

CHAPTER 2 REGIONAL SETTING & ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

2.1 Regional Setting and Land Use

Gunnison-Crested Butte Regional Airport (GUC) is owned by Gunnison County, and is situated within the limits of the City of Gunnison. Under the state’s constitution, the City of Gunnison is a home rule municipality, meaning that it can exercise powers unless specifically prohibited by the state or federal government.

As noted in the City’s Land Use Development Code, 2014: “All other powers authorized by statute or by common law for the regulation of land uses, land development and subdivision, including, but not limited to, the power to abate nuisances.” As a result, GUC is directly affected by the planning and land use controls exercised by the County and the City.

The City and County of Gunnison have distinct authority over the real property surrounding the Airport. County land use authority is primarily on the southern and western flanks of the Airport facilities, and the City boundary encompasses the vast majority of the air-operation facilities, the airport terminal building, and the land uses north and east of the Airport.

The County uses a performance-based planning approach that is distinct from traditional district zones. On the other hand, the City uses a more traditional district zone approach, and that portion of the Airport within the city limits is within the City’s Industrial District zone. The real property is not exempt from City development standards. In 2003, the City and County entered into an agreement concerning shared Land Use authority:

STATUTORY AUTHORITY FOR SHARED LAND USE PERMITTING REVIEW:

The State of Colorado specifically allows cities and counties to enter into intergovernmental agreements to encourage cooperative land use planning between the two. It also requires municipalities to plan for land uses, utilities and roads within the area three miles outside of their boundaries, so that if those lands are annexed, the infrastructure and land uses are compatible with those already in the City.

The County has jurisdiction over permitting land uses in that area, until they are annexed into the City. The City of Gunnison and Gunnison County adopted the Three Mile Plan/Urban Growth Boundary Intergovernmental Agreement July 3, 2001. As part of that Agreement, the entities agreed to jointly review Land Use Change Permit applications for projects proposed within the Three Mile Plan Area and Urban Growth Boundary outside the City limits. The Agreement directed that processes be designed to review projects that are located in the Area and outlined different requirements for review in the Urban Growth Boundary and outside it.

These Guidelines for reviewing Land Use Change Permit Applications Within the Gunnison Three-Mile Area, describe the County's general Land Use Change Permit application review process, and outline the review processes required by the IGA including flow charts that illustrate the timelines and key actions of the City's review.

Gunnison County has set specific goals for the Airport as part of its Strategic Plan (2013):

C. Promote Prosperous, Collaborative and Healthy Communities

Strategic Results

1. Gunnison County will provide economic development leadership in the following areas:

- Pursuing abundant, redundant and affordable broadband infrastructure;
- Building consensus-driven trail and recreation opportunity development;
- Growing community and Western State Colorado University relationships;
- Promoting local food production; and
- Convening and facilitating decision makers for actions in economic development.

Lead: Community Development Director Russ Forrest

Team: Commissioner Swenson, Commissioner Chamberland and Commissioner Houck.

2. By December 31, 2014, the Gunnison County airport general and commercial aviation operations will meet the needs of our community and visitors by ensuring year-round operations and multiple daily flights to Denver.

Lead: Airport Manager Richard Lamport

Team: Public Works Director Marlene Crosby and Facilities and Grounds Director John Cattles (p. 5).

Gunnison County's Land Use Resolution, amended August 19, 2014, specifically protects the area around the Airport: "**NO INTERFERENCE WITH AIRPORT PATHS OR ZONES.** There shall be no interference with established airport flight paths or structural height restrictions within airport influence zones." (Section 13-103, D, 3 H, 3d). As noted above, given FAA's policy regarding restricting certain types of land uses in runway protection zones (RPZ), it is possible that the White Water Park on the Gunnison River, situated in the Runway 6 RPZ, may be categorized by FAA as "interference with airport paths or zones."

The City of Gunnison's last master plan was completed in 2007; in 2014, the City initiated a process to develop a new master plan. The first two phases of the process, including initial citizen input and development of the *Community Analysis* were completed in February 2015. The next phase includes the

development of a community vision statement, conducting future trend analyses associated with the transportation system functions, land use and development patterns, and economic development.

