resolution.

Abbi Jo Wittman

From: Rapids Lodge [rapids@rapidslodge.com]
Sent: Thursday, January 05, 2012 10:06 AM
To: Abbi Jo Wittman
Subject: RE: Planning Commission Resolution

Hi Abbi Jo...Would you please pass this on to the Planning Commission for me. I am seeking an extension on the Rapids PUD for three reasons. A) even if we wanted to start today there is no loan money available for new construction. B) If there was money available for construction, once the construction is completed, the current economy would not support the endeavor, and c) The Town and The Rapids has a lot of time and capitol already invested in this project. It would be counter productive on both parties' behalf to have to start the whole process over again. Tom and Lynne Ludwig

-----Original Message-----

From: Abbi Jo Wittman [mailto:glplanning@townofgrandlake.com]
Sent: Wednesday, January 04, 2012 2:44 PM
To: rapids@rapidslodge.com
Subject: RE: Planning Commission Resolution

Tom

I have you scheduled for the January 18th Planning Commission meeting. Curious, are you seeking an extension? If so, can you get me a request (email is sufficient), addressed to the Commission, asking for an extension and stating why they should grant it.

Thanks.

Abbi

P: 970.627.3435
F: 970.627.9290

www.townofgrandlake.com

-----Original Message-----

From: Rapids Lodge [mailto:rapids@rapidslodge.com]
Sent: Thursday, December 22, 2011 11:07 AM
To: abbi jo whittman
Subject: Planning Commission Resolution

Abbi Jo---Would you please try and get me (The Rapids) on the agenda for the Planning Commission so I can ask for a one year extension regarding the Rapids Planned Development.. Thank You Thomas Ludwig

The Historic Rapids Lodge and Restaurant P.O. Box 1400/209 Rapids Lane Grand Lake CO, 80447
USA
970-627-3707
www.rapidslodge.com

**TOWN OF GRAND LAKE
PLANNING COMMISSION
RESOLUTION NO. 1 - 2011**

**A RESOLUTION GRANTING A ONE-YEAR EXTENSION ON THE PLANNING COMMISSION'S
RECOMMENDATION REGARDING THE RAPIDS PLANNED DEVELOPMENT**

WHEREAS, On November 3, 2008, the Planning Commission approved Resolution No, 2-2008, forwarding a favorable recommendation to the Town Board of Trustees for the approval of The Rapids Planned Development; and,

WHEREAS, On November 5, 2008, Mr. Tom Ludwig (Owner) requested staff not forward the recommendation to the Town Board of Trustees at this time, citing economic concerns; and,

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission, acknowledging the Municipal Code outlines no formal procedures of requests of this nature, discussed this matter on January 20, 2010; and,

WHEREAS, On January 10, 2010, the Planning Commission discussed this matter with the Owner and determined project viability in that it was still consistent with the community goals and character; and

WHEREAS, at that same meeting, the Planning Commission unanimously approved a one-year extension for the Planning Commission's recommendation (to no later than February 2, 2011) to the Town Board of Trustees of the approval of The Rapids Planned Development; and

WHEREAS, On February 2, 2011, the Planning Commission again discussed this matter with the Owner and determined project viability was still consistent with the community goals and character and, once again, agreed with the Owner of declined economic market; and

WHEREAS, at that same meeting, the Planning Commission unanimously approved a one-year extension for the Planning Commission's recommendation to the Town Board of Trustees of the approval of The Rapids Planned Development; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GRAND LAKE PLANNING COMMISSION AS FOLLOWS:

PART 1. The Rapids Planned Development is granted an extension of 365 days (no later than February 1, 2012) of the Planning Commission's favorable recommendation of approval to the Town Board of Trustees.

DULY MOVED, SECONDED AND ADOPTED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF GRAND LAKE THIS 2ND DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2011.

(SEAL)

Votes Approving:	7
Votes Opposing:	0
Votes Abstaining:	0
Absent:	0

ATTEST:

**TOWN OF GRAND LAKE
PLANNING COMMISSION**

/s/

Ronda Kolinske, CMC, Town Clerk

/s/

Hayden H. Southway, Chairman

Mountain Town News

News in brief & deep in resort valleys of the West
January 20, 2012

Aspen works on worldly business with new flights

by Allen Best

Aspen has always had a strong international following during winter. The usual figure cited has been 20 percent of skier days.

Could that figure be growing? Aspen Skiing Co. keeps such statistics close to its vest, but the anecdotal evidence suggests improved transportation and continued booming economies abroad, particularly in South America, may be nudging the international numbers.

The resort's two strongest foreign markets are Brazil and Australia, and the arrival of American Airlines flights to Aspen-Pitkin County Airport have improved links for people from both countries.

"This year, in particular we saw a lot of early, big bookings from Brazil," says Bill

Tomcich, president of Stay Aspen Snowmass, a reservations agency.

The Brazilians, he reports, are staying at some of the most expensive ski-in, ski-out resort properties, especially at Snowmass. "It almost seems that price is no object this year," he says, and the daily rate for lodging is "dramatically" increased

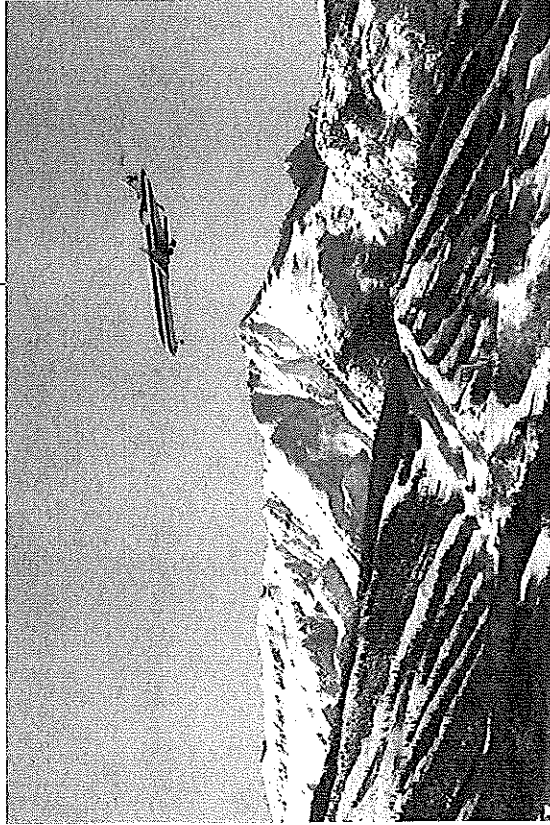
from last year.

"That to me is a strong sign of how healthy their economy is," says Tomcich.

But it's also easier for well-heeled Brazilians to get to Aspen and Snowmass. Unlike several other ski-based mountain resorts in Colorado, but also Jackson Hole, the Aspen area players have never guaranteed revenues to airlines. Marketing is another matter. When the \$700,000 was pledged to American Airlines by the governments of Snowmass Village and Aspen coupled with the Aspen Skiing Co., the Brazilian angle was a "major selling point," says Russell Forrest, the town manager of Snowmass Village.

Brazilians particularly have favored the new Viceroy Hotel, where prices of the condominium-style rooms range from \$435 in high season to \$224 in low season.

Aspen-Pitkin County Airport this winter gets up to 30 incoming flights a day, for 220,000 seats, the most in 14 years. But more importantly, as pertains to international visitors, Aspen has never had more connections with



The Aspen-Pitkin County Airport is getting up to 30 flights a day.

Photo: Aspen Skiing Company / Jeremy Swanson

out-of-state hub airports in Chicago, Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, and Los Angeles.

"We definitely have the best connections from the most out-of-state hubs that we have ever had," says Tomcich. Most of Europe is just a one-stop flight away via Chicago or Dallas-Fort Worth.

Tomcich makes the argument that Aspen/Snowmass has become the most accessible mountain resort in the country.

"To a large degree we are already living the dream in terms of international connectivity, and a lot of it is because of our runway extension completed this fall," he says.

The runway, now 8,000 feet, was extended by 1,000 feet last summer. The greater length allows planes to take on more weight during take-off. This will



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<http://mountaintownnews.net/>

China remains a puzzle. Construction of a major resort in China has many people talking about a burgeoning population of skiers in China.

Russians are already becoming a significant presence in the Aspen-Snowmass area, and in the Vail-Beaver Creek area, too, both as real-estate buyers and as vacationers.

Tomcich also sees the start of flights from Iceland to Denver as important. "This is big," he says. Iceland itself, if lightly populated, is relatively affluent and has many residents active in outdoor sports. Moreover, flights from Iceland would provide a further conduit to Europe.

And he sees the United Kingdom — already a big market for Breckenridge and many other resorts in the United States — as a potentially growing market. Killington, in Vermont, also sees many U.K. skiers. The key is that airline flights across the Atlantic are relatively low in cost during winter months, and so the argument can be made — has been made — that Colorado is a viable alternative to the traditional resorts of the Alps.

Resorts in the Sierra Nevada may also see increased international visitors.

"Mammoth Mountain has been pretty aggressive in marketing international, especially as they increase their direct flight program," says Tomcich. And San Francisco offers a natural gateway to the Tahoe resorts.

become most important during summer, when warmer temperatures provide less loft for planes. It is already a factor during winter, allowing airlines to carry more passengers and hence improve revenue margins. Sky West Airlines, for example, can add 8 to 10 passengers. On its flights to Chicago, the airline has been forced to leave an average 8 seats empty.

But another change was the shift in airline fleets. Beginning in 2006, airlines began gradually adopting use of the CRJ-700. As configured by different airlines, it can accommodate 63 or 66 passengers. Then, as they became more comfortable with operating the aircraft in and out of Aspen, they expanded use. From Aspen, the plane has a 1,400-mile range, even to Atlanta. That, in turn, puts it within range of airports that have direct flights to many parts of South America, Europe, and Australia. The plane is ideal for routes that cannot fill a 188-passenger plane, but where the market will absorb the considerable seat-per-mile operating costs.

Tomcich sees potential for growth in the international market for Aspen and Snowmass — and perhaps other ski resorts.

Both Japan and China remain tiny markets for Aspen. Since at least the 1980s, Colorado resorts have reached out to Japan. But the Japanese have rarely gone beyond Whistler. A direct flight from Tokyo to Denver would be a game-changer, he contends.

Will technological innovations open the door for more international visits to mountain resorts? In regards to airline technology, nothing game-changing is imminent, says Tomcich. Boeing is building the new 787 Dreamliner, a long-range, mid-sized jetliner that uses lightweight carbon fiber in place of some metal, allowing it to use 20 percent less fuel than the similarly sized Boeing 767. It can carry 210 to 290 passengers.

But production is behind schedule, and although the first model entered commercial service in October, mountain resorts are unlikely to see them any time soon.

"I don't envision any scenarios that a place like Vail would be able to attract an aircraft like that, for at least many years to come," says Tomcich.

Vail Resorts kicking tires around the world

VAIL, Colo. – Vail Resorts, with four ski areas in Colorado, two more in California, and a property in Jackson Hole, wants to grow its empire. Rob Katz, the chief executive, has never made a secret of the strategy, and indeed, in his tenure he has expanded the company to the Tahoe-area resorts.

At a meeting in Vail, during December, Katz said that he and John Garnsey, co-president of Vail Resorts, have been "around the world" studying prospects of

resorts in China, Europe and Japan. He described a "slow, disciplined approach to buying other resorts."

But, mindful of his Vail-centric audience, he added, "Our roots are right here."

Imagine: international world-class resort city

VAIL, Colo. – From its inception in 1962, when ski teams were invited to pre-season practice on the slopes, Vail has tried to capture the international eye.

To a great extent it has succeeded. Among ski cognizant, it is, similar to Aspen, a resort with almost instant name recognition.

But is it time for Vail to think even bigger? For several years, that's been the argument of Jim Lamont, the founder and director of the Vail Homeowners Association, an influential group in all matters Vail. In annual community meetings held after Christmas, Lamont's group pushed that message last year and then again this year.

The president of the organization now is Gail Ellis, daughter of the late Robert Galvin, the long-time chief executive of Motorola, a long-time homeowner in Vail, and a founder of the organization 21 years ago.

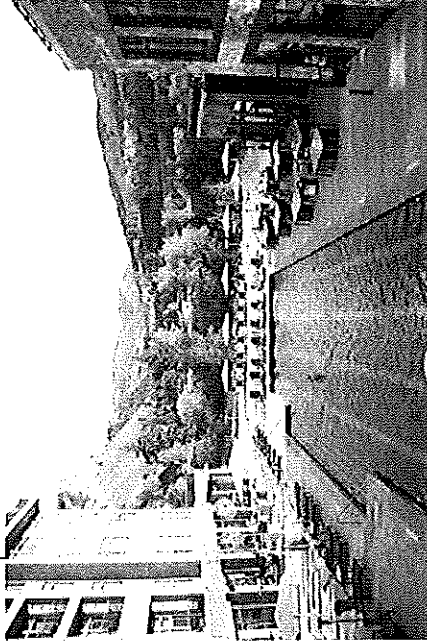
On the cusp of its 50th anniversary, she said, Vail needs to broaden its vision, from

being "the small town that we have been to a much larger situation." Real estate development, she said, is no longer viable as an economic foundation, and attention must be paid to sustained tourism. "We have the best mountain in North America. That's not going away," she said.

"There isn't any reason why we shouldn't now talk about what must happen for this valley to remain economically viable and strong and, in my opinion, the premier destination spot. In the world. Year round. There's no reason it shouldn't be."

She called for new ideas.

In his remarks, Mayor Andy Daly



The Westin Riverfront, if located in Avon, at the foot of Beaver Creek, is among the general upgrade in lodging that undergirds the call for more worldly aspirations of the Vail community.

continued the theme, without specifically mentioning the international component. Vail, he said, needs a "broader market

segment that will serve us well into the future.”

