

PLANNERS & MANAGERS ROUNDTABLE NEWS

News & Information on Planning & Community Development
in the Roaring Fork & Colorado River Valleys

Newsletter 

August, 2003

- UPCOMING MEETING -

The [Watershed Collaborative's](#) Water Committee will meet on **Thursday, August 28 from 10am to noon at the Eagle County Community Center in El Jebel**. The meeting purpose is to express and explore the idea of compiling, formulating, and providing information (e.g. a watershed scale GIS database tool) related to current and foreseeable future challenges for water quantity issues in the Roaring Fork Watershed.

This meeting represents a first step toward creating a strategic plan for sustainable watershed management. The meeting will be a forum to brainstorm this potential project and how various groups can participate. For more information and/or to RSVP, please contact Kristine Crandall at the Roaring Fork Conservancy (970-927-1290 / birke@rof.net).

NEXT ROUNDTABLE - Mark your calendars!
Friday, September 19, 2002
2-5pm
Basalt Town Hall

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The Planners and Managers Roundtable is an informal collaborative effort to exchange information and resources, and develop shared analysis tools and management frameworks in the Roaring Fork and Colorado River Watershed.

Past Newsletters

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[July 2002](#)

[May 2002](#)

[February 2002](#)

[December 2001](#)

If you want to subscribe, please send an email with "Subscribe Planners and Managers Roundtable" to claird@hmccolorado.org

Planning Links

Local

Eagle County
www.eagle-county.com

Garfield County
www.garfield-

CONFERENCES & EVENTS

- [Workshop on Erosion Control & Stormwater Management – 8/22](#)
- [DOLA Smart Growth Workshop, September 4th in Grand Junction](#)
- [Colorado Watershed Assembly Annual Conference – 9/11- 9/12](#)
- [Rural Resort Region Affordable Housing Summit – 9/25 - 9/26](#)
- [Mountain Philanthropy Days – Perceptions and Realities of Mountain Communities – 9/28 - 9/30](#)

TOOLS & RESOURCES

- [People and Fire in Western Colorado](#)
- [Investing for Prosperity: Building Successful Communities & Economies in the Sierra Nevada](#)
- [Getting Ahead in Greater Yellowstone: Making the most of our comparative advantage](#)

NEWS BRIEFS

STATE OF THE VALLEY SYMPOSIUM A SUCCESS

Over 120 citizens, elected officials, business representatives, and planners attended HMC's State of the Valley Symposium on May 2 in Glenwood. Springs. Responses to the event range from "amazing amount of information" to "terrific overview of issues facing our region." Attendees even liked the food, although the seats were a bit hard for an 8-hour symposium.

Keynote speakers John Parr, Jim Westkott, Keith Charters, and Michael Shuman provided stimulating information on regional cooperation, demographic trends, the business argument for smart land use design, and economic development respectively. Between the keynote presentations, panelist of local experts discussed the state of the valley from the perspectives of real estate and development, banking and tourism, energy and the Latino community. Thanks again to the symposium sponsors for making the event possible: Alpine Bank, US Forest Service, Sonoran Institute, Snowmass Land Company, American Leadership Forum, The Land Studio, Blue Green, H3 Architects, and Clarion.

The proceedings of the event will be released this fall but a few of the presentations are available online at www.hmccolorado.org/stateofthevalley.htm. Contact Colin Laird at 963-5502 or claird@hmccolorado.org for more information.

COMMUNITY AND COUNTY PROFILES ONLINE

Healthy Mountain Communities has put profiles of the communities and counties in the region on its website www.hmccolorado.org/commecon. The profiles were created using the Economic Profile System (EPS) software, which was developed by the Sonoran Institute in partnership with the BLM. EPS is free software. It is available by contacting Ray Rasker at the Sonoran Institute, ray@sonoran.org.