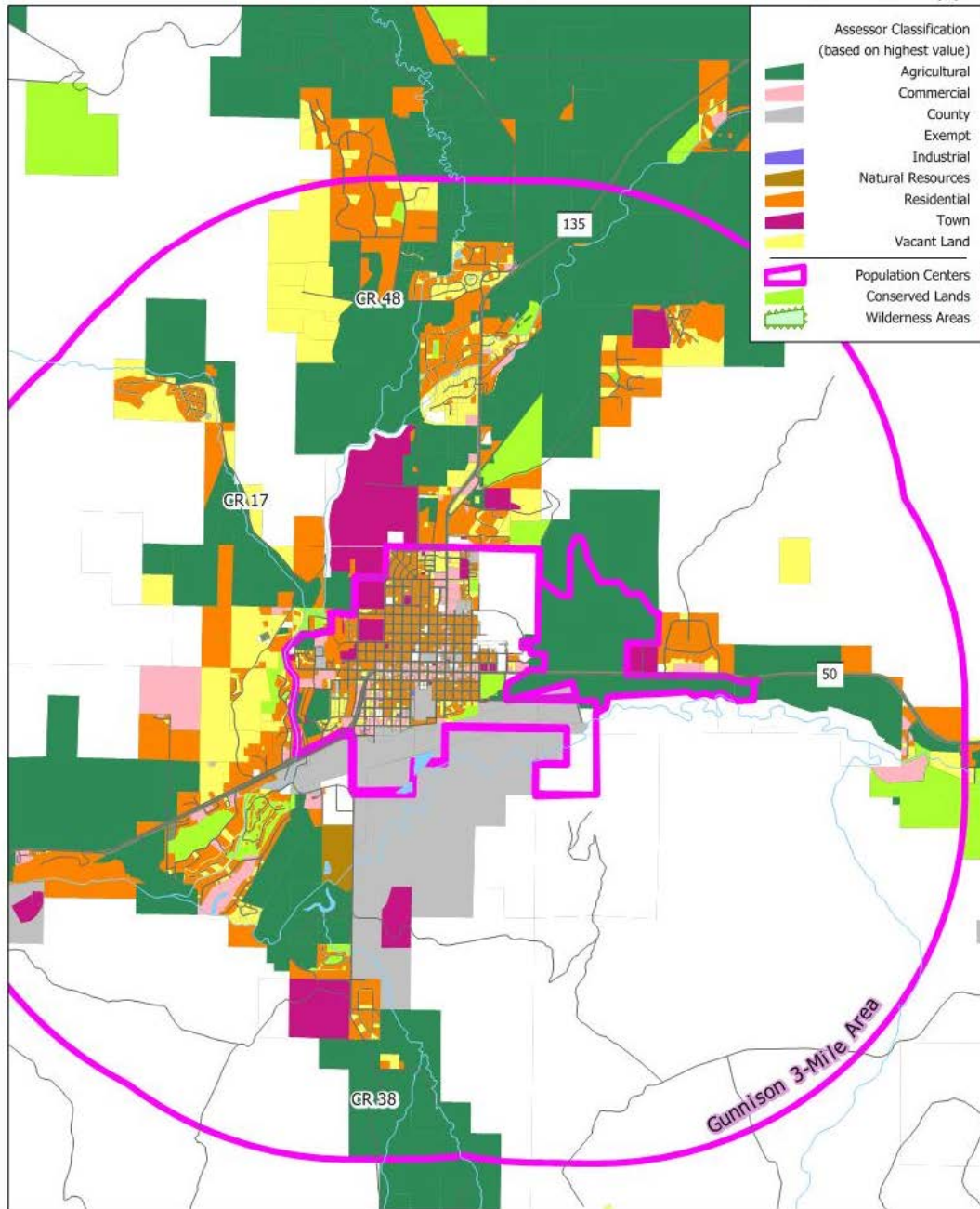
In April 2015, the City initiated an urban highway design project that will focus on developing a “Complete Streets” design concept for the City’s urban highway corridors. The emphasis of the project will be to develop preliminary construction plans for the highway corridor that focus on pedestrian, bike, and automobile functions and urban streetscape design; highway corridor entrances will also be an emphasis of the design project.

The *City of Gunnison Master Plan, 2007*, notes that one of the City’s strengths is: “A functional airport capable of handling commercial passenger jet aircraft.” The City’s Master Plan also noted:

“This (west) entrance to the City provides the best view of the "W" on Tenderfoot Mountain, but is characterized by the presence of large airport hangars on the south side of Highway 50. To the north is a mix of residential uses, followed by commercial strip development. Efforts continue by City staff and the County Beautification Committee and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to create more pleasing entrances to the Airport and to the City. This entrance should be monitored so that the community edge is clearly defined.”

“Although not connected by a major arterial, the south entrance to the City is the entrance for those entering Gunnison by air. Gunnison County has made significant improvements in recent years to improve the aesthetics in the vicinity surrounding the Airport. However, this remains an area of concern for the Gunnison County Beautification Committee and the City. Residents in this vicinity are encouraged to pursue CityScape grant funds.”

FIGURE 2-1 GUNNISON COUNTY LAND USE MAP



Source: Gunnison County

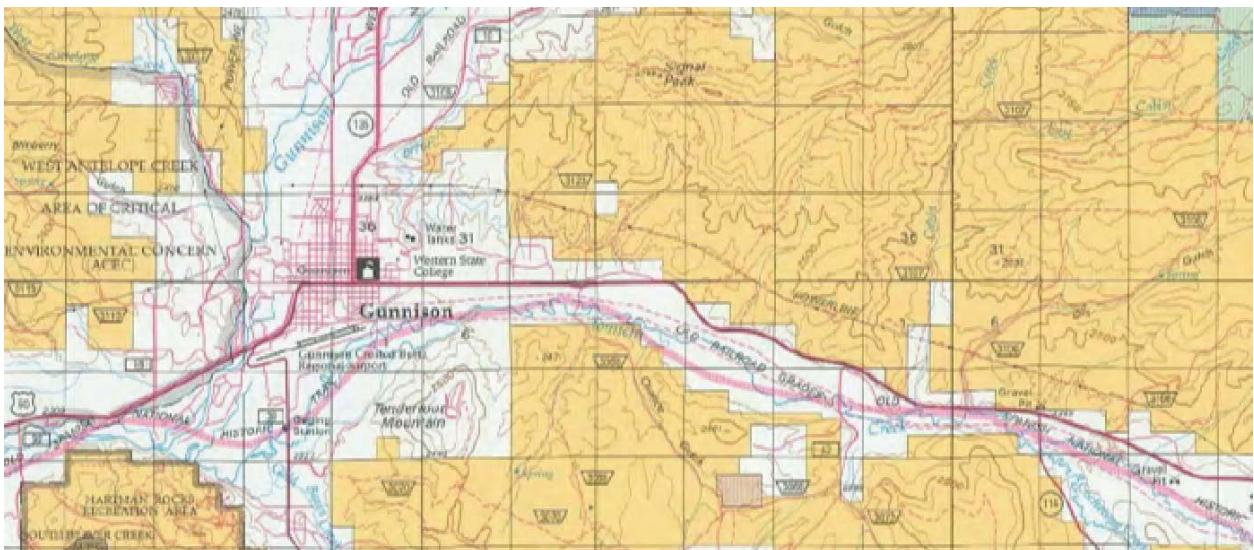
Regarding the “soundscape” element in the City Master Plan, it is noted: “Particularly, the Gunnison County Airport (which is located in the City limits) creates the most significant impacts with respect to noise pollution.”

As noted elsewhere, the BOCC adopted a voluntary curfew at the Airport that runs between 10:30pm and 6am local time.

GUC is zoned by the County as “County Exempt”/industrial. Land uses adjacent to GUC include:

- Single and multi-family residential, including apartments and condos adjacent to airport property
- Commercial/retail/business
- Light industrial
- Open space (primarily to the south and northeast)
- Conservation/Public - Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- Recreational
- Institutional

FIGURE 2-2 PUBLICLY-OWNED LAND (YELLOW) - BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT (BLM)



Source: Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

FIGURE 2-3 MULTI- AND SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENCES ADJACENT TO GUC



Source: Google Earth

FIGURE 2-4 MULTI- AND SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENCES ADJACENT TO GUC



Source: Google Earth

2.1.1 Future Land Uses

As discussed below, the area south of Runway 6-24 is designated wetlands and floodplains. There is rising terrain further south, all of which significantly limits development. There are proposed off-airport developments in the vicinity of GUC.