The wrap-up speaker was Jim Ellis, dean of the Marshall School of Business at the University of Southern California. He called on Vail to begin benchmarking itself against all the best resorts—not just in North America, but in the world.

Ellis further called for Vail to expand its ambitions, including health, athletics and thinking. In the latter, Vail is far surpassed by Aspen, with its variety of thinkfests sponsored by the Aspen Institute, and perhaps even Jackson Hole, maybe even Sun Valley.

Vail, said Ellis, should seek the same recognition as Davos and the World Forum. Precise numbers for Vail’s clientele are not available. Whereas 20 percent of Aspen’s business is international, Vail Resorts more broadly identifies 10 percent of skier days at its six resorts as being international, and 15 percent of destination skier days.

And thoughts from China...

Becky Zimmermann, president of Design Workshop, has been consulting on a new ski area in china.

“The growth of the ski industry will come (is coming) from outside of North America,” she says. “It is doubtful that the U.S. will ever see a new large-scale resort, but there is still opportunity in other countries, especially China.

“As people become skiers/riders in

Asia, they will travel to the U.S. to ski. And they spend a lot of money. Several of my client’s executives have been to Aspen, Vail and Whistler to ski,” she continues.

“The same could be said for golf, although it is more complicated due to recent regulations. To date, golf in Asia has only been for the elite and the wealthy.

With the growth of golf in China, it will be opened up to middle-income demographic.”

Tamarack Resort has future, not just a past

DONNELLY, Idaho – Is Tamarack, the resort north of Boise forced into bankruptcy in 2008, a bad dream or a good dream interrupted? Experts consulted by the Idaho Statesman in a late-November piece point toward the latter.

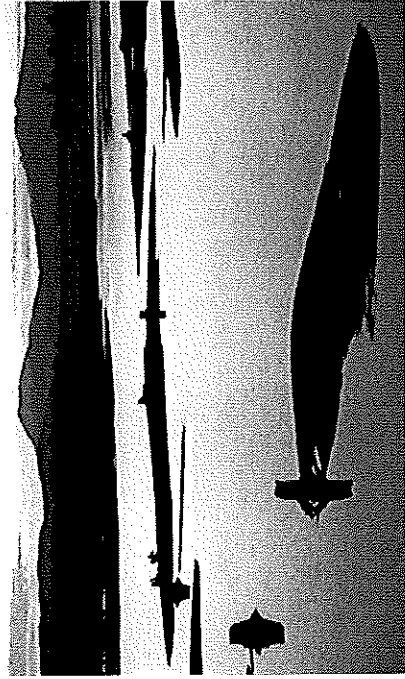
“You don’t need to be very big to be very successful,” said John Norton, formerly a ski executive in Crested Butte and Aspen. “You don’t need a million skier days to have a strong hold on some of your guests.”

Norton has teamed with Bill Ciraco, a trader at a New York-based investment fund, to serve as advisers for anyone looking to buy Tamarack. Planned for decades, the resort took off in 2004 after a key permission from Idaho

authorities. Construction of homes, shops and other amenities followed. But in 2008, Tamarack defaulted on a \$250 million note from Credit Suisse, which began foreclosure proceedings. In 2009, other creditors forced the resort into a bankruptcy.

The foreclosure process could be coming to an end. Creditors and potential investors await a judge’s order that could outline who is owed what and in what order, the Statesman reports. But even a sale might not be final. Idaho law allows the original owner up to one year to pay off the top bidder and take the property back.

“What’s left behind is so well done,” Norton said. “The lifts are in the right



Whatever happens at Tamarack, it does have a lovely setting, including Cascade Lake, located at the base. Photo/Allen Best

places, the buildings are well executed, the village needs completion.” He said there

are no glaring errors other than the obvious ones that led Tamarack into its financial problems.

Michael Berry, president of the National Ski Areas Association, said putting ski operations into experienced hands is the key to regrowing Tamarack. Even so, it will take awhile, he said.

But ski area operations can be profitable. Nationally, the average return on investment for ski resorts is 21 percent in earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and certain other expenses. Once Tamarack's past is sorted out, a bidding war could ensue, said Berry.

Norton and Ciraco told the Statesmen that they have met with four prospective bidders in the last three years, including two high-net-worth families and a real estate fund with ownership in other ski resorts. There are also at least a couple of interested parties from the Boise area.

Colorado continues to study '22 Olympic bid

DENVER, Colo. - An ad hoc committee appointed by the governor of Colorado and the mayor of Denver has started meeting. The 22-member committee was told that based on what it cost Utah to host the Olympics, Colorado should expect a \$1.5 billion price tag, reports The Denver Post. In contrast, the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver and Whistler cost \$1.86 billion.

A formal recommendation from the committee is expected in mid-April.

"If we are going to go down that road, we better understand the enormity of the obligation and what you hope to get out of it," said Don Elliman, the committee co-chair, according to the Post account.

Reno-Lake Tahoe is also preparing a

And what about I-70?

VAIL, Colo. - And if Denver and Colorado do go after - and get -- the U.S. bid for the Olympics, will that somehow unleash buckets of money for some new iteration of transportation between Denver and the mountains, especially along I-70?

Based on Salt Lake City's ability to secure federal funding in advance of the 2002 Olympics, many people have speculated as much. But who knows.

As regards Vail, talk continues about burying I-70 through at least portions of the 10-mile-long town. Asked at a December meeting if that is still a possibility, Vail Mayor Andy Daly said yes. "Long-term, that's a very realistic idea," he said.

But in the short term, he said, "the governor is trying to find two nickels to rub together right now for education." He also said that the real estate market needs to turn around. "A tunnel is not at the top of the list right now," he concluded.

bid, which puts Denver in the curious position of hedging its bets. Blaise Carrig, a co-president of Vail Resorts, has been elected to the Reno Tahoe Winter Games Coalition board of directors, as has been Andy Wirth, chief executive of Squaw Valley and Alpine Meadows. The latter ski area is owned by KSL Capital Partners.

Both Vail and KSL are based in the Denver-Boulder metropolis.

Whistler assembles bid to host another X Games

WHISTLER, B.C. - Whistler is bidding for the rights to host the Winter X Games as ESPN begins expanding the competition. Aspen has been the winter venue for the last 11 years, now along with Tignes, France. Los Angeles is the site of the Summer X Games.

But beginning in 2013, ESPN plans to have six venues altogether around the world, three each in winter and summer. Whistler wants to be among the winter sites.

Whistler Blackcomb, Tourism Whistler and Whistler Sports Legacies have submitted a bid to host the X Games during the April 10-13 timeslot in 2013. The partners are trying to raise \$3.5 million.

But Whistler wants the event to be part of a broader, 10-day festival. The new festival, officials said at a public meeting covered by Pique Newsmagazine, would subsume and combine with the existing

Telus Ski and Snowboard Festival, which has been held for 17 years.

In Aspen, the X Games last year drew 114,000 people. Barrett Fisher, president of Tourism Whistler, recently told elected officials there that they think even more people can be drawn to Whistler. She estimated a \$41.3 million economic impact to Whistler.

Aspen has hosted the event since 2002, and it has been negotiating with ESPN for the last year to extend the contract for another five years. What exactly the Aspen Skiing Co. has been giving has not been publicly disclosed, although the Aspen Daily News reports the municipal government's contribution has been \$100,000, and it is considered a key part of the package.

This year's event will be held at Buttermilk Mountain on Jan. 26-29.

Crested Butte explores alternative skiing ideas

CRESTED BUTTE, Colo.—Crested Butte Mountain Resort, thwarted in its plans to expand skiing onto Snodgrass Mountain in 2009, has gone back to the drawing board. The quest, as before, is to provide more ways to hold the interest of visitors for more than three or four days.

The latest sketch — it's not really a plan yet — would yield two more lifts on the existing ski mountain, servicing 100 acres more of intermediate terrain plus another

100 acres of extreme terrain. All of this would be intended to provide the sort of experience sometimes called backcountry lite or, alternatively, sidecountry.

As well, the resort is toying with the idea of a more easily accessible backcountry hut, suited to the skills of beginner and intermediate skiers, reports the Crested Butte News.

Monarch Mountain hopes to expand a bit

SALIDA, Colo. — Monarch Mountain, small but successful in recent years, despite being more than two hours from the nearest metropolitan area, Colorado Springs, hopes to keep growing bit by bit. The Forest Service has accepted a plan that calls for a new chair lift in ski terrain on the back side of the mountain, plus additional parking, an expanded base lodge and other adjustments as needed to push the annual skier days to 200,000. The resort has been logging 175,000, says the Mountain Mail.

Hotels increase room rates, but reservations dragging

DENVER, Colo. — Mountain Travel Research Program reports that the average daily rate at the 265 properties it monitors across the West was up 8.1 percent in December compared to the same month in 2010. Occupancy was up 1.3 percent.

However, the report also notes that the strong early season booking momentum

waned. Occupancy for the rest of ski season remains ahead of last year, but the pace of bookings has dropped dramatically. The problem? Scant snow, of course.

MTRIP's data are derived from a sample of 265 property managing companies in 15 mountain destination communities in Colorado, Utah, California and Oregon.

Economic confidence is improving, notes MTRIP, with the Dow Jones Index up 5.5 percent from last year, unemployment down for the fourth straight month, and the Consumer Confidence Index increased for the second month.

Pithy greeting to ski-town visitors

MAMMOTH LAKES, Calif. — Mammoth Lakes has decided it needs a more conspicuous greeting to visitors on a monument to be erected at the town's entrance. From the 100 or so entries, organizers have culled the following three finalists: 1) Welcome; 2) Gateway to the Heart of the High Sierra; and 3) "The mountains are calling...." John Muir.

In reporting this, The Sheet newspaper impishly offers its own proposal: "Please Spend Lots of Money."

Snow finally comes as grooming crews get rafts of attaboys

Praise be the groomers and snowmakers. That was the message in many ski resorts as a broad swath of the West continued to have marginal snow this past week.

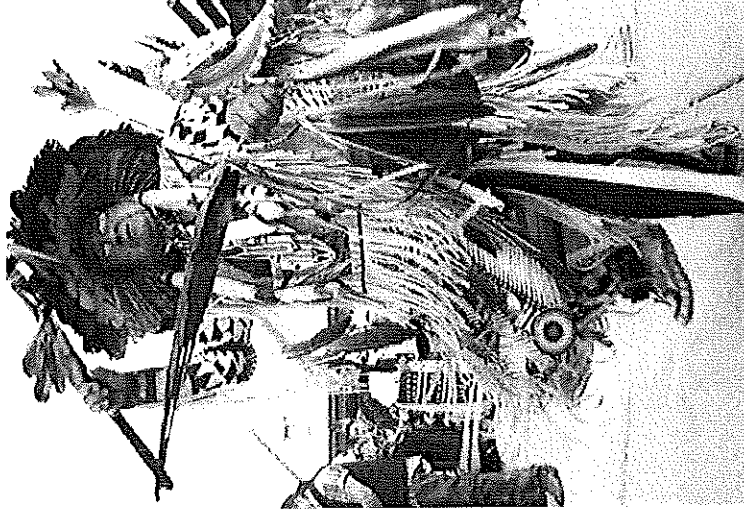
"I've never seen a crew do so much with so little," wrote a reader in the Idaho Mountain Express, describing the grooming of Sun Valley's Bald Mountain.

On Monday, a storm rolled inland across the central swath, followed by another late this week in what at least one meteorologist says is likely the harbinger of more to come.

"It wasn't a dump, by any means, but it was a great pick-me-up," reported Nan Chalat-Noaker, editor of The Park Record, on Monday.

"It looks like we're in for a pattern change," said Mike Chamberlain, who is with the National Weather Service in Grand Junction, Colo. Chamberlain told The Steamboat Pilot of evidence that the ridge of high pressure that has kept snow mostly out the forecast for Steamboat—and many other resorts from Tahoe to Breckenridge—is starting to break down.

In Park City on Saturday, dancers from the Northern Ute Nation, which is headquartered nearby in Utah, conducted a



A member of the Northern Ute Nation danced at Park City last Saturday. Nobody is saying there was any causality, but it did snow on the next day.

snow-blessing ceremony. This came several days after the town council passed a resolution declaring teams from the Deer Valley and Park City ski areas the "greatest snowmakers and groomers on Earth." It was, noted The Park Record, a play on the Utah ski industry's marketing slogan of "The Greatest Snow on Earth."

Idaho's Bogus Basin finally opened on Thursday, Jan. 19—the latest ever in the 62-year history of the ski area just outside of Boise. The prior record was Jan. 6.

In California, there was so little snow in the Tahoe Basin that the Forest Service issued a distinctly unseasonal warning: fire danger.

"We are essentially back in fire season," said Kit Bailey, fire chief of the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit.

The Tahoe Daily Tribune noted that lack of snow had done tourism numbers no favors. One rental firm told the newspaper that only 40 percent of units were booked for the Martin Luther King holiday weekend, compared with 60 to 70 percent more typically.

In Colorado, comparisons continue to be drawn to two prior drought years of note, 1976-77 and 1980-81. A former ski patroller at Vail remembers that in the first season, patrollers went through two or three pairs of skis because of all the rocks. Since then, Vail has invested heavily in snowmaking—although not in the Back Bowls®, which as of late this week remained closed.

In Aspen, staff members of one local newspaper were sure that those with longer tenure were exaggerating the bad-old days of '76-'77. Not so, concluded writer Scott Condon, who discovered that Aspen got more snow in December 2011 than it had in December 1976. That year, Aspen Mountain didn't even open until Jan. 11.

With many destination resorts hurting for snow in the early season this year, other resorts have tried to steal market share.

Among the haves was Montana's Big Sky Resort. It announced a special "Epic Package," available to holders of the Vail Resorts Epic Pass. Pass-holders booking lodging with the Big Sky Central Reservations during January could ski free.

"Colorado and Tahoe skiing not so epic this season? We'd like to help," said Big Sky on its website.