LOVA TRAILS CORRIDOR PLAN COMPLETE

The LOVA Trails Committee has been running its completed corridor master plan up and down the I-70 corridor for review by local planning commissions and are now approaching town councils. The Garfield County Planning Commission has adopted the document as "advisory" to the County Comprehensive Plan. LOVA has received CDOT Enhancement Funding for preliminary design in South Canyon, and continues to receive support from area foundations and municipalities. Next steps are probably seeking funding for an organizational 'office' with a very part time coordinator/grant writer to generate necessary matching and project funding. For more information contact Brian Brown (brianjmbrown@earthlink.net) or Janet Steinbach at the town of Silt (Janet@townofsilt.org).

county.com

Gunnison County
www.co.gunnison.co.us

Pitkin County
www.aspenpitkin.com

City of Aspen
www.aspenpitkin.com

Town of Basalt
www.basalt.net

Town of Carbondale

City of Glenwood
Springs
www.ci.glenwood-springs.co.us

Town of New Castle

Town of Parachute

City of Rifle
www.rifleco.org

Town of Silt
www.townofsilt.org

Town of Snowmass
Village
www.tosv.com

Roaring Fork
Transportation Authority
www.rfta.com

Healthy Mountain
Communities
www.hmccolorado.org

Roaring Fork
Conservancy
www.roaringfork.org

Northwest Colorado
Council of Governments
www.nwc.cog.co.us

Associated Governments
of Northwest Colorado

email: jwhitt@rifle.net

League for Economic Assistance & Planning - Region 10
www.Region10.Net

Colorado Mountain College
www.coloradomtn.edu

State

State Homepage
www.state.co.us

Dept. of Local Affairs
www.dola.state.co.us

Dept. of Natural Resources
www.dnr.state.co.us

Dept. of Transportation
www.dot.state.co.us

Colorado Counties, Inc.
www.ccionline.org

Colorado Municipal League
www.cml.org

Colorado APA
www.apacolorado.org

Colorado SBDC
www.coloradosbdc.com

Federal

Bureau of Labor Statistics
www.bls.gov

Bureau of Land Management
www.blm.gov

US Forest Service
White River Forest
www.fs.fed.us

US Census

WILL SOUTH RIFLE'S BOOM LEAD TO NORTH RIFLE'S BUST?

The furor over Wal-Mart's impending arrival and other commercial development in south Rifle has been running at a fever pitch long before the first shovel of dirt was tossed at the groundbreaking on March 11, 2003. The south Rifle commercial development is expected to bring in more than 75,000 new shoppers a year, generating more than \$1.6 million in annual sales.

But as much excitement and anticipation that has come since the official announcement that a 145,000 square foot Wal-Mart was coming, there's also great anxiety stirring among the business owners of north Rifle. As south Rifle booms, mystery will shroud north Rifle for the next year and beyond. Can they survive as south Rifle becomes the core of business activity in a city of a little more than 7,000 people?

Most businesses in north Rifle offer shoppers unique or specific items. Destination-based businesses like the banks, Rifle Packing and Sausage Company, Columbine Ford and others don't need visibility to help them survive. Other stores, however, would benefit from extra foot traffic and visibility.

With the Wal-Mart Supercenter offering residents the convenience of groceries as well as other items, many shoppers will choose south Rifle over north Rifle, but a new 50,000 square foot City Market will be an attractive lure to many in the area. Most agree that commercial growth in south Rifle will be good for Rifle as a whole. Where the mystery lies is how will the business sector two and three miles to the north adapt, adjust and survive once the south Rifle commercial monster comes to life?

Based on an article by Dale Shrull, 7.31.2003, www.citizentelegram.com

LAND USE PLANNING FOR THE ROAN PLATEAU

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is currently in the process of preparing a Resource Management Plan Amendment and Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/EIS) for the Roan Plateau planning area. The Roan Plateau is located northwest of Rifle and north of Parachute. The planning area covers about 73,602 acres of federal land. Included in the planning area are former Naval Oil Shale Reserves 1 and 3, which were transferred to BLM in 1997. Recoverable gas reserves have the potential to represent up to 37 percent of Colorado's current reserves. The success rate of wells drilled in the vicinity is about 97 percent. The area also supports a number of rare plants and plant communities, including some such as the Parachute Penstemon, which are restricted to the Green River Shale Formation and occur nowhere else in the world. Some of the most pristine riparian systems in Colorado are also found on the Plateau. They harbor some the last pure populations of Colorado River cutthroat trout. To add to the mix, three parcels of land have also been determined to contain wilderness character.

The presence of many unique and valuable resources has resulted in a high level of public interest. BLM has been working with various members of the public, industry, interest groups, organizations, the State of Colorado, and local governments. The purpose of this involvement has been to identify issues, develop alternatives, and prepare a thorough analysis in the Draft RMP/EIS Amendment. Release of the document is planned for early this fall. There will be a 90-day public comment period on the draft prior to preparation of a final plan.