One of the largest is Gunnison Rising, which proposes a total of 1,245 acres for residential, mixed use, and recreational development (Figure 2-5). Gunnison Rising was annexed into the City in 2010. The annexation is governed by two principal documents which include the *Gunnison Rising PUD Development Standards* (2010, amended) and the *Gunnison Rising Annexation Agreement* (2010).

The PUD Development standards, which can be found on the City’s website, are a combination of use and design standards directing the development of the master plan area. The Annexation Agreement is a contractual document addressing a variety of issues including, but not limited to, future land dedications, development financing responsibilities, water right conveyances, and service responsibilities. Exhibit J of the recorded *Annexation Agreement* is an established avigation easement dedicated to the Board of County Commissioners.

Gunnison Rising states that it will be “divided into three distinct parcels separated by Highway 50—the North, South, and East Parcels. Developer has completed the annexation of 633 acres:

- 406 acres—North Parcel
- 187 acres—South Parcel
- 40 acres—CDOT roadway and other contiguous parcels”

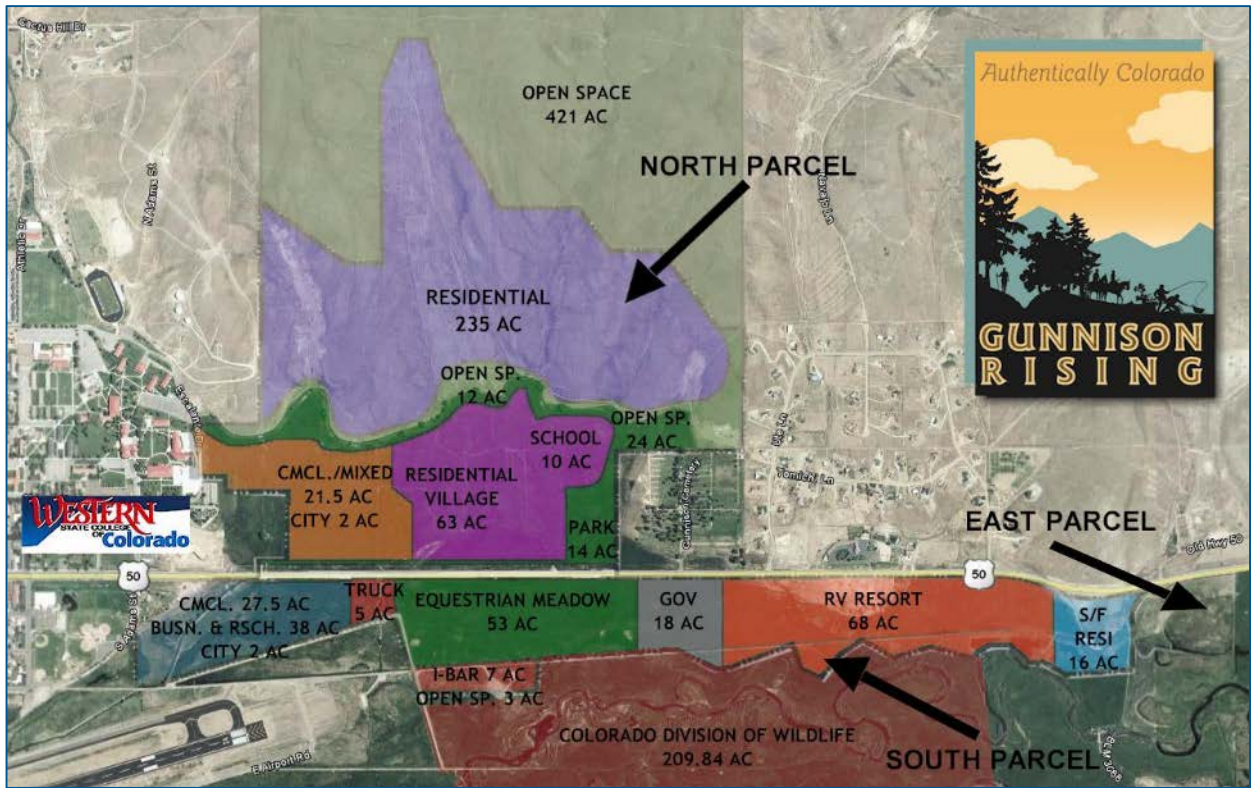
As the Airport sponsor, Gunnison County is legally encumbered by the FAA’s Sponsor Grant Assurances. One of the assurances states:

“21. Compatible Land Use

It (i.e. the Airport sponsor) will take appropriate action, to the extent reasonable, including the adoption of zoning laws, to restrict the use of land adjacent to or in the immediate vicinity of the Airport to activities and purposes compatible with normal airport operations, including landing and takeoff of aircraft.”

FAA defines compatible land uses based on a number of factors, discussed in more detail below (Section 2.6). In general, residential land uses on or immediately adjacent to an airport are not compatible in relation to noise generated by aircraft operations.

FIGURE 2-5 PROPOSED GUNNISON RISING DEVELOPMENT




Source: City of Gunnison

2.2 Socioeconomic Trends in Gunnison County and Colorado

Gunnison County is home to a broad range of businesses, residents (both year-round and seasonal), as well as year-round activities and attractions. With an area of 3,239 square miles, the County has one of the lowest population densities in the state, with 4.3 people per square mile compared the statewide average of 41.5 people per square mile.