Grand Targhee, located on the flanks of the Tetons in Wyoming, more broadly offered free lift tickets to anybody with a season pass to a U.S. or Canadian ski resort for as many nights lodging as were booked through Targhee's lodging division.

Whistler-Blackcomb couldn't help but gloat. It posted a bar chart on its Facebook page. As of Jan. 5, it had 517 centimeters (204 inches) of snow, almost twice as much as the next in line, Snowbird and Alta, then Vail and Breckenridge, with poor Heavenly looking like a child's stool in this row of bars.

People are still talking with astonishment how little snow the mountains had at Christmas, lingering into January.

In Crested Butte and Steamboat, people were mountain biking because the skiing was so bad. At Christmas, the Summit Daily News reported that Denver International Airport, located on the prairie

15 miles east of Denver, had received as much snow as Breckenridge.

But Breckenridge was at least open. Others had it worse. In the Tahoe Basin, Homewood Mountain Resort announced it would be closed Mondays through Thursdays "until snow conditions permit full operations or further notice."

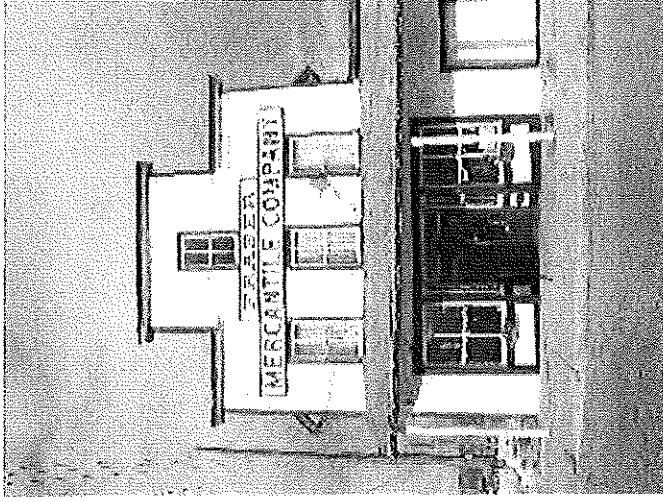
Truckee's Sierra Sun also reported rumors - dismissed speedily by resort representatives - of other resorts closing down.

"If anyone hears rumors like that, they should question the intellect, the judgment and the motivations of the people who are forwarding those rumors along," Andy Wirth, chief executive of Squaw and Alpine, told the newspaper.

In Idaho, Bogus Basin general manager Mike Shirley was foregoing pay during the Christmas holidays, a time when the ski area takes in as much as \$100,000 in revenue. Other year-round employees are getting 10 percent pay cuts and in some cases reduced hours.

"We are confident in the fact that it's going to snow," he told the Idaho Statesmen in early January. "If it didn't, that would be breathtaking."

Bogus season pass-holders were extended discounts at other Idaho resorts, including Brundage. The late-opening resort had snow, but also warm, warm weather. "I've never seen so many people willing to ski in the rain and actually



Usually snowy and bitterly cold on New Year's Day, Fraser - located 4 miles from the Winter Park ski area - was neither this year. It was almost T-shirt weather.

smiling about it," spokeswoman April Russell told the Statesman.

Mammoth Mountain wasn't exactly digging out from excess snow, either. But it had top-to-bottom skiing - and getting customers who might otherwise have gone to Tahoe, Utah, or Colorado, according to chief executive Rusty Gregory in a memo to employees distributed after the holidays.

"Many of our guests came to Mammoth from Northern California for the first time

because the Tahoe resorts' lower elevations and limited snowmaking capabilities only allowed the operation of a small fraction of the terrain and services Mammoth provided," reported Gregory. It was, he said, the "most successful" Christmas week in his 34 years on the mountain.

Gregory declared that Mammoth will stay the course. "We are going to do the opposite of what other resorts are doing. We are not going to cut services or service to save money. We are going to keep everything open," he said.

Save for snowplowers, businesses in Breckenridge weathered the lack of snow reasonably well, the Summit Daily News found. "It's nice to have a resort that blows a lot of snow, and then to have a town that has a lot of options other than skiing," said Eric Mamula, local restaurateur and town council member.

In Aspen, the ski company reported a maximum of 17,000 skiers per day in late December at its four resorts, compared to a historical record of 20,000. Vail Resorts, however, reported a 15 percent decline in skier numbers - with presumably a major portion of that hit coming from its two resorts at Lake Tahoe.



Yellow, pink and green - yes, but no blue skies in this photo taken Monday at Snowmass Village, unlike the common color of the skies for most of this winter. Photo: Jeremy Swanson

Adam Sumner, the director of sales and marketing for Vail Mountain, reported in late December that surveys revealed customer satisfaction on par with last year, when Vail and many other resorts were having epic powder storms.

Chris Jarnot, chief operating officer for Mountain, made a joke about the dearth of snow at a late-December community meeting. "You take last year's snow, and this year's snow, and between the two of them we have two average seasons," he joked, referring to last year's phenomenal snowfall. "Our grooming crew has been pulling rabbits out of hats so far," he added.

In Snowmass, the gist was the same. "Our guests love the blue skies," said Russell Forrest, the town manager of

Snowmass Village. Not so much the singer LeAnn Rimes, who tweeted to fans about a mishap: "Tailbone hurts from falling on a stump that tripped up my board 'cause THERE'S NOT ENOUGH SNOW."

Ski towns were busy over Christmas. In Aspen, occupancy hit 90 percent before New Year's last year. Bill Tomcich, who heads the local reservations agency, predicted this year will be busier yet - the busiest, in fact, since the 2007-2008 season.

The flip side of this story is Whistler, which has had plenty of snow and enjoyed a particularly jovial Christmas. Some businesses reported unparalleled volume, with Europeans, Brits and Aussies in great evidence, but with the U.S. greenbacks also flowing liberally.

Small Colorado ski area has new energy

GRAND JUNCTION, Colo. - Late last summer, the Powderhorn ski area was purchased by a quartet of businessmen familiar in the skiing world of Colorado. The ski area is located on the lip of Grand Mesa, 6,000 feet above the Colorado River and the desert city of Grand Junction.

Although the Grand Junction metropolitan area now has a population of more than 100,000, Powderhorn is a four-to five-hour drive from Denver and the larger population of Colorado's Front Range. In its 45-year history, it has never emerged beyond the also-rans of

Colorado's ski areas, a few times even failing to open.

Businessmen sports retailers Ken, Tom and John Gart and former Vail Mountain executive Andy Daly bought the ski area for \$1.4 million, getting not only the lifts on federal land but also 600 acres of private land. The new owners haven't indicated what exactly they intend to do with the private land, but they have not ruled out real estate development in the long run.

Can Powderhorn draw skiers from Denver and Boulder? Or even customers from beyond Colorado? That's less clear. The Denver Post, which trumpeted the ski area's opening with two stories, stresses the experience of the principals in the business, particularly that of Daly.

A native New Englander, Daly arrived at Aspen and was a ski patroller there before moving on to various other posts and increasing responsibilities: Copper Mountain, Ski Broadmoor and Eldora, before landing at Vail in the early 1990s. He parted with the ski company long ago, but remained in Vail, and was recently elected mayor.

Seeking clarity about the use of marijuana

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, Colo. – The Steamboat Pilot correctly points out that Colorado still hasn't decided exactly what it wants to do about marijuana.

Voters in 2000 approved dispensaries for medical use. But in fact, that has been,

in many cases, a charade for recreational use. "I've never seen so many 21-year-olds with neck pain," one mountain-valley sheriff said several years ago.

An initiative that proposes to legalize marijuana altogether now appears headed to voters in November, and the Pilot says that this is good. However, the newspaper says it reserves judgment whether it will support the proposal.

Date-rape drug less apparent in Aspen

ASPEN, Colo. – A 44-year-old woman was found sitting in an idling car in downtown Aspen at 3 a.m., eating a grapefruit and with two top-shelf bottles of vodka.

How did this happen? Her lawyer told The Aspen Times she would be tested to see if she had the date-rape drug Rohypnol in her blood.

The Times explains that several people reported being slipped the drug in 2010. The same year, the Aspen Police Department and a nonprofit organization teamed to distribute 2,500 coasters. If color of the coaster changed after a few drops of drink were put on it, the drink had been spiked.

A police detective told The Aspen Times no bona fide case of the drug, informally called roofie, had been reported recently. "We've heard a few reports of people being roofied, but it's usually people

with a high BAC (blood-alcohol content) combined with the high altitude," he said. In this case, police aren't persuaded. They accuse her of driving while under the influence. A video surveillance from a high-end hotel shows her walking behind the bar and collecting the vodka bottles.

Utah not alone in loopy liquor laws

WHISTLER, B.C. – Everybody knows that Utah has had some bizarre laws governing liquor. But organizers of the 20-year-old gay ski week at Whistler say that British Columbia can make it very difficult to put on a festival.

"It's really hard to do events in Whistler," says Dean Nelson, chief executive of Alpenglow Productions, which sponsors the event catering to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender snow sports riders. However, other special-event organizers have also complained.

Winter Pride in Whistler last year drew 2,500 people. This year, the municipality took the additional step of issuing a proclamation, designating Feb. 5-12 as Pride Week. Mayor Nancy Wilhelm-Morden said she had met with Winter Pride organizers, and she was happy to issue the proclamation, particularly after being told that some participants are persecuted in their hometowns for their sexuality.

Talking about how to shrink emissions

JACKSON, Wyo. — Carbon constraints are gradually ebbing into commerce. As Jonathan Schechter, a columnist for the Jackson Hole News&Guide, observes, the European Union will implement a cap-and-trade system requiring major airlines to offset the greenhouse gas emissions produced during their European flights.

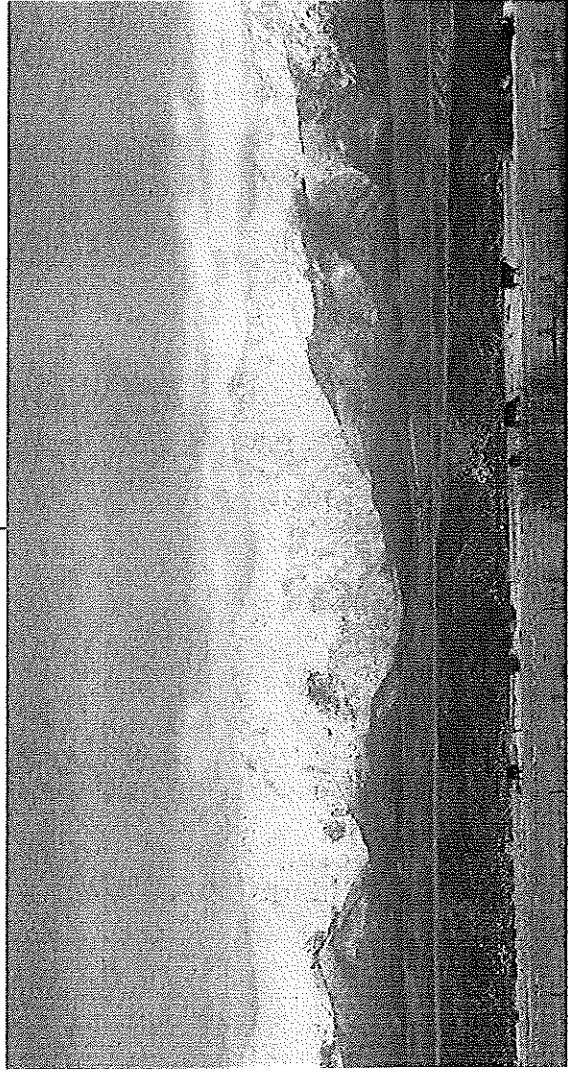
Jackson Hole, says Schechter, should up the ante. Operators of the local airport should declare it the first carbon-neutral airport. Airlines would be required to raise fares to cover the cost of carbon offsets. In 2008, he says, that would have cost \$468,372, or \$1.75 per passenger.

And in Aspen

In Colorado, the Aspen Skiing Co. reports "slow but not explosive" progress in reducing its carbon footprint during the past 10 years. Despite expansion of operations, such as caused by high-speed detachable quad lifts, which use more electricity, the company has shaved its carbon footprint by 2 percent.

"That's not horrendous, but it's not exactly saving the planet, either," says The Aspen Times, quoting the ski company's "Greenletter."

The company has done several things to reduce power consumption, such as replacing the boiler that serves its largest hotel with a more efficient model. On the



Drought or not, there's, something eternally wonderful about the last rays of day, in this case illuminating the Medicine Bow Range east of Walden, Colo.

generation side, it has built a small solar farm, a small hydroelectric plant, and has looked into other forms of renewable energy production. The current idea being explored would tap the methane being vented by a coal mine in Colorado to make electricity. Aspen did not specify which coal mine, although there have been discussions for several years about a coal mine near Paonia.

Warmer temps add difficulty to climbs

Warming global temperatures are making many mountains more difficult to

climb. Climbers and scientists tell the New York Times that receding ice and snow leave unstable rocks, making footing treacherous and rockfalls more common.

Among regions that climbers are especially worried about are the Alps, the Canadian Rockies, and the Peruvian mountains, as well as many Himalayan areas.

There's one small upside for those trying to ascend the world's highest mountains. Telluride-based physician Peter Hackett, a climber himself, explains that warmer temperatures create a slight increase in barometric pressure, and hence oxygen. "At extreme altitude, the

increasing temperature is making Everest a tiny bit easier to climb," says Hackett, an expert in the human physiological response to thin air.

Taking grocery bag issue to a direct vote

BASALT, Colo. – A municipal edict designed to reduce use of disposable plastic and paper bags is being met by resistance in Basalt. A resident named Roy Chorbajian has gathered enough signatures to force the town council to rescind the fee or put the proposal before a community-wide election.

"Communities of the valley shouldn't follow the do-gooders of Aspen who run under the green banner on everything," Chorbajian told The Aspen Times.