For more information BLM's land use planning process contact Greg Goodenow (greg.goodenow@co.blm.gov) with the BLM in Glenwood Springs.

GARFIELD COUNTY REDESIGNS COMP. PLAN STUDY AREAS

The Garfield County Planning Commission approved a new Study Area map for the County's Comprehensive plan that focuses on municipalities as 'communities of interest.' The new

map splits the existing Study Areas 1-3 into six new Study Areas that coincide better with municipal urban service area boundaries and zip codes as well. "This allows us to better customize future IGA's and MOU's to joint municipal/county concerns, and focus more on 'neighborhood' plans in the County's growth corridors," says county planner, Randy Russell.

GARFIELD COUNTY DEVELOPMENT CODE REWRITE PROCESS UNDERWAY

For those of you on this mailing list, especially, you may want to note the evening of **August 14** to attend one of the kick-off meetings for the Garfield County Code Rewrite process. Barbara Green, of Sullivan Green Seavy, LLC will lead a discussion and exploration of development process issues, ideas and alternatives that will assist the County in developing new code provisions. This meeting is targeted for area developers, consultants, lawyers and planners to get into 'the guts' of process and definitional issues, and to solicit early in that process ideas, alternatives and issues that can assist the County in code revisions. This meeting is designed for people 'in the profession' to help focus on the nuts and bolts of procedures and codes. Barbara Green is a well-respected planning and legal consultant, and the evening should be informative as well as productive. The meeting will be held in the Commission Chambers, Room 100, Courthouse Plaza Building, 108 8th Street in Glenwood Springs starting at 6:30 with light refreshments.

There will also be a meeting customized to the needs and concerns of the agricultural community, **Aug. 12, 6:30 PM** at the North Hall of the County Fairgrounds in Rifle. This meeting will be presented by GarCo Planning staff. On **Aug. 27th and 28th** in the evenings the County will host major public kick-off meetings, with open-ended topics and discussion. Specific locations and times to be announced.

BASALT WEIGHS OPTIONS FOR RELOCATING TRAIL PARK RESIDENTS

With the Roaring Fork Trailer Park under new ownership and in the flood plain, Basalt and Pitkin County officials are working with residents and the developer to relocate the 52 families in the trailer park.

The Town has known it will be necessary to relocate residents out of the floodplain since it learned about the dynamics and dangers of the river in the River Master Plan process last year. The park property was recently purchased for roughly \$4 million by an Illinois-based development group that wants to redevelop the site into a mixed-use commercial project.

The trailer park, although in the heart of Basalt, is actually in Pitkin County. The County has previously said that it will not change the current use for the parcel. If there is to be redevelopment, the developer will need to be annexed into the Town of Basalt, which has an ordinance that 100% of existing affordable housing on a site must be replaced if the site is redeveloped. While there is no guarantee that the displaced families will get the new housing, the Town is working hard to help them make the transition equitably.

In an effort to work more closely with trailer park residents, the Town hosted a River Corridor Plan Design Charette between July 14-18. Roughly 200 people attended the open house, half of which were Latino residents of the trailer parks along the river. The charette was the first step in community planning process that could help relocate trailer park residents in town. Basalt is planning to use relocation of the mobile home park residents as a condition of annexation. Contact Kay Philip at 92704701 or Kayp@basalt.net for more information.

GLENWOOD AND GARFIELD HOLD JOINT PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

At the request of Dan Richardson, Glenwood City Councilman and Tresi Houpt, Garfield County Commissioner, the Planning Commissions of the City of Glenwood Springs and Garfield County held a joint meeting on May 28th to discuss common areas of concern and explore ways of working together cooperatively in the future. Each Commission reviewed the other's Comprehensive Plan in advance of that meeting, and staff acquainted both

www.census.gov

Roundtable Resources

[Newsletter archives](#)

[Resource Reports](#)

[Sample Codes](#)

Roundtable Contacts

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commissions with the regulatory tools and documents in effect which guide decision-making at the city and county level. The residual product of that meeting will be some joint analysis of specific growth areas by city and county staff, focusing at first on the west Glenwood Mall area where the city and county own a checkerboard relationship of boundaries, and the 4 Mile Canyon area and urban service boundaries with some lessons learned from the Red Feather development vote.