FIGURE 2-6 GUNNISON COUNTY PROFILE



County Profile

People Quickfacts		
	Gunnison County	Colorado
Population, 2012 estimate	15,475	5,189,458
Population, 2010 (April 1) estimates base	15,324	5,029,196
Population, percent change, April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2012	1.0%	3.2%
Population, 2010	15,324	5,029,196
Persons under 5 years, percent, 2012	5.0%	6.5%
Persons under 18 years, percent, 2012	18.3%	23.7%
Persons 65 years and over, percent, 2012	10.0%	11.8%
Female persons, percent, 2012	46.1%	49.8%
White alone, percent, 2012 (a)	94.8%	88.1%
Black or African American alone, percent, 2012 (a)	0.4%	4.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent, 2012 (a)	2.4%	1.6%
Asian alone, percent, 2012 (a)	0.6%	3.0%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent, 2012 (a)	Z	0.2%
Two or More Races, percent, 2012	1.8%	2.8%
Hispanic or Latino, percent, 2012 (b)	9.0%	21.0%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent, 2012	88.1%	69.6%
Living in same house 1 year & over, percent, 2007-2011	70.0%	80.8%
Foreign born persons, percent, 2007-2011	4.4%	9.7%
Language other than English spoken at home, percent age 5+, 2007-2011	9.4%	16.8%
High school graduate or higher, percent of persons age 25+, 2007-2011	94.3%	89.9%
Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons age 25+, 2007-2011	51.9%	36.7%
Veterans, 2007-2011	1,119	405,895
Mean travel time to work (minutes), workers age 16+, 2007-2011	13.6	24.4
Housing units, 2011	11,505	2,230,459
Homeownership rate, 2007-2011	61.0%	65.9%
Housing units in multi-unit structures, percent, 2007-2011	28.0%	25.8%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2007-2011	\$327,400	\$236,800
Households, 2007-2011	6,447	1,962,753
Persons per household, 2007-2011	2.2	2.51
Per capita money income in the past 12 months (2011 dollars), 2007-2011	\$28,280	\$31,039
Median household income, 2007-2011	\$50,091	\$58,244
Persons below poverty level, percent, 2007-2011	16.3%	12.9%

Source: Gunnison County 2014 Budget

Like much of Colorado, particularly the Western Slope Region, major attractions in Gunnison County include its geography, scenery, and weather. The *Gunnison County Economic Indicators Report*, August, 2014, notes the interconnectedness of the various communities, activities, and attractions (Figure 2-7).

FIGURE 2-7 INTERCONNECT COMMUNITIES

Interconnected Community

Gunnison County is an interrelated and interdependent community. The major hubs of the County—the city of Gunnison and the towns of Crested Butte and Mt. Crested Butte, make up most of the year-round population of citizens. The County is also made up of smaller, diverse communities including Marble, Pitkin, Ohio City, and Somerset. The County is connected by:

- Western State Colorado University
- Crested Butte Mountain Resort
- Gunnison-Crested Butte Regional Airport
- Gunnison Valley Regional Transportation Authority
- Gunnison Valley Hospital
- RE1-J School District
- Outdoor recreational amenities
- Tourism in all areas

There does appear to be a shift in the attitudes of government agencies, citizens and businesses in the past several years toward more collaborative working relationships. It will be critical moving forward that the communities, organizations, businesses and citizens acknowledge, understand and enable the connectivity and relationships that can make the County thrive.

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and U.S. Census data show that nearly equal numbers of residents commute up or down valley—residents living in Crested Butte South commute to Gunnison for work, just as residents in Gunnison commute to Crested Butte for work. Gunnison’s importance to Crested Butte will continue to grow, as a hub for employment and a lower cost

alternative for housing. Gunnison is also the entrance point for visitors to Crested Butte, whether it be the airport or the highway, the look and feel of Gunnison matters to visitors and businesses in Crested Butte. Similarly, the success of Western State Colorado University (WSCU) is important to Gunnison and Crested Butte. Stable and/or increasing populations of students is beneficial in present economic conditions because the students are an economic driver and WSCU is a significant employer. WSCU students also lead to future residents, business owners and visitors in Gunnison County.

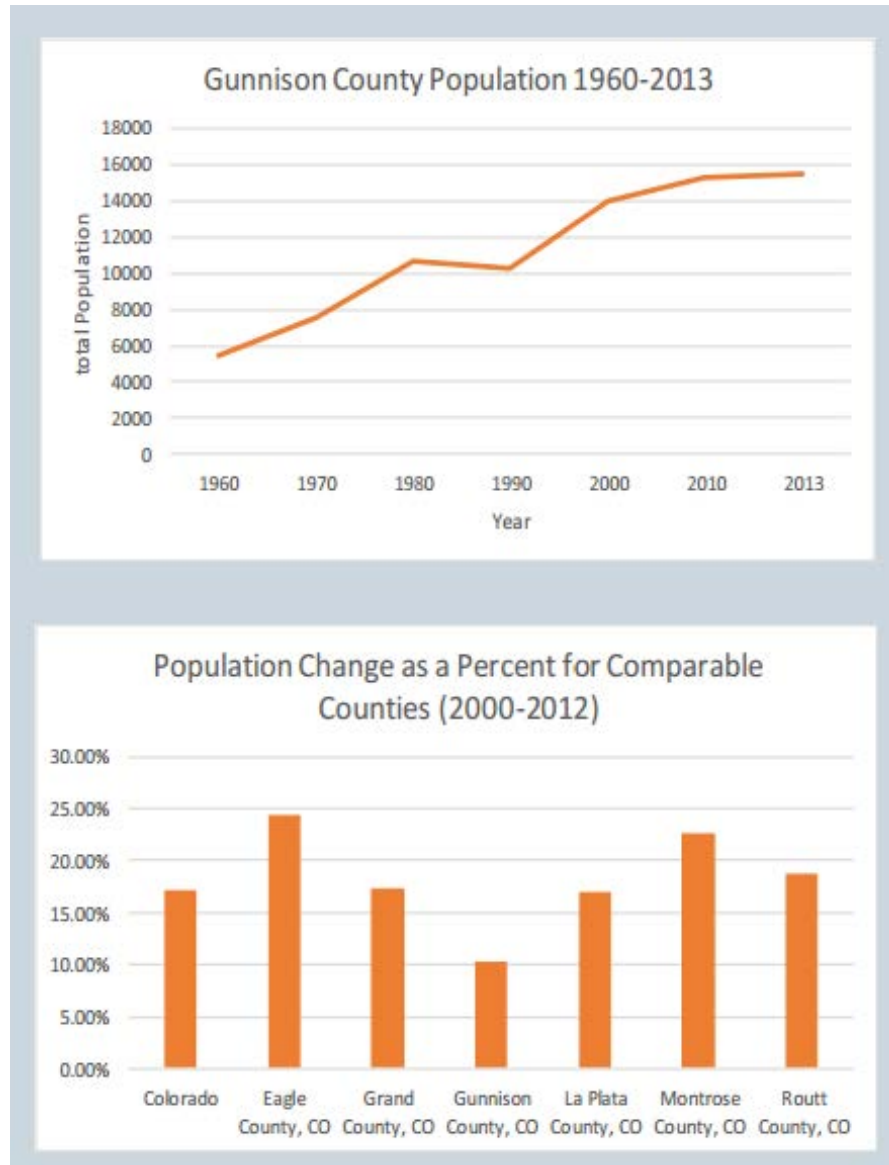
Crested Butte, Mt. Crested Butte, and Crested Butte Mountain Resort (CBMR) will continue to be critical players in the upper East River valley but also in Gunnison. Students attending WSCU are certainly influenced by the proximity of CBMR and the amenities of Crested Butte. Residents and visitors of Crested Butte and Mt. Crested Butte also visit Gunnison for the amenities that it offers—the airport, larger grocery retailers, recreation center facilities, and other year round amenities that may not always be available in the upper valley.