The newspaper noted that Basalt was actually the first in the Roaring Fork Valley to take action. In September, the council voted to require grocers to charge 20 cents per bag. Since then, elected officials in Aspen and Carbondale voted to ban plastic bags and charge a fee for paper bags.

A petition in Carbondale could force a community vote there similar to what Chorbajian seeks in Basalt.

Reflections on carbon in the nation of the tar sands

WHISTLER, B.C. – In 2007, the government of British Columbia adopted

what seemed to be a break-through agreement that taxes carbon emissions and seemed to put the province on a clear path toward transitioning away from carbon.

Of course, Canada more broadly had committed to a similar goal when it opted into the Kyoto Agreement in 1999. In fact, Canada's emissions had risen to 17 percent above 1990 levels by 2009, much of it due to expanded development of oil sands in neighboring Alberta.

Now, Canada has withdrawn from Kyoto goals, which Pique Newsmagazine editor Claire Ogilvie calls "shameful."

Pique recently published two extended analyses by the Tye Society of policies intended to dampen greenhouse gas emissions in British Columbia.

As transportation is responsible for 36 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions in B.C., any realistic policy must consider the heavy carbon footprint of oil derived from Alberta's tar sands. At issue is how much oil-sands producers can reduce their carbon footprint in coming decades.

As for B.C.'s gas tax and broader global warming policy, everything seems to be up for negotiation at this point. When it was adopted, the economy was booming. Now, of course, every policy that slows economic recovery is challenged.

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Food institute talked up in Sun Valley area

KETCHUM, Idaho – Talk is surfacing in the Ketchum-Sun Valley area of expanded offerings of culinary instruction. A group called Sustain Blaine has been talking with the College of Southern Idaho about a culinary institute that would have three components: professional training, destination cooking classes, and short demonstrations and workshops.

However, some of the existing programming is already offered by other organizations, points out the Idaho Mountain Express. Officials describe the concept as still early in development.

Fido off-limits at events in Breck

BRECKENRIDGE, Colo. – What's a mountain town without dogs roaming around? Breckenridge is finding out. The town had adopted a law that specifically sets the procedure by which pets can be excluded from events. Signs will have to be posted at the events, reports the Summit Daily News.

Citing a town memo, the Daily News notes that more and more events held in Breckenridge ban animals, usually due to the presence of food or large crowds of people. While most people have complied, authorities have recently had people challenging the policy.

Aspen mayor calls for lower cap for downtown buildings

ASPEN, Colo. — Aspen Mayor Mick Ireland is calling to apply new zoning to the town's downtown core that would discourage empty, high-end condominiums.

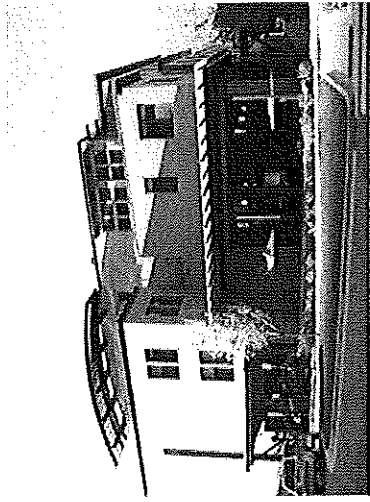
Ireland, according to the Aspen Daily News, proposes that buildings containing free-market residences be capped at 28 feet, compared to the current limit of 47 feet.

However, he favors lodges near the base of Aspen Mountain being allowed to go as high as 42 feet and buildings in the downtown core to go up to 34 feet—if they contain only some combination of retail, lodging and local-serving businesses, as well as affordable housing.

He contends that stricter rules would reduce the city's exposure to a "shoot-the-puppy" scenario, in which the council is forced to choose between a development that might not be in the community's best interest, or either face litigation or lose a popular community institution.

"Simply put, the mass and scale allowed in the current code is too generous in the downtown, allowing structures of a size the public does not support," Ireland writes. "... An ultimate buildout at a uniform 40- to 47-foot height would pretty much destroy remaining small-town character."

Ireland would also increase the affordable housing requirement for lodges to 100 percent of employees generated, but to reduce that to 60 percent if the housing was



Aspen Mayor Mick Ireland would cap buildings with free-market residences at 28 feet in the downtown core.

built either on-site or to the east of the entrance to Aspen called the S-curves.

The Aspen Daily News talked with Stan Clauson, a planning consultant, who said that "the free-market bashing has gone far enough." Ireland, he said, "has become very single-minded about the importance of affordable housing."

Salt Lake equity firm gets Cornerstone, near Telluride

RIDGWAY, Colo. — A Salt Lake City-based private equity firm, SilverLeaf Financial, has acquired the 6,000-acre Cornerstone golf community. The project, which was developed in 2006, is located between Telluride and Montrose, and it has 412 "homestead" lots, of which 56 have been sold. The project was purchased from Dallas-based Hunt Realty Investments.

SilverLeaf, according to the Salt Lake Tribune, with accounts echoed in Telluride papers, has acquired properties by purchasing notes from banks in default situations. It has purchased more than \$500 million in face value notes during the last three years, including the 58-room Trailhead Lodge in Steamboat Springs.

Public health skids during recession in Jackson Hole

JACKSON, Wyo. — By the simple metric of average per-capita income, Wyoming's Teton County is home to the nation's 1 percent. It annually leads or is among the top handful of counties in the nation by that measure of wealth.

But a new Community Health Assessment tells of another side to Jackson Hole. Reflecting effects of the recession and resulting unemployment, the report finds that Teton County's poverty rate shot up from 4.4 percent to 9 percent, Food Stamp participation more than doubled, and the number of people without health insurance tripled to 30 percent.

"The lack of health insurance and unemployment are big health factors, because they lead to lots of stresses," said Terri Gregory, manager of Teton County Public Health.

By many measures of public health, Teton County still leads Wyoming, statistically the 21st healthiest state in the nation.

Big-box hardware store opens into Summit County

SILVERTHORNE, Colo. — Another big-box store, the hardware and lumber merchandiser called Lowe's, has opened a 94,000-square-foot store in Silverthorne.

Summit County already has a big Wal-Mart plus a Target, and a study predicts this new big box franchise will impact 100 businesses directly or indirectly, with losses of up to 12 percent, reports the Summit Daily News.

The newspaper quoted Stacy Mitchell, author of "Big Box Swindle: The True Cost of Mega-retailers and the Fight for America's Independent Businesses." She

said there's no tried-and-true approach for a small business trying to compete with the franchise giants.

Suiter takes temp planning duties at La Plata County in wake of comp plan flap

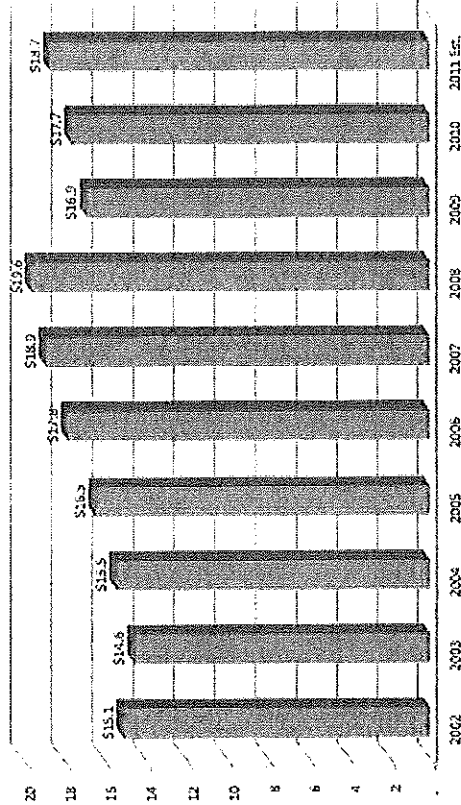
DURANGO, Colo. — Gary Suiter has stepped into a four-month contract to direct the planning department in Colorado's La Plata County.

He replaces Erick Aune, who resigned on Dec. 9, the day after the county planning commission scrapped the La Plata County Comprehensive Community Plan. The plan had been two years in the making, with 150 meetings and \$1 million in costs, reports the Durango Telegraph.

This was the third time in recent years that efforts to craft a comp plan for the county on the edge of Colorado's San Juan Mountains ended in a divisive stalemate.

The newspaper probes what went wrong, and the quotes suggest an echo of the national

Sales Tax (\$ Millions)



Sales tax collections in Vail have pushed back, and last year were expected to surpass those of 2006, which was definitely one of the go-go years.

debate about the role of government. La Plata County, it would seem, has more of an ear for what the more conservative Republican presidential candidates have been saying.

Travis Craig, the chairman of the planning commission, which first whittled the proposed 157-page document to 11 pages then killed it altogether, said the plan tried to create images of the future based on community values — something he believes government has no business doing.

A county commissioner, Bobby Lieb, told the Telegraph he doesn't think the county needs a comprehensive plan at all. He believes the plan attempted to force gentrification and was, at heart, elitist. He said he didn't agree with the idea of sprawl. "It is, he says, in the eye of the beholder. "I won't tell people where and how they can live; the market will decide."

Another county commissioner, Kellie Hotter, said the county government will get to work right away on simplifying the county land-use code and providing certainty while reducing the obstacles to building permits.

The county is also seeking a new county manager to replace Shawn Nau, who resigned in July.

Park City mayor going to China to talk, sell Utah

PARK CITY, Utah — Park City Mayor Dana Williams plans to travel to China in April. He'll be talking about environmental

matters at a conference and trumpeting the case for Park City as a destination. The city government has agreed to pick up the \$5,490 cost of the 11-day trip, reports the Park Record. China is expected to have 20 million skiers by 2014. The conference is called the World Congress of Biodiversity.

Brooks to stay on salary in Avon, but not as manager

AVON, Colo. – In a 4-3 vote, the Avon Town Council has decided to relieve Larry Brooks of his duties as town manager. He will, however, stay on the town payroll through 2012 at roughly the same salary, \$150,000, as he got last year. He will leave his full-time position at the end of February, according to a report in the Vail Daily this week.

Town council members who voted for the change pointed to a contentious relationship with the developers of the Traer Creek, a giant project on the east side of Avon that began in the late 1990s.

“After several years and hundreds of thousands of town money spent on litigation, the town and the developers last year announced they would work to negotiate a settlement in the case,” the Vail Daily explained.

Town council members want a new face representing the town, although Brooks will advise the town on the case during the remainder of the year.

Brooks, a long-time public works director in Avon, was manager for nine years.

In looking for the next manager, say council members, they will look for somebody with skills that include marketing or business.

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County manager Garfield County, Colo.

Located in spectacular northwestern Colorado, Garfield County is a very

dynamic and diverse community. In broad strokes, the eastern half of the county is viewed as the more cosmopolitan side of the county, closer to “up valley” communities, with the western half of the County seen as home to the natural gas industry and a more traditional western lifestyle. The Board of County

Commissioners is seeking a visionary leader with unquestionable ethics and integrity as well as solid management, organizational, and financial skills. The County is very strong financially with approximately 450 employees and total expenditures for 2012 budgeted at \$120 million. Hiring range is \$105,137 to \$131,421 DOQ with possible relocation assistance and competitive benefits.

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Hello,

My name is Chad Kooistra, I am a graduate student at the University of Idaho. I recently completed my thesis, titled: 'Understanding Residents' Attitudes about Mountain Pine Beetle Outbreaks on Public Land in Grand County, Colorado.' I conducted a study using mail surveys and in-depth interviews with full-time Grand County residents to record and understand their concerns about impacts from the MPB outbreak, as well as their attitudes towards different forest management and economic development options regarding the MPB outbreak.

The purpose of this study was to provide this information to land managers and community leaders to present a current and clear understanding of the publics' attitudes, which may be incorporated into future management plans that seek to mitigate the potential social and ecological impacts from the outbreak.

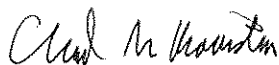
Enclosed you will find a summary report of the findings from my research. Please feel free to distribute this around your office or community as you feel appropriate.

Though I realize the extent of the outbreak, along with limited resources, may prevent any immediate and large-scale actions, it is my sincere hope that this information will be helpful to land managers, community leaders, and residents in addressing any potential impacts from the outbreak. I also hope that it will assist communication, outreach, and public involvement efforts concerning any future forest management issues in Grand County.

If you have any questions or comments about this study, or would like more details about my findings or additional copies of this report, I would be happy to talk with you any time. You can reach me by calling (775) 636-5145, by mail at the address at the top of this letter, or by emailing me at chadk@uidaho.edu.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Chad M. Kooistra

M.S., University of Idaho, Conservation Social Sciences Department

**Summary of Results from a Study of Grand County
Residents' Attitudes Regarding Forest Management and
Related Economic Development Options**



Chad Kooistra and Dr. Troy E. Hall

University of Idaho

Conservation Social Sciences Department

chadk@uidaho.edu, (208) 885-7911

This report is a summary of findings from a study that used mail surveys and telephone interviews to gain a better understanding of Grand County, CO, residents' attitudes and concerns regarding the pine beetle infestation. The focus is on permanent residents and their opinions about the management of the outbreak on public forests in Grand County.