GLENWOOD VOTERS CLIP RED FEATHER RIDGE'S WINGS; ANNEXATION NIXED

Red Feather Ridge was defeated in a special city election Tuesday by more than 1,000 votes. The final tally was 1,886 no votes to 671 voters in support of the proposed development.

Red Feather Ridge was a 149-lot subdivision planned for 132 acres on the east side of Four Mile Road, just outside the city limits of Glenwood Springs. The plan included open space, park land and land for a new city cemetery. City Council approved annexation and zoning for the project in a 4-3 vote Jan. 8.

More than 1,000 people who oppose the project signed a petition circulated by CVRG asking City Council to refer the project's fate to voters. Council agreed to refer the question to voters. With the city annexation and zoning rejected, MidFirst Bank will move forward with selling the 57 lots approved under the original county plan.

Based on article by Greg Masse and Heather McGregor, 6.25.2003 www.postindependent

MARKETPLACE SHUT DOWN IN CARBONDALE

Carbondale residents defeated Crystal River Marketplace 787-601 Tuesday in what is believed to be a record voter turnout. The vote means California developer Brian Huster must come up with an alternative plan to build a shopping center on his 24-acre property on Highway 133, It is already zoned for commercial uses.

A total of 1,388 of Carbondale's 2,700 registered voters cast ballots in the special election, which followed approval in February by the Carbondale Board of Trustees. The previous turnout record was 957 in the 2002 trustee election.

Crystal River Marketplace opponents, first led by Mountain Folks for Global Justice and later the Carbondale Town Mothers, objected to the 125,000-square-foot big-box anchor tenant the developer promised. They said the shopping center would create traffic impacts on Highway 133, and was out of scale with the rest of the town. Supporters, including the Carbondale Chamber of Commerce, said Carbondale needed the increased sales tax revenues the Marketplace would bring, and residents needed the shopping opportunities

Based on article by Lynn Burton, 7.16.2003 www.postindependent

SONORAN INSTITUTE PROCESS FEATURED AT NATIONAL NACO CONFERENCE

The National Association of Counties invited Commissioner John Martin and Garfield County Long Range Planner Randy Russell to serve on a panel at their national convention in Milwaukee July 12 -15. The 20-minute panel slot covered the team building process That Eagle and Garfield County co-sponsored last year that has grown into our Watershed Collaborative and led to the Impact Fee Workshop last November and the State of the Valleys Symposium this May, among many other residual products. The handout focused on the team building process, and is available from Randy Russell at randyrussell@garfield-county.com.

NWCCOG RELEASES STUDY OF SECOND HOMEOWNERS

Two out of every three people who own homes in Summit County don't actually live in

Summit County. Indeed, in the four High Country counties about 60 percent of all residences are second or third homes.

That trend seems poised to continue, according to a study released Tuesday by the Northwest Colorado Council of Governments (NWCCOG) on the effects of second homeowners on the social and economic environments of Summit, Pitkin, Eagle and Grand counties.

"The study is trying to get at, "What is the meaning, what is the effect of second homes?" said Jim Westcott, the state demographer. "(Planners) need to know what services they're going to be confronted with."

Westcott said that the NWCCOG counties may see even greater growth than the study suggests because of the region's connection to the Front Range.

"The Front Range has a disproportionately higher range of baby boomers than the rest of the country," he said. "Not only does Colorado expect to keep its baby boomers, but there's a real expectation to attract more baby boomers."

One dimension he noted was the development of downtown Denver, which has experienced an increased focus on condominium sales that are marketed with the prospect of time also spent in the mountains.

According to the study, the majority of second home values, as expected, were well above those of primary residences. The median incomes of residents versus nonresidents were almost mirror opposites with nonresidents tending to earn at least \$100,000 per year and residents averaging between \$15,000 to \$100,000.

Although the direct connection of such phenomena to social impacts has not been yet been drawn (the social and economic indicators the data will help provide will not be available until at least this fall), it's apparent that the whole phenomenon of vacation homes is a major economic driver for the region according to Westcott.

For more information on the NWCCOG's study visit http://nwc.cog.co.us/Second%20Home%20Study/second_home_study.htm

Based on article by Aidan Leonard, 7.30.2003, www.sumitdaily.com

OBERMEYER PLACE WINS APPROVAL IN ASPEN

After heaping praise on ski-wear-icon-turned developer Klaus Obermeyer, the Aspen City Council gave his Obermeyer Place redevelopment project unanimous approval. Developers plan to begin construction next spring, transforming a funky corner of Aspen into a new mix of residences, space for service/industrial businesses and medical offices. Two levels of underground parking, including 20 spaces designated for city use, are part of the plan. So is sprucing up the recycling center in the park and creating a pedestrian walkway through the development that will link Main Street and the park.