Location neutral businesses are an emerging trend in resort communities. These are businesses that can locate anywhere with good internet access, airline service and are often associated with amenity-rich communities (arts, culture, recreation, scenery, shopping and dining).

In Gunnison County the connectivity of the municipalities, County, businesses, non-profits, residents and visitors is a critical component of economic prosperity. It is important to note that visitors to area do not see political boundaries and experience the Valley as a whole. Cooperation and collaboration are critical to future success in Gunnison County.

Source: Gunnison County Economic Indicators Report, August, 2014

FIGURE 2-8 GUNNISON COUNTY POPULATION STATISTICS



Source: Gunnison County Economic Indicators Report, August, 2014; Data from Headwaters Economics and U.S. Census Bureau

The Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DLA) projects continued population growth through 2040 throughout the Western Slope region of the state, including Gunnison County, although Gunnison is projected to experience a slower growth rate than the state as a whole, and also a lower growth rate than some other western slope counties.

TABLE 2-1 GUNNISON COUNTY POPULATION FORECAST

Population Count									
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Colorado	4,338,801	4,662,534	5,049,717	5,439,290	5,924,692	6,429,532	6,915,379	7,352,327	7,752,887
Gunnison County	13,989	14,473	15,309	15,954	17,290	18,250	19,248	20,186	24,052

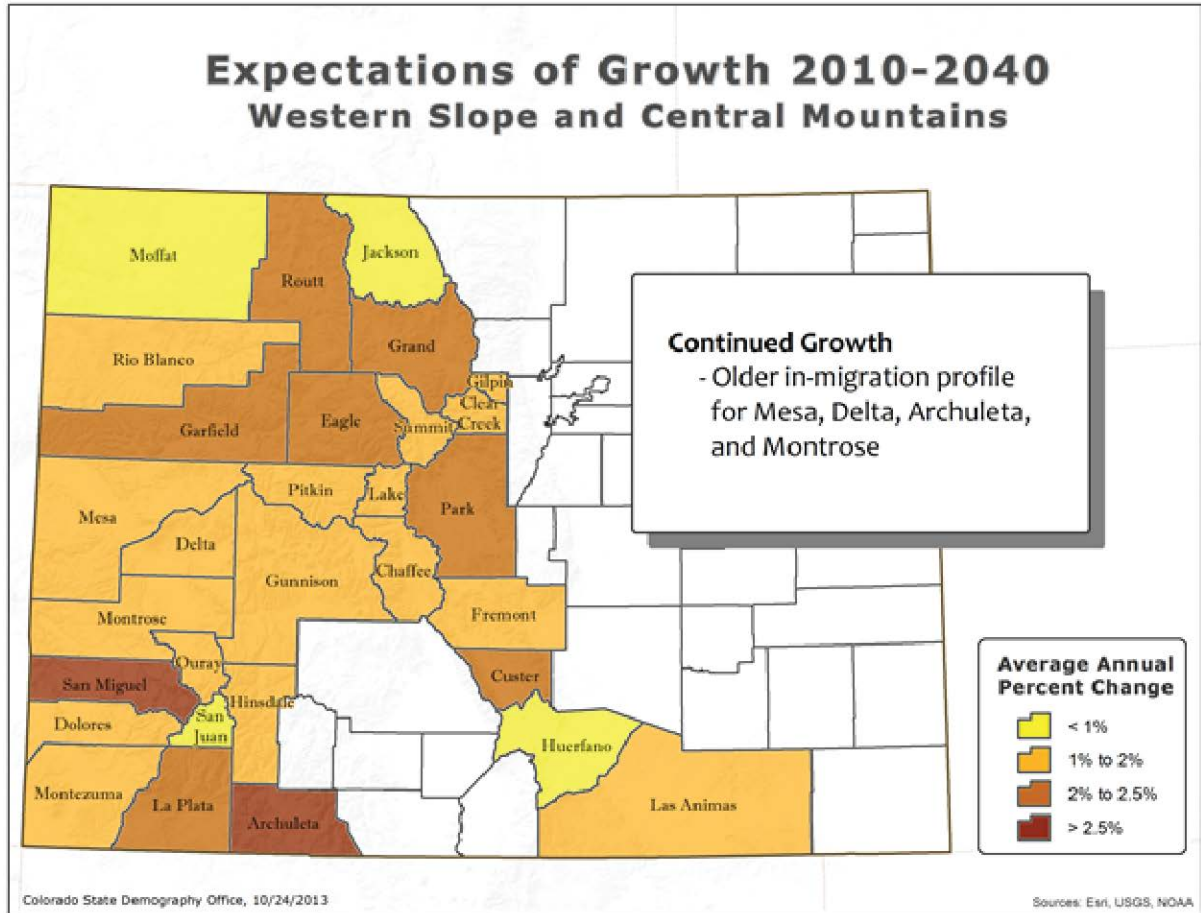
Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs

TABLE 2-2 - ANNUAL AVERAGE RATE OF GROWTH FORECAST

Annual Average Rate of Growth								
	2000-2005	2005-2010	2010-2015	2015-2020	2020-2025	2025-2030	2030-2035	2035-2040
Colorado	1.4%	1.6%	1.5%	1.7%	1.6%	1.5%	1.2%	1.1%
Gunnison County	0.7%	1.1%	0.8%	1.5%	1.2%	1.1%	1.0%	0.8%

Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs

FIGURE 2-9 WESTERN SLOPE & CENTRAL MOUNTAINS GROWTH EXPECTATIONS



Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs

In terms of per capita income and overall employment, Gunnison County has not performed as well as some of the other counties in the central and eastern part of the state, a number of which have been the beneficiaries of the rapidly growing energy exploration market.