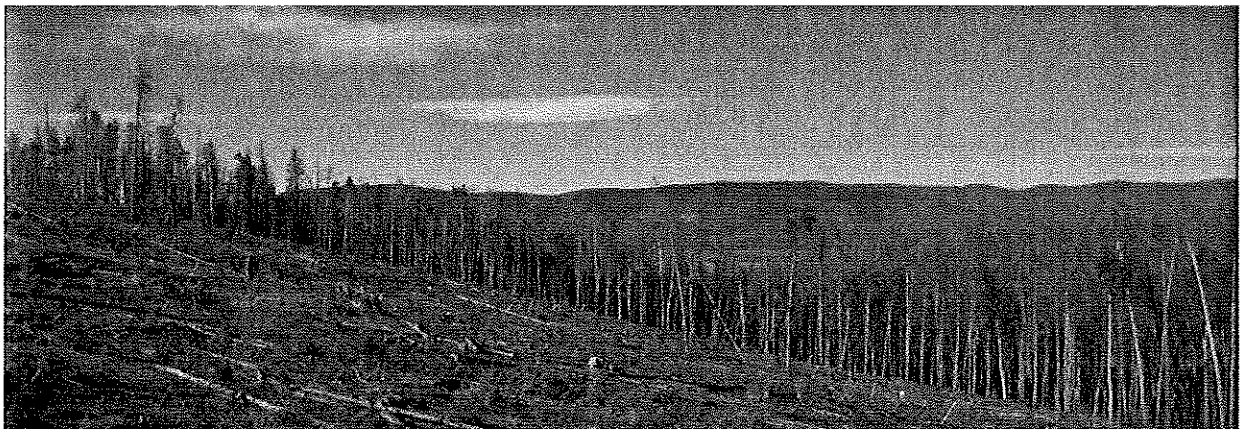
There are several key findings from our research. Respondents indicated overall high levels of concern for a variety of potential impacts from the pine beetle outbreak in Grand County. Concerns about catastrophic wildfires, negative impacts to tourism and aesthetic qualities, and fears over blowdowns affecting personal safety and access to public lands were the most prominent. Support for various forest management and economic development options to manage the dead trees was relatively high among respondents. They are eager to see the trees utilized for options that enhance economic activity in Grand County and to see the trees removed for aesthetic reasons and to allow for quicker forest regeneration. Satisfaction with and confidence in land managers and community leaders was fairly low, but many respondents understand the difficulty managing such an overwhelmingly large area of forests affected by the outbreak, especially given budgetary and procedural considerations. Respondents generally indicated that they do not actively seek information about the outbreak anymore because the infestation has passed. Most tended to rely on personal observations, discussions with friends, and contacts with local government officials and land managers for current information about the outbreak and related forest management issues. Findings clearly indicated high levels of personal experience with the outbreak and residents are certainly impacted on a daily basis by the resulting visual impacts. We found that respondents had moderate levels of general environmental concern and they expressed that forests are important to them for a wide variety of uses and values. Finally, socio-demographic characteristics of participants mostly reflected current Grand County census data, with the exception of a higher percentage of males, an older average age, and a higher average level of education of respondents in our study than the county-wide average.

We hope that these findings will be incorporated into future management decision making processes by land managers and community leaders. Our findings indicate that residents desire more and consistent information about the management of the outbreak. Increasing the visibility of projects designed to protect personal property and safety, as well as to enhance forest health, may be an option for improving relationships with residents and getting them more involved in the management process. Study participants generally understand this outbreak to be a result of past forest management and changing climatic factors, and they want to make sure that managers, leaders, and other residents learn from this infestation and can apply those lessons to future changes in the forests and communities. We recommend that current and future research findings regarding the effects of various forest management practices on the future composition of the forest, as well as the actual effect of the MPB outbreak on wildfire likelihood and/or severity should also be clearly communicated with the public.

For further information, questions, concerns, or comments please feel free to contact Chad Kooistra by phone at (775) 636-5145, or by email at chadk@uidaho.edu.

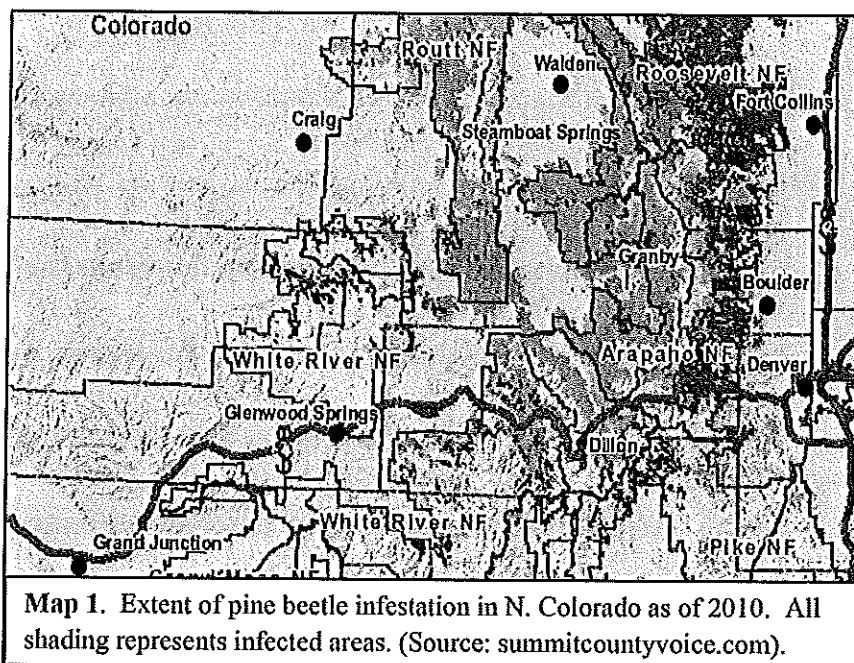
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Introduction

Recent pine beetle outbreaks have affected over 3 million acres of forests in northern Colorado and southern Wyoming (see Map 1). Forests in Grand County have been significantly affected by the outbreak. Land managers and community leaders face tough decisions for managing the forests for safety, ecological integrity, and community well-being. Understanding the attitudes and concerns of residents is necessary to make the most effective decisions.



This study explored these human dimensions of the outbreak so they can be taken into account during the on-going decision making process by land managers and community leaders. In addition to reviewing similar past studies for research ideas, we worked with representatives from the Colorado Forest Restoration Institute (CFRI) and the Colorado Bark Beetle Cooperative (CBBC) to develop pertinent topics and questions to address in our study.

We mailed survey questionnaires to 450 randomly selected Grand County residents in the summer of 2010. After accounting for incorrect addresses, we had 234 returned surveys for a 57% overall response rate (see Table 1 for community breakdown).

Table 1. Mail survey questionnaire response rates

Community	Completed Surveys	Response rate (%)	% of the Total
Fraser	26	50	11
Granby	49	45	21
Grand Lake	59	66	26
Hot Sulphur Springs	11	52	5
Kremmling	30	55	13
Parshall	4	50	2
Tabernash	12	67	5
Winter Park	37	60	16
TOTAL	234	57%	100%
	(6 unidentified zipcodes)		

Then, in late fall/early winter 2010 we conducted 36 semi-structured interviews with selected survey respondents who were willing to participate. Interview participants were selected to represent a range of characteristics including, sex, home zip code, and level of environmental concern. Averaging 30 minutes, the interviews allowed us to better understand the survey results and relationships between the different variables that we measured.

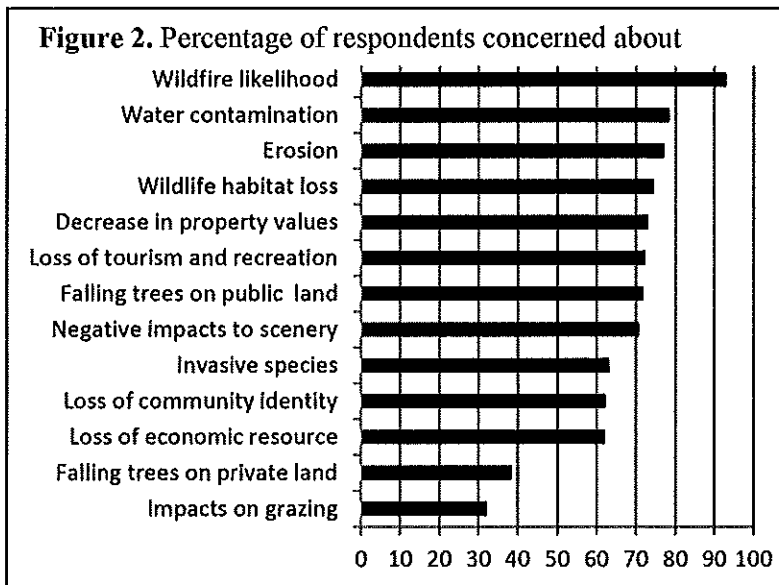
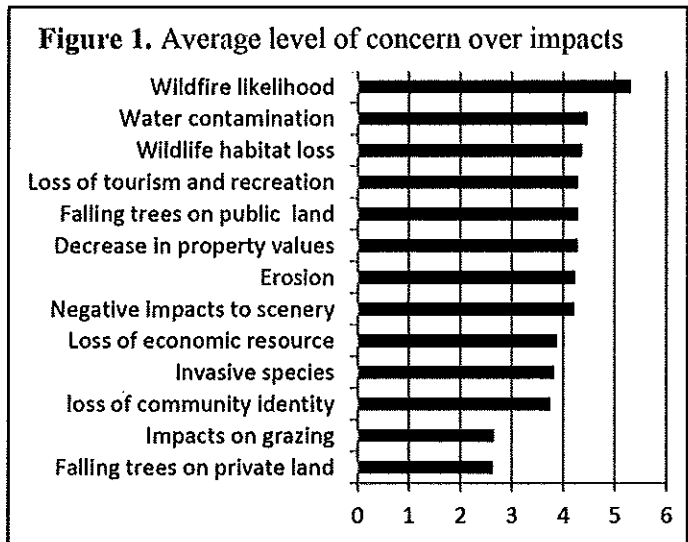
The following report is a summary of the questionnaire results with interview findings incorporated for clarification where appropriate. Our data was intended to be representative of Grand County residents, not necessarily individual communities. In other words, individual community's results may not be representative of that community, but the entire data set is representative of Grand County overall.

Findings

1. Concerns about Potential Risks and Impacts from the Pine Beetle Outbreak

We asked respondents to indicate how concerned they were with potential social and ecological risks and impacts in Grand County resulting from the pine beetle outbreak. Respondents rated their level of concern on a scale from 0 (not concerned at all) to 6 (very concerned).

Figures 1 and 2 show the average level of concern on the 7-point scale, as well as the percentage of all respondents that indicated moderate to high levels of concern (i.e., marked 4-6) for each impact.



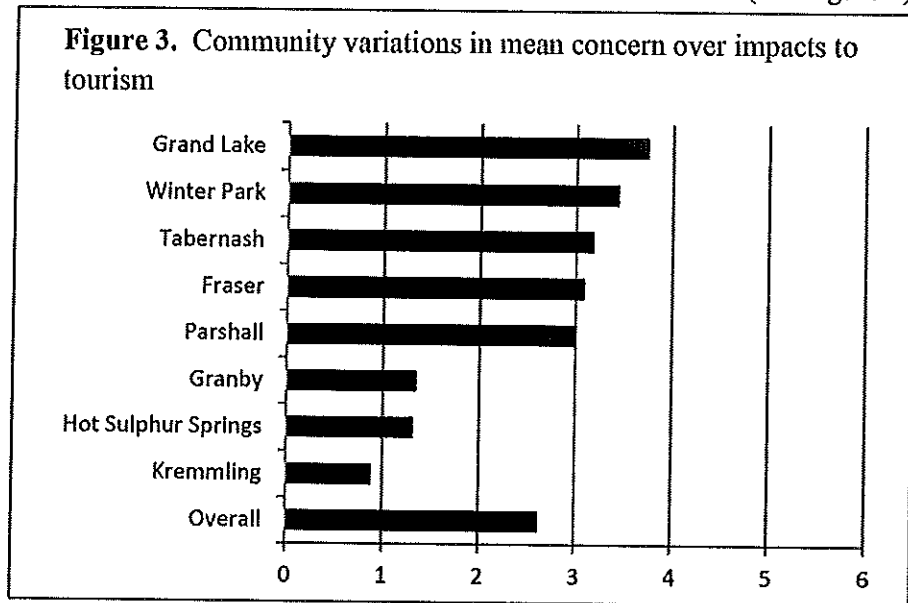
Overall, results show that respondents are concerned about a wide range of social and ecological impacts. The potential for a catastrophic wildfire that may threaten human safety and property, as well as the natural resources in the area, is the greatest concern among most respondents.

The interviews overwhelmingly confirmed these results and highlighted a growing concern over

falling trees or blowdowns due to the weak root structure in the dead lodgepole pine trees. Many interviewees revealed a concern that the vast amount of dead trees would remain on the land without ever being utilized, restricting access to the forest for safety reasons, and causing wildlife to relocate to areas that are less congested with fallen trees.

Levels of concern were similar across individual communities for each impact, except that concerns about negative impacts to the tourism industry varied somewhat between communities (see Figure 3).

Although we did not analyze each community's level of dependence on tourism for economic well-being, it is logical that residents of more tourism based towns, such as Grand Lake and Winter Park, may be more concerned about impacts to the tourism industry.