The project saw a year of review and revision by a city-appointed task force as part of the city's COWOP (Development Reasonably Necessary for the Convenience and Welfare of the Public) process, working with a development team assembled by Obermeyer. Under this section of the city land use code this type of land-use review process allows for a private property owner to be a co-applicant with the city on a land-use project. Obermeyer Place is the first development to go through the COWOP process.

In all, Obermeyer Place will include up to 265,000 square feet of space, including nearly 39,000 square feet for service/commercial/industrial uses; 21 free-market residences; 21 deed-restricted units and roughly 9,000 square feet of medical office space. Aspen Valley Hospital has an agreement with Obermeyer for a long-term lease of the office space with an option to

purchase it.

Based on an article by Janet Urquhart, 4.15.2003, www.aspentimes.com

EDWARDS AREA COMMUNITY PLAN ADOPTED

This March, Eagle County Commissioners adopted a new community plan for the Edwards area replacing the plan that was originally adopted in 1986. This plan provides a vision and direction on land use and capital improvements that may occur in Edwards over the next ten to fifteen years. The Future Land Use Map shows future development being focused in the core of Edwards and reducing in density as the distance from the center increases. The Goals and Objectives are items that shall be considered when reviewing future development proposals and planning for capital improvements. The update process began in 1999 with the help of a dedicated group of residents called the Update Committee

Contact Senior Planner, Rebecca Leonard at 328-8749 or rleonard@eagle-county.com for more information on the adopted plan.

Based on Eagle County News Release, 3.1.2003

HMC PROFILED IN NEW PUBLICATION FROM SIERRA BUSINESS COUNCIL

Healthy Mountain Communities' regional effort in transportation and affordable housing are profiled in the newly released publication *Investing for Prosperity* from the Sierra Business Council. The 148-page publication is available from the Sierra Business Council for \$25. See description below. You can see the HMC profile at www.hmccolorado.org/hmcinthenews.htm.

PEOPLE IN PLANNING

EAGLE COUNTY WELCOMES IN NEW DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

Eagle County welcomed in a new director of housing this spring. KT Gazunis comes to the job with a strong foundation in affordable housing issues, development. KT has spent the past four years as executive director of Habitat for Humanity in Eagle and Lake counties and most of her career engaged in private and public sector housing, finance and property management, and the many facets of economic and community development.

Gazunis is returning to the Eagle County team where she served as executive director for economic development from 1987 to 1990. Her responsibilities as housing director include development and coordination of a comprehensive housing and property management program. You can contact KT at 970-328-9769 or ktgazunis@eagle-county.com.

CONFERENCES & EVENTS

WORKSHOP ON EROSION CONTROL AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Friday August 22, 2003, Glenwood Springs Community Center 100 Wulfsohn Road, Glenwood Springs

Cost is only \$45 for the session and includes:

- Full day of tuition
- Erosion Control/Stormwater Management Manual
- Lunch
- CDOT Erosion Control Supervisor certification (optional exam)

Please RSVP and/or address questions to Troy Wineland by August 15, 2003.

NWCCOG Water Quality and Quantity Program, 970.468.0295 x 104, or email twineland@nwc.cog.co.us

DOLA SMART GROWTH WORKSHOP, SEPTEMBER 4TH IN GRAND JUNCTION

The Department of Local Affairs, Smart Growth folks are hosting their annual workshop in Grand Junction, September 4th. These one-day sessions are always jam-packed with good information, examples of innovative projects, and the latest skinny on grant and assistance programs. This one will be held again at the Whitman Building at the Museum of Western Colorado, 248 S. 4th St. \$40 includes lunch and usually a bunch of helpful materials. For agenda updates and to register see them at the DOLA Smart Growth office website, or contact Andy Hill at andy.hill@state.co.us.

COLORADO WATERSHED ASSEMBLY ANNUAL CONFERENCE

September 11-12, Ramada Inn, Glenwood Springs.

Registration fee of \$75.00 includes admission to all plenary and concurrent sessions, entry to exhibits, Thursday and Friday breakfasts, Thursday luncheon, refreshment breaks, Thursday Barbecue Picnic Dinner, and conference folder. Registration after August 30 will not guarantee conference meals.