FIGURE 2-10 GUNNISON COUNTY INCOME COMPARISON



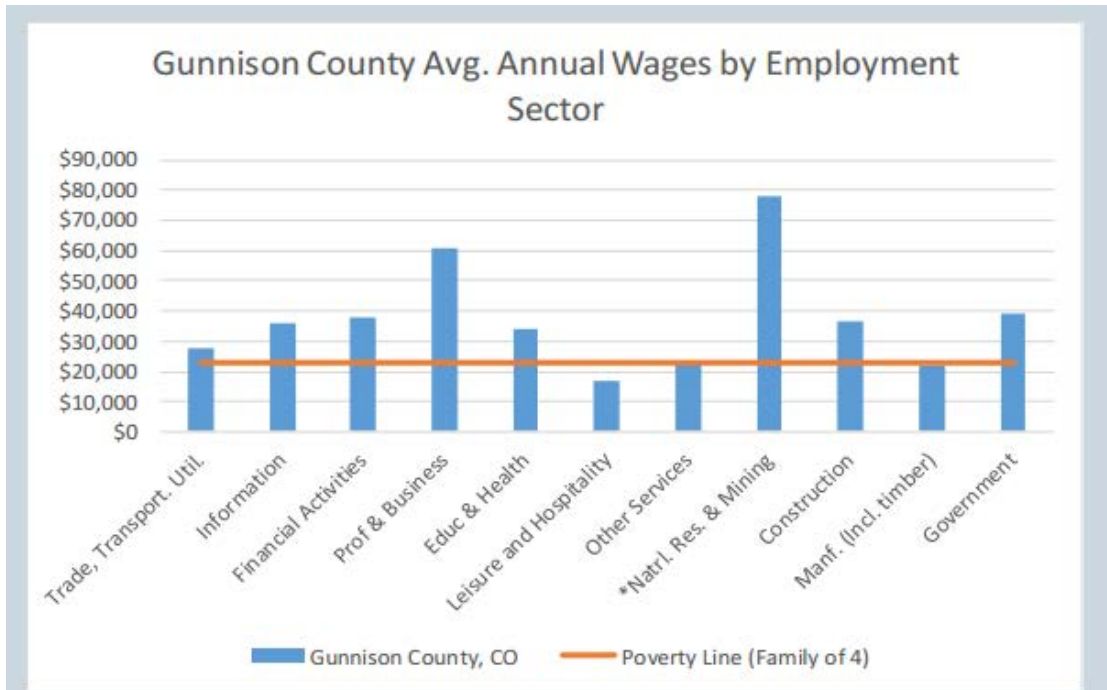
Source: Gunnison County Economic Indicators Report, August, 2014; Data from Headwaters Economics and U.S. Census Bureau

TABLE 2-3 WESTERN SLOPE PER CAPITA PERSONAL INCOME

Per Capita Personal Income (2011)	
Delta	\$31,307
Gunnison	\$34,293
Hinsdale	\$41,284
Montrose	\$30,933
Ouray	\$41,898
San Miguel	\$74,742
COLORADO	\$44,179
US	\$42,298

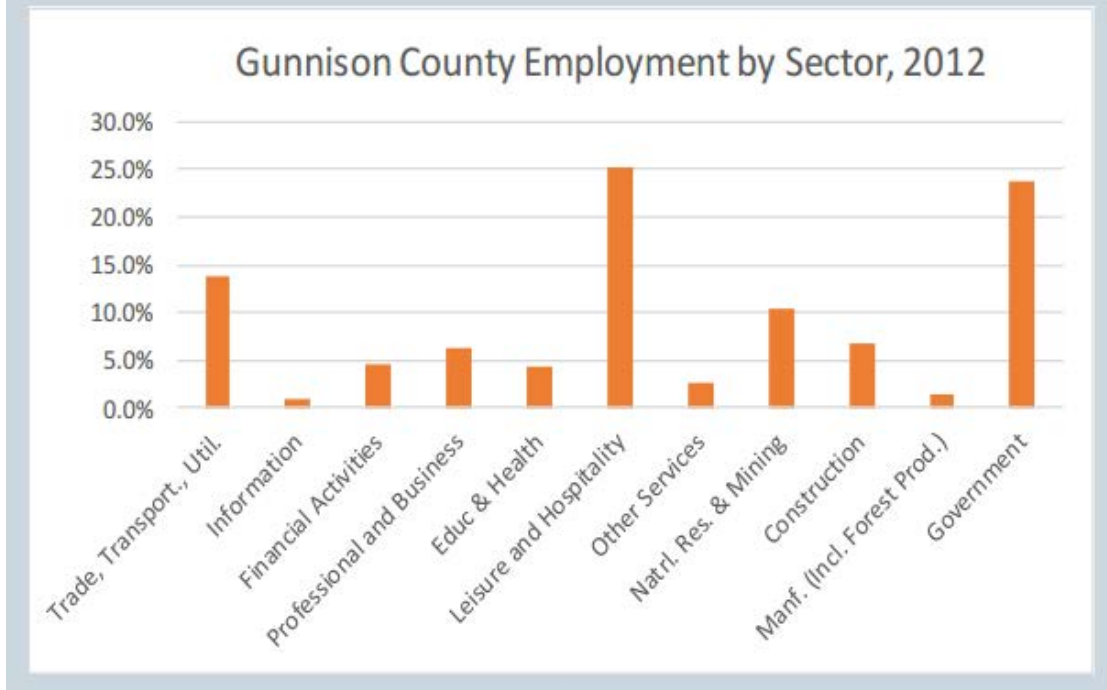
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