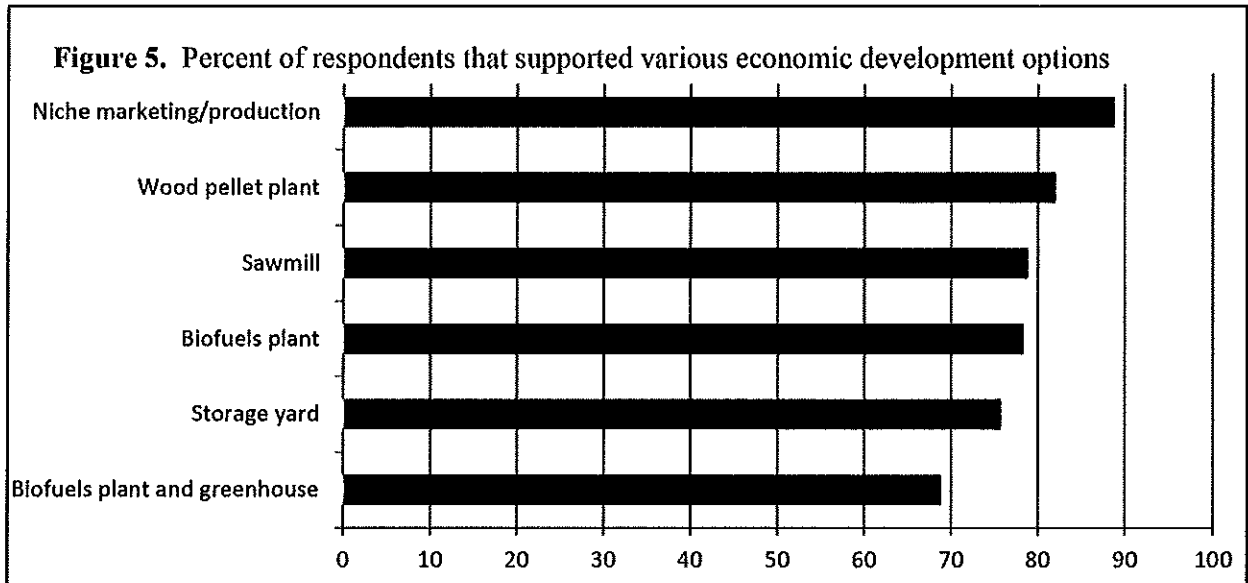
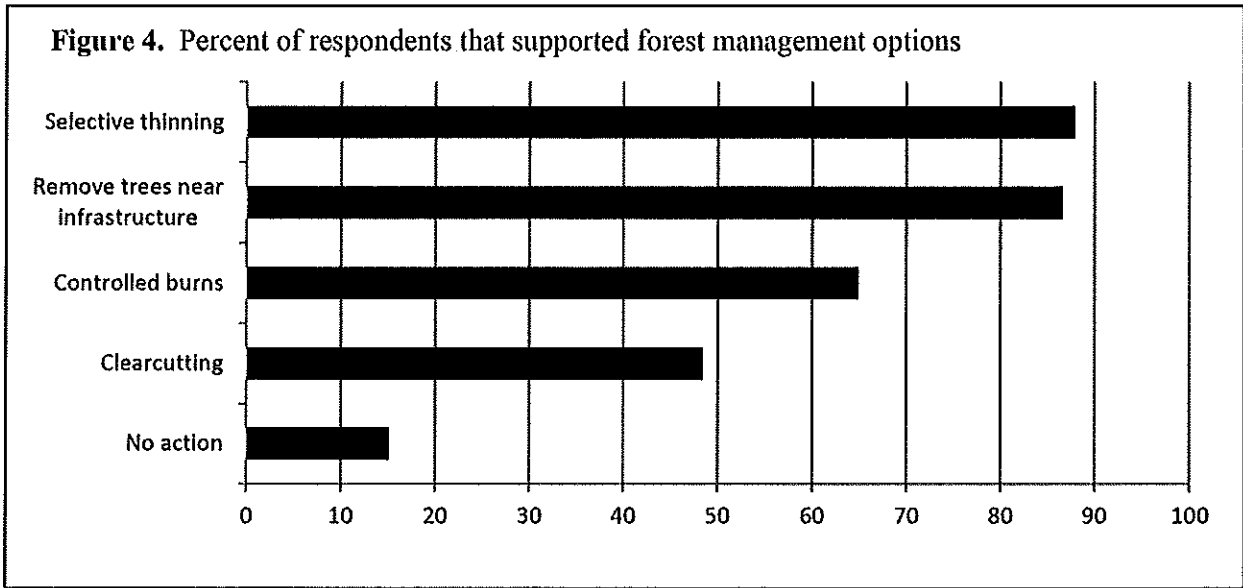
Very few respondents (0-8%) answered 'don't

know' to any of the impacts. This suggests that permanent residents generally have formed opinions about these issues, which was confirmed in the interviews when people spoke in depth and candidly about their concerns and attitudes.

2. Support for Forest Management and Economic Development Options

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of support for these **forest management options on public land in the county**: selective thinning; clearcutting; removing trees within 150 feet of power lines, roads, trails, and campgrounds; using controlled burns; or taking no action all. Similarly, they were asked about the following **economic development options**: a biofuels plant; a biofuels plant and a community greenhouse; a sawmill; a wood pellet plant; a log storage yard; and niche marketing/production. Levels of support ranged from 0 (strongly opposed) to 6 (strongly support).

Overall, support for forest management options was high (Figure 4). Support for selective thinning and removing trees near valuable infrastructure were the most supported, while support for controlled burns and clearcutting were lower. Support for taking no action was substantially lower than any other option. Respondents' level of support for all economic development options asked about in the questionnaire was all relatively high, with very few differences among the options between communities (see Tables 2 and 3).



These sentiments were also overwhelmingly reflected during the interviews. Many participants expressed strong support for basically any use of the wood that could minimize potential risks such as blowdowns and wildfire, and also bring in any economic activity to the county. Air pollution and increased taxes from subsidies were the top reasons for not supporting a biofuels plant. It was evident that many respondents did not entirely understand what biofuels plants are, how they function, what resources are necessary to sustain a biofuels plant, how much energy it could provide, and what by-products may result from energy production.

Concerns over the utility of the rotting trees and the longevity of the wood supply were also important reasons for any uncertainty or lack of support for economic development options. In other words, many respondents discussed not knowing if the trees are still viable for construction or lumber purposes because many of the trees have been dead for several years and appear to be decomposing.

There is also concern that investment in any option to use the trees may not be a long term option after the majority of beetle infected trees are removed and utilized because the supply will be diminished.

Overall, support for removing some portion of the dead trees was relatively high. Interview participants consistently voiced support for some level of tree removal to improve regeneration rates and try to capitalize in some way on the large amount of available timber. Support for taking no action was consistently very low due to concerns about disastrous wildfires, given all the fuel, as well as a belief that no action would inhibit healthy and quick forest regeneration.

A majority of interview participants also indicated concerns about using controlled burns due to smoke pollution and the possibility of the burns getting out of control, yet many expressed a sense of trust in local fire management teams to handle future wildfires. Many also expressed concern over the visual impacts of clearcutting and potential ecological harm from increased logging activity, which could result in more roads and erosion. These concerns help to explain the greater level of support for selective thinning on public lands to remove the dead trees because it is seen as having lesser aesthetic and ecological impacts, while still promoting quicker regeneration.

There were no major differences between individual communities concerning levels of support for different options. See Tables 2 and 3 for community variations in mean level of support for different forest management and economic development options. Again, these results indicate relatively strong support for the different options.

Table 2. Mean level of support for economic development options
(0 = strongly oppose; 6 = strongly support)

Community	Storage yard	Biofuels plant	Biofuels plant and greenhouse	Wood pellet plant	Sawmill	Niche production
Overall	4.4	4.6	4.3	4.8	4.7	4.9
Fraser	4.4	4.8	4.9	5.1	5.1	5.2
Granby	4.2	4.8	4.3	4.7	4.4	4.8
Grand Lake	4.6	4.6	4.4	4.8	4.7	5.0
Hot Sulphur Springs	3.9	5.4	4.6	5.5	5.3	4.9
Kremmling	4.2	4.1	3.9	4.7	5.3	4.8
Parshall	4.0	4.5	6.0	5.3	5.8	5.5
Tabernash	3.6	3.6	3.6	4.5	4.7	4.9
Winter Park	4.9	4.7	4.2	4.4	4.3	4.8

Table 3. Mean level of support for forest management options
(0 = strongly oppose; 6 = strongly support)

Community	Remove dead trees within 150 ft of infrastructure	Selective thinning	Clearcutting	Controlled burns	No Action
Overall	4.9	4.9	3.2	4.0	1.6
Fraser	5.2	5.3	2.9	4.2	1.6
Granby	5.0	5.0	3.3	3.9	2.0
Grand Lake	5.1	5.1	2.9	4.0	1.4
Hot Sulphur Springs	4.7	4.7	3.6	3.5	3.0
Kremmling	4.4	4.4	4.2	4.2	1.1
Parshall	3.8	3.8	1.3	5.0	0.8
Tabernash	5.4	5.4	3.0	3.2	1.8
Winter Park	4.7	4.7	2.8	3.8	1.4

We suggest that land managers and community leaders work closely with community members to discuss the details of any option, including how much money it would cost residents, who would benefit, and its long term viability of being a sustainable option. High levels of support among our study participants indicate an opportunity for managers and leaders to pursue a variety of options.

3. Attitudes Towards Land Managers (USFS) and Local and County Government Officials

We asked respondents to indicate their level of agreement with nine statements about their confidence, trust, and satisfaction with the US Forest Service and city and county governments concerning management of the pine beetle outbreak in Grand County. See Table 3 for the percentage of respondents who agree and disagree with each statement as well as the mean level of agreement with each statement. Responses ranged from 0 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree) and mean scores closer to zero indicate a lack of confidence, trust, and satisfaction. Overall, respondents were dissatisfied with land managers and city/county governments' actions, and confidence in them to manage the outbreak in a way that minimizes risks to communities and forests was relatively low.

Table 4. Level of agreement with statements about the US Forest Service and community leaders

Statement	% Agree	% Disagree	Mean level of agreement
I am satisfied with the US Forest Service's efforts in handling the pine beetle outbreak in Grand County	27.6	61.3	2.0
I am confident in the US Forest Service's ability to manage the pine beetle outbreak on public forests to reduce potential ecological and social risks	25.7	66.1	1.9
I trust the US Forest Service to make appropriate decisions about prescribed burn treatments	37.3	51.6	2.5
I trust the US Forest Service to make appropriate decisions about forest thinning treatments	42.5	48.4	2.7
I trust the city government to make appropriate decisions about handling the outbreak to minimize risks to residents and the economy	41.9	44.1	2.7
I trust the county government to make appropriate decisions about handling the outbreak to minimize risks to residents and the economy	43.7	46.8	2.7
The city government does a good job communicating with the public about pine beetle related issues	43.3	37.2	2.9
The county government does a good job communicating with the public about pine beetle related issues	25.7	38.7	3.0
The US Forest Service does a good job communicating with the public about pine beetle related issues	37.3	47.2	2.6

**Note: percentage of neutral not shown*

The interviews helped clarify these results by revealing a sense of frustration with inconsistent information during early stages of the outbreak. For instance, information about what size trees can be affected, when and how to effectively spray the trees, and what climatic conditions are necessary to prevent the outbreak from spreading were reported by many participants to have changed multiple times throughout this outbreak.

Respondents also had concerns over the financial burdens and bureaucratic procedures that could limit the ability of the USFS and local governments to respond quickly and effectively to these types of natural disasters. It was well recognized that the amount of land affected by the pine beetle is so vast that any one agency or government entity could not possibly treat all of it. Respondents who worked

more actively with local land managers, especially local fire departments and the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) seemed more understanding of the difficulties facing land managers and community leaders. These individuals tended to be more aware and appreciative of the services these agencies and government entities have provided to help residents better understand the cause and effects of the outbreak, as well as how to minimize risks to personal safety and property.

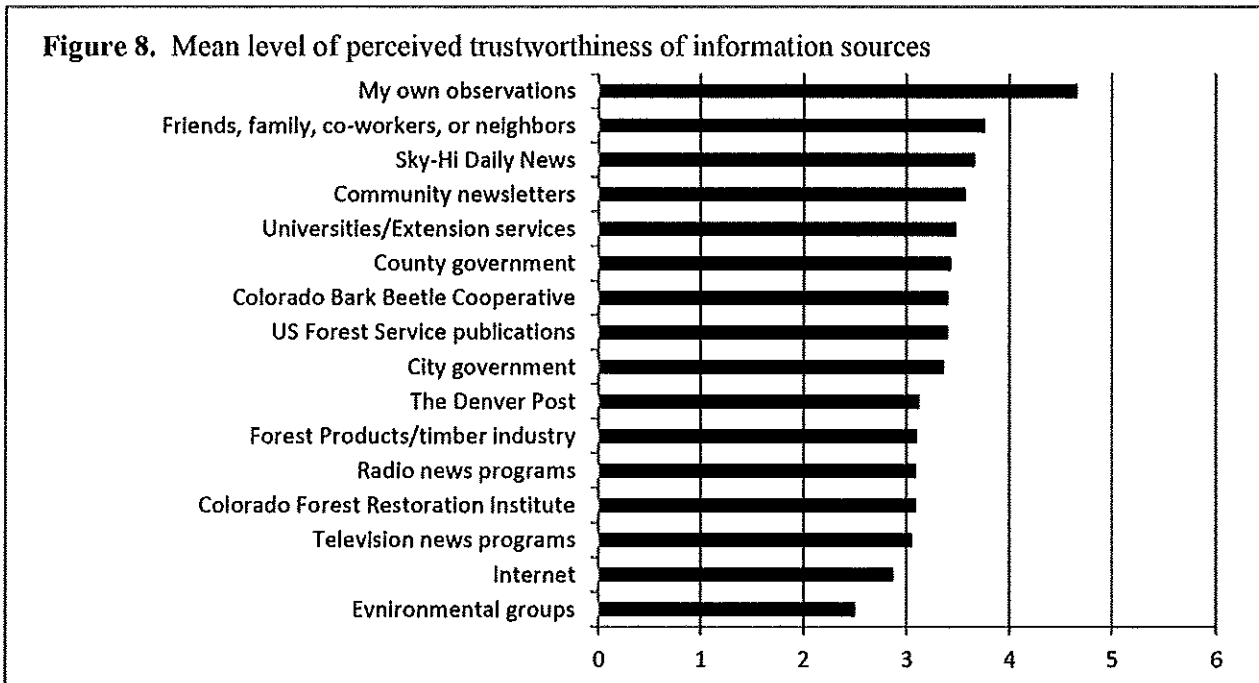
Discussions about communication effectiveness revealed that many people would like to have more access to information about the types of mitigation activities, their location, and their extent occurring on public land currently and in the future. This type of increased visibility may help to improve Grand County residents' levels of trust, confidence, and satisfaction with the USFS and local governments.