Additional information is available at: www.coloradowater.org/cwa_2003_conference.htm

RURAL RESORT REGION AFFORDABLE MOUNTAIN HOUSING SUMMIT

Mark your calendars! The 2003 Rural Resort Region Summit on Mountain Workforce Housing is scheduled for September 25 and 26, 2003 in Grand Lake, Colorado.

Since January 2003, four committees comprised of representatives from all areas of the eight-county region have been working to develop specific recommendations to address regional workforce housing issues. At the September summit, each committee will present their recommendations. The summit is sponsored by FannieMae, Millennium Bank (in Edwards, Colorado), the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority, and Wells Fargo Bank. Although there will be no charge to attend the summit, space is limited and registration is required. The final summit agenda and registration forms will be available in early August.

Topics will include:

- the state of the region,
- current and projected workforce demands,
- results of NWCCOG's second home study,
- commuter patterns and housing needs,
- creative partnerships and financing options,
- regulatory barriers,
- tools and resources available to employers, and
- a regional homebuyer's education plan.

For more information on the 2003 RRR Summit on Mountain Workforce Housing, contact Liz Finn at (970) 468-0295 ext. 123 or lfinn@nwc.cog.co.us.

MOUNTAIN PHILANTHROPY DAYS – PERCEPTIONS AND REALITIES OF MOUNTAIN COMMUNITIES

September 28-30, Marriot Mountain Resort at Vail

Meet with Colorado grantmakers. Connect with other nonprofit and public agencies. Learn about the work of the nonprofit community.

Registration Fees: Includes pre-event training, all workshops, all meals and the roundtable sessions.

\$75.00 per person - postmarked *before* September 1.

\$85.00 per person - postmarked *after* September 1.

Register online at www.mtnphil.org

Or contact Renee Ryman, P.O. Box 5043, Edwards, CO 81632, Phone: 970328-2874 Email: mpd@vail.net

TOOLS & RESOURCES

PEOPLE AND FIRE IN WESTERN COLORADO

People and Fire in Western Colorado is a report on focus group attitudes, beliefs, opinions and desires regarding wildfire in the wildland-urban interface of Colorado's West Slope. It is filled with the ideas and concerns of over 275 participants from 29 community focus or discussion groups throughout Colorado's western slope. The project's staff and facilitators with the [Office of Community Services](#) and partners in the Colorado Bureau of Land Management call it a "working report" in order to encourage further dialogue about its contents and potential applications.

The report is online at www.southwestcoloradofires.org or contact Sam Burns at (970) 247-7193 / Burns_S@fortlewis.edu.

INVESTING FOR PROSPERITY: BUILDING SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITIES & ECONOMIES IN THE SIERRA NEVADA

Investing for Prosperity: Building Successful Communities and Economies in the Sierra Nevada is a new guide from the Sierra Business Council on economic and community development that offers hundreds of ways to achieve prosperity in fast-growing rural regions. This attractive and well-researched book brings together many of the latest innovations that rural communities across North America are using to grow their economies, improve their towns, and build their "social capital." One of the book's key findings is that communities in the Sierra Nevada can diversify and expand their economies in ways that were never possible over the last 150 years, thanks to new technologies and the market premium put on the Sierra's natural assets and livable communities. 148 pages. \$25. Visit www.sbcouncil.org/publications.asp to order and view a pdf file of the first chapter.

GETTING AHEAD IN GREATER YELLOWSTONE: MAKING THE MOST OF OUR COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE

The Sonoran Institute's SocioEconomics Program has produced a report on the Greater Yellowstone economy. Greater Yellowstone is a land of tremendous opportunity – and substantial risk. The economy is vibrant, as reflected by job creation, income growth and population increases. The region prospers in an era when many rural areas suffer sharp declines. Why? One reason is our unusually high quality of life, which attracts energetic, creative and hard-working people who make the economy hum.

But rapid growth also threatens to overwhelm the very qualities that fuel this economic renaissance. Just as important, not everyone is benefiting from the current transition. How can we help individuals, families and communities thrive? By recognizing that our natural landscape and friendly towns are chief economic assets and will be key to staying competitive in years to come.

The report is available in pdf format at www.sonoran.org/programs/si_se_program_grt_yel.html

Newsletter contributors

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