There were relatively minor differences between communities in Grand County for these questions.

4. Information Sources

To better understand the role of information sources in shaping opinions about the pine beetle outbreak, we asked respondents for their opinions about sources of information they had consulted. First, we asked respondents to rate the **perceived trustworthiness of various information sources** from 0 (completely untrustworthy) to 6 (completely trustworthy).

Figure 8 shows the mean level of perceived trustworthiness of information sources. Figure 9 shows the percentage of respondents who had no opinion about the trustworthiness of information sources, which may reflect the sources of information that people may be less likely to use to learn about pine beetle issues.



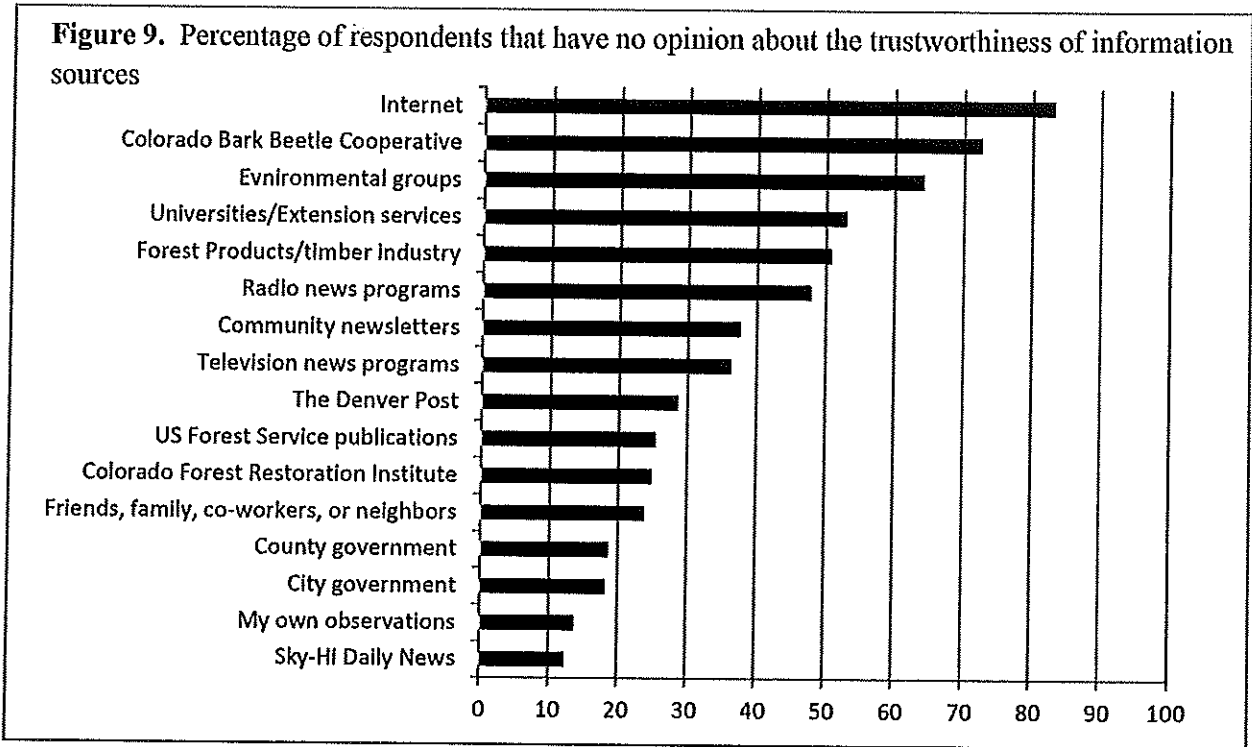
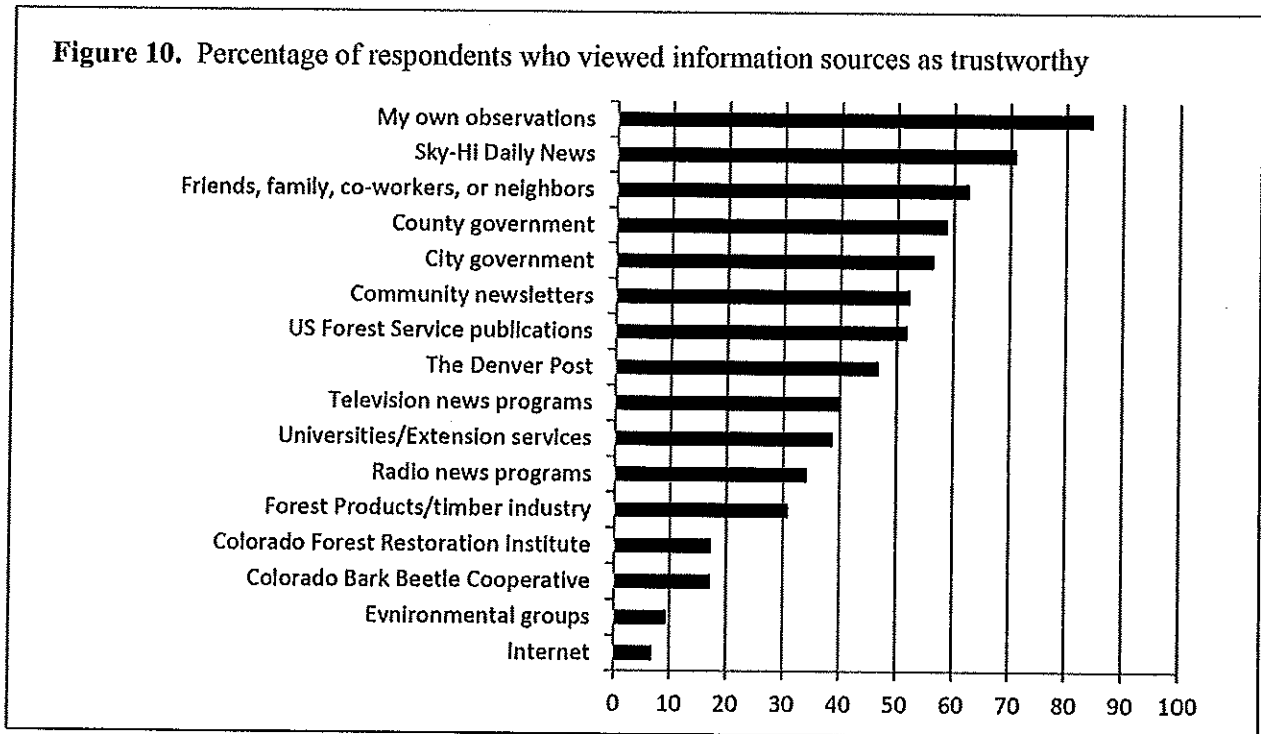
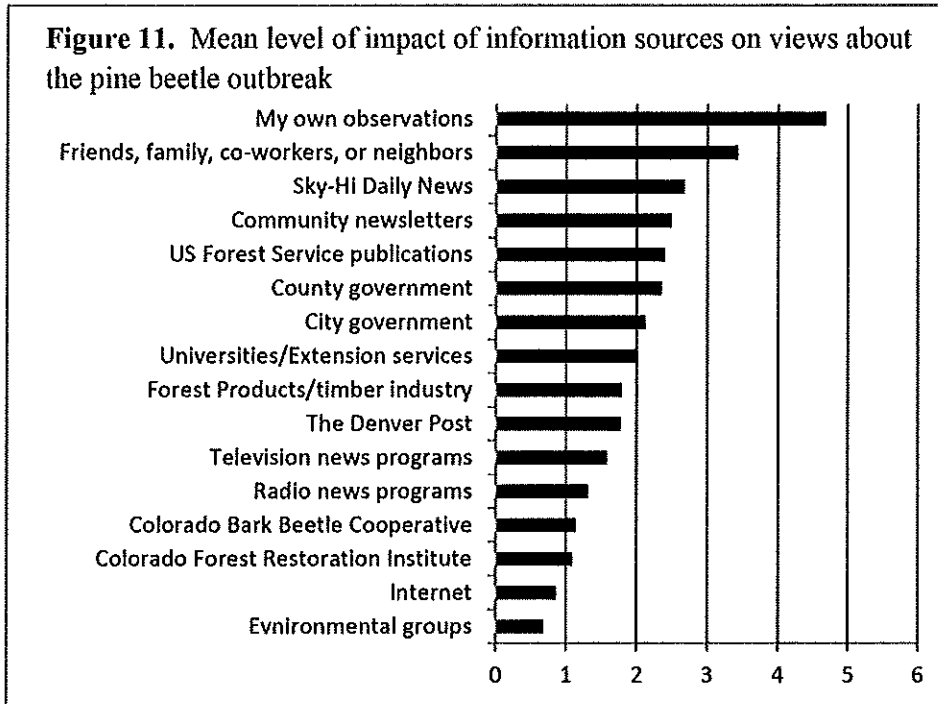


Figure 10 shows the percentage of respondents who had an opinion and rated information sources as being trustworthy.

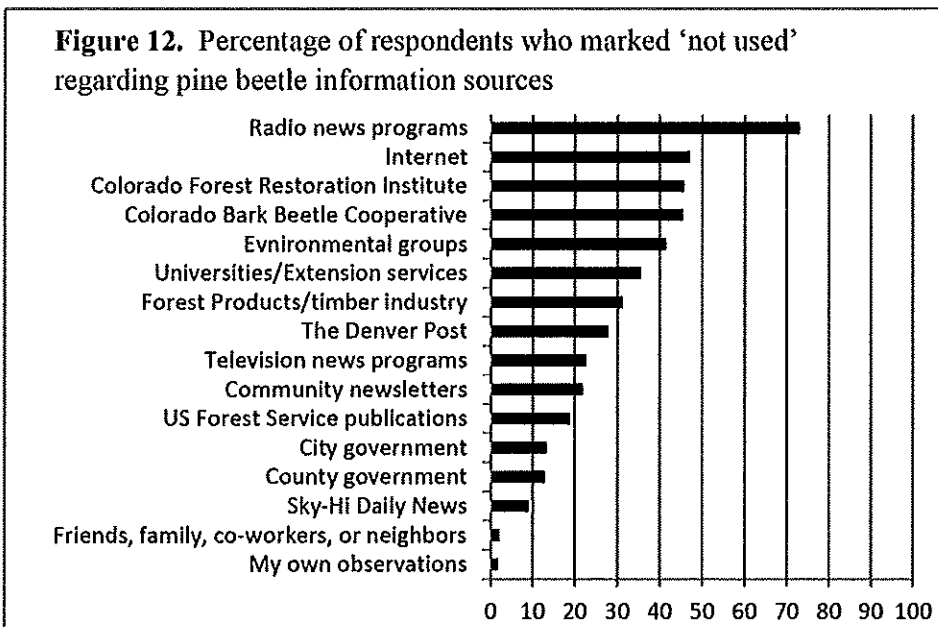


Next, we asked respondents to indicate the level of impact different information sources have had on their views about the pine beetle outbreak in Grand County. Responses ranged from 0 (no impact) to 6 (a great deal of impact).



Similar to the levels of trustworthiness of information sources, respondents rely more on their own observations, discussions with other locals, and the local newspaper for information about the outbreak (see Figure 11). Figure 12 shows the percentage of respondents who indicated they did not use each information source. Community

leaders and land managers can use these results to communicate more effectively with residents about pine beetle issues by focusing on those sources that are more trusted and have a greater impact on people's views.

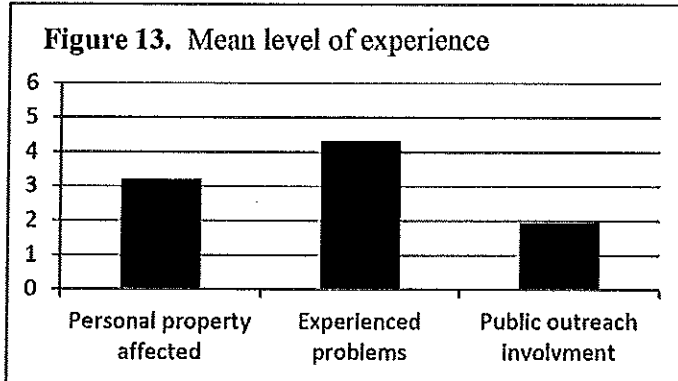


The interviews also revealed a wide range of information seeking concerning the outbreak. Residents whose property was more affected by the pine beetle were more likely to actively seek information and work with local agencies to learn about the outbreak and how to mitigate against it on their own property. A majority of

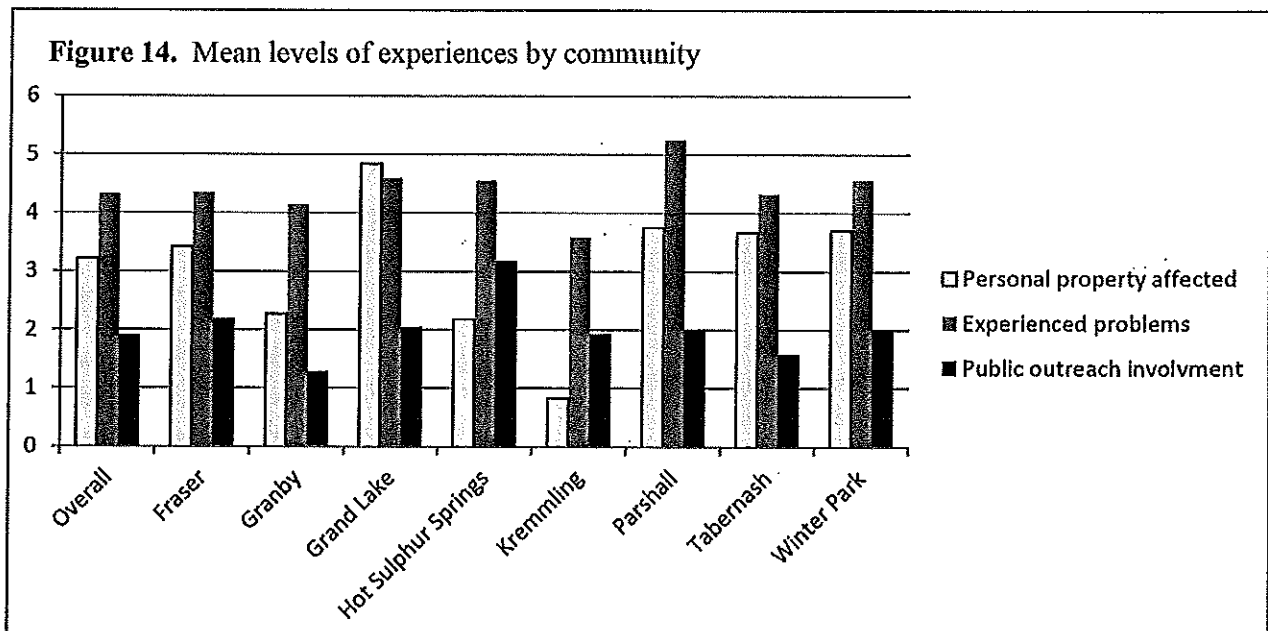
respondents indicated that as the beetle infestation has seemingly run its course, the need to find new information about the outbreak is substantially less than in earlier stages of the outbreak.

5. Personal Experiences with the Pine Beetle Outbreaks

Respondents were asked to indicate how much their personal property has been affected by the pine beetle; the extent that they or others they knew had experienced problems with blowdowns, fire,



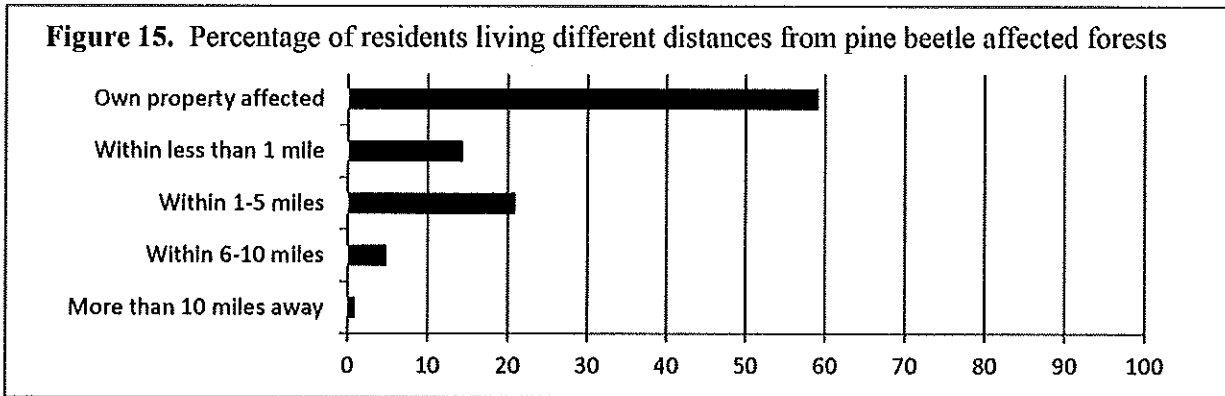
degraded aesthetics, or any other consequences related to the pine beetle outbreaks; and how involved they have been with public involvement efforts concerning management of the pine beetle outbreak in Grand County. Responses ranged from 0 (not at all) to 6 (a lot). Figure 13 presents the county-wide mean levels of personal experiences. There was a fair amount of variation between communities for each of these categories (Figure 14).



Interview participants discussed a wide range of experiences with the outbreak. While not everyone had trees on their own property affected by the outbreak, it was still a very salient issue that residents are highly aware of and that often affects their daily lives. The most common reasons for not being more engaged in public involvement efforts were that respondents were too busy, they didn't know about meetings, or they didn't think they were going to learn any new information, since the beetle has essentially come and gone.

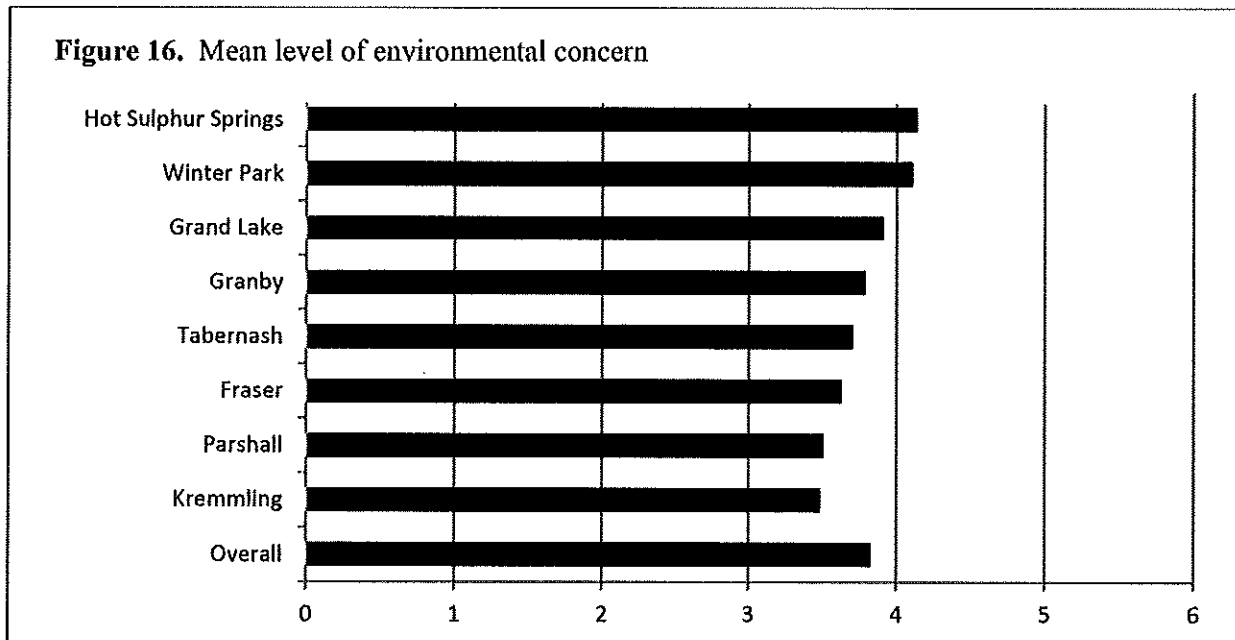
We also asked survey respondents to indicate how close they lived to a forest affected by the pine beetle outbreak. Almost 60% of respondents reported having trees on their own property affected by

the pine beetle and less than 1% lived more than 10 miles away from infected trees (Figure 15). This is a good indication of the high level of awareness of the outbreak and the prominent role that it has played in Grand County residents' lives.



6. Environmental Concern and Forest Values

We asked respondents a series of questions regarding their level of general environmental concern. Responses were averaged for each participant, and then used to compute an overall average for each community and all of Grand County (see Figure 16). Responses ranged from 0 (low environmental concern) to 6 (high environmental concern). Scores closer to 0 indicate beliefs that humans should control nature, while scores closer to 6 indicate beliefs that natural environments and processes could be harmed by too much human interaction. An overall average of 3.8 indicates a moderate level of environmental concern among respondents in Grand County, and there was not much variation in levels of environmental concern between the different communities.

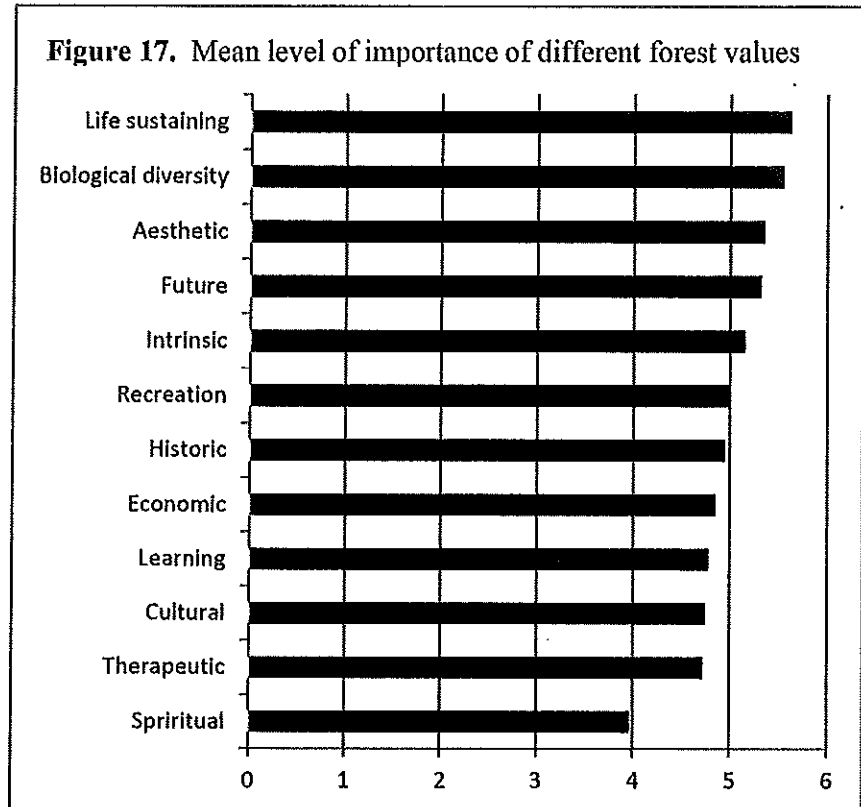


Forest Values

Respondents were also asked to rate the importance of various forest values for forests on public land.

Responses ranged from 0 (not important at all) to 6 (very important).

Results showed little variation and that most values, except perhaps spiritual, were important aspects of the forests in Grand County (see Figure 17) to respondents. There were no major variations between communities in Grand County.



7. Socio-Demographic Characteristics

Finally, we also asked respondents general demographic questions to better understand their responses. Table 3 shows basic socio-demographic characteristics of survey respondents. Most of these results were consistent with 2010 Census data for Grand County. The most significant differences between our respondents and county population were a larger portion of men (approximately 51% male), a higher median age (median age of 40), and a higher average level of education in our study than Census data indicated for Grand County.

Statistical analyses did not reveal any major differences between social-demographic groups in terms of levels or types of responses to our questions. This indicates that the differences between Census data and our demographic data should not raise concern for interpreting the results as from a representative sample of Grand County residents.

Table 3. Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Socio-Demographic Characteristics	% of Respondents	Mean/Median	Range
Age (n=231)		57 years (mean and median)	18-88
Gender (n=231)	Male Female	64.1 35.9	
Residence (n=232)	Permanent Part-time	94 6	
Years Lived in Grand County (n=225)		Mean = 23.9 years Median = 20 years	2-73 years
Property Size (acres) (n=230)		Median = 1 acre Mean = 18.4 acres	0-1300 acres
Education Level (n=231)	Less than a high school degree High school degree or GED Some college or post high school training Two year technical or associate degree Four year college degree (BA/BS) Advanced degree (Master's, JD, MD, Ph.D)	0.9 11.3 17.6 7.8 37.7 24.7	Mean = four year college degree
Household Income (n=211)	Less than \$20,000 per year \$20,000 - \$39,999 \$40,000 - \$59,999 \$60,000 - \$79,999 \$80,000 or more	5.8 11.9 20.5 20.0 41.8	Mean = \$60,000 - \$79,999
Political Orientation (n=223)	Liberal Conservative Center	28.8 44.4 26.9	Median = weak conservative

Limitations and Future Research

There are several potential limitations of this study that should be taken into consideration. First, our sample was drawn from a Grand County phone book due to financial constraints in purchasing a sample from a professional organization. Thus, any permanent residents that were for any reason not in that phone book were not represented in this study. We do not expect this to have significantly affected our findings because we believe that many residents still have land lines due to limited cell phone coverage in the area. Second, 6% of our respondents were part-time residents and the analyses for this report did not take into account any differences between permanent and part-time residents. However, several interviews with part-time residents did indicate that responses were similar. Third, we used general descriptions for forest management and economic development options instead of listing specific projects in specific locations. The details of the options we asked about may affect the levels of support among residents, so land managers and community leaders should be careful to be specific about their ideas when communicating with the public to determine the best option. Lastly, we understand the inherent limitations in effectively applying these findings to on the ground management due to budgetary and bureaucratic concerns, as well as the overwhelming amount of affected land in Grand County. Land managers and community leaders must consider many factors when making decisions, and we hope that our findings can help give direction and some indication of how residents will respond to different decisions.

This pine beetle epidemic is a dynamic phenomenon, from both an ecological and social perspective. We encourage decision makers to actively engage with the public and garner support for any plans to manage the forests and/or improve economic activity in Grand County. Future sociological research should focus on attitudes towards more specific management options, in terms of the location and type of activity as well as the expected time frame. We also suggest any future researchers work as closely as possible with land managers and community leaders to design a study that is most relevant to their immediate and future needs.

Conclusion

Throughout this study it was very clear that residents, land managers, and community leaders are passionate about this region and its abundant opportunities to live with and experience nature. They also have many concerns about the impacts of the outbreak to their community and the forests, and they mostly want to see decisions made that effectively take into account the future generations that will be affected by how the forests are managed today. Our most important recommendation is that any management activity be clearly communicated with the public well in advance of implementation, and that activities take place in a visible manner or location so everyone is aware of actions being taken to minimize impacts from the outbreak. Research findings regarding the effects of various forest management practices on the future composition of the forest, as well as the actual effect of the MPB outbreak on wildfire likelihood and/or severity should also be clearly communicated with the public.

We would like thank the various land managers, community leaders, and researchers that helped us focus our study on pertinent issues, especially Dr. Jessica Clements (CFRI), Kremmling Mayor Thomas Clark, and Dr. Courtney Flint (University of Illinois). We also sincerely thank all participants for thoughtfully offering their time and opinions throughout this research.