FIGURE 2-11 GUNNISON COUNTY EMPLOYMENT SECTOR STATISTICS



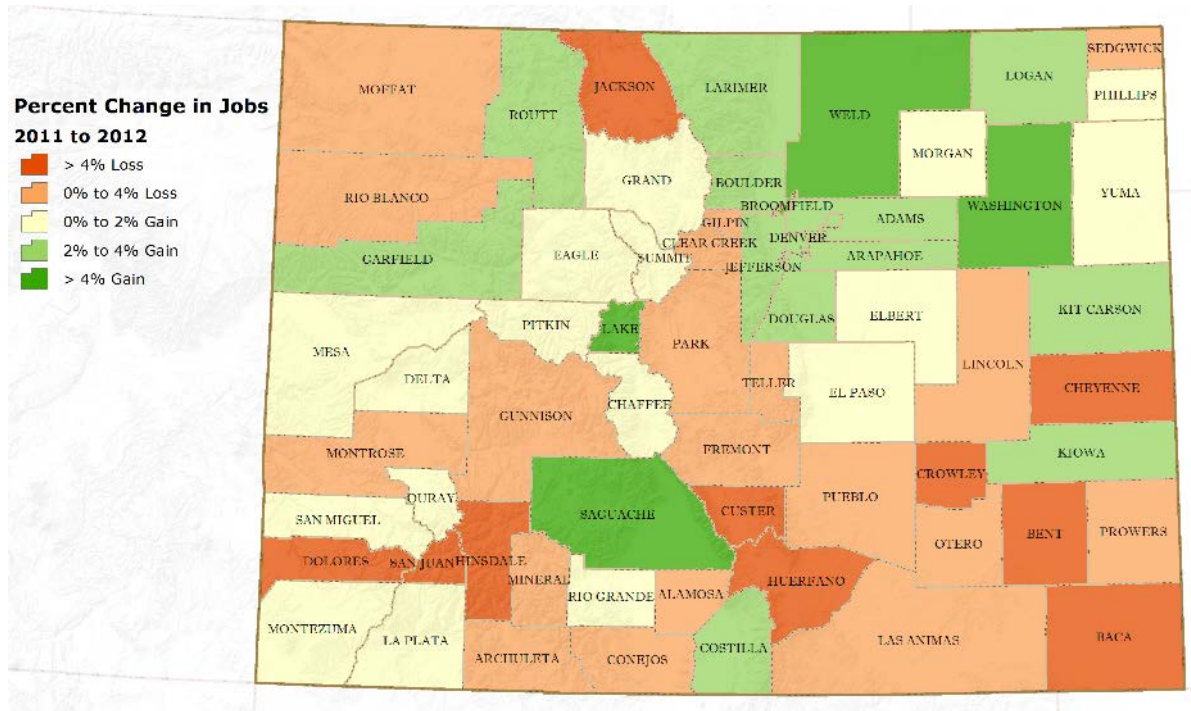
* Natural Resource and Mining jobs have been cut dramatically since 2012

Source: Headwaters Economics and U.S. Census Bureau



Source: Gunnison County Economic Indicators Report, August, 2014

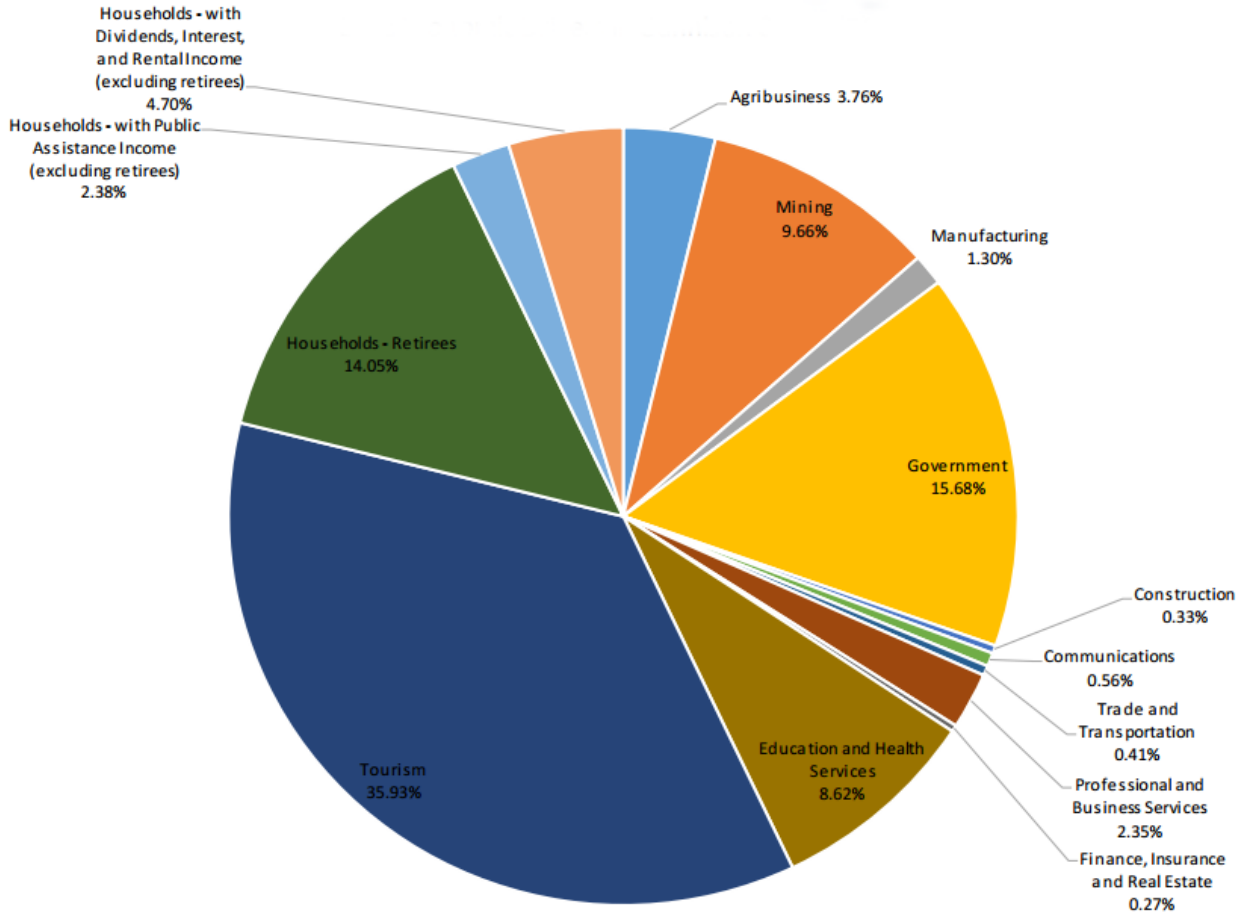
FIGURE 2-12 PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN JOBS BY COUNTY, 2011-2012



Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs

The economy in Gunnison County is diverse, and as noted below (“Interconnected Community”) and is experiencing growth in “location neutral businesses,” which is anticipated to be a growing factor in further diversifying the local economy. In addition, mining and energy exploration are relatively large employers, as well as education, health services, and government.

FIGURE 2-13 GUNNISON COUNTY BASE ECONOMIC DRIVERS (2012)



Source: Gunnison County Economic Indicators Report, August 2014; Data from Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Like many Western Slope counties, Gunnison County is also a very popular winter destination, and tourism has a significant impact on Gunnison's economy in terms of employment, income, retail sales, tax receipts, etc. According to Gunnison-Crested Butte Tourism Association, "Tourism in 2012 resulted in total direct spending by visitors of \$150.6 million dollars, generating more than \$5.5 million in local taxes and 1,870 tourism related jobs." Of course, the impact of tourism on the County is not a recent phenomenon. As noted in the Colorado State University Economic Development Report in 2004, tourism directly accounted for one-third of the Gunnison County economy and 40% of the job base.

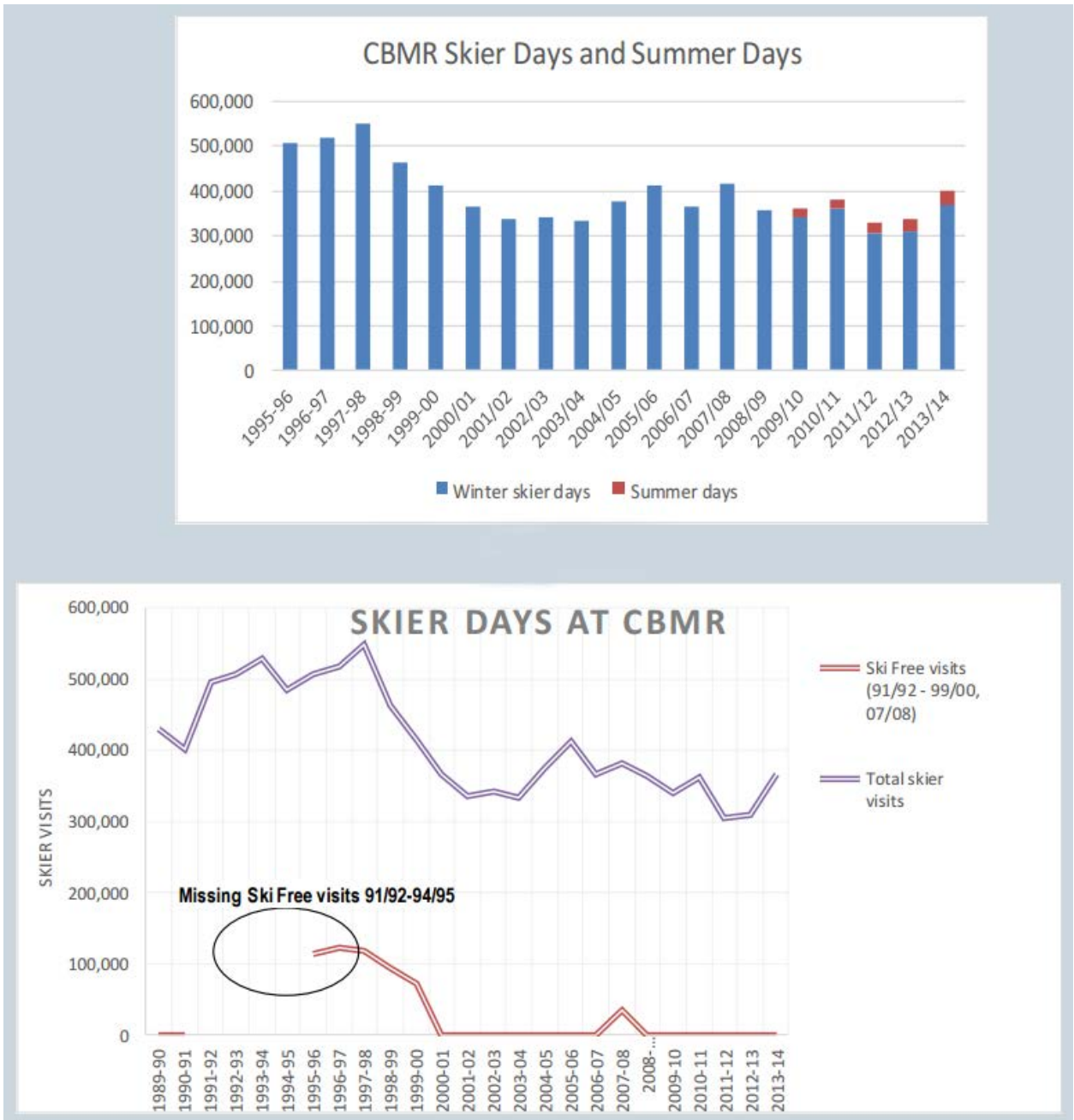
The ski industry is the largest single generator of tourism, and the ski industry as a whole has had a major impact on the U.S. economy, and Colorado in particular has benefitted economically more than any other state and from ski resorts and visitors (see Figure 2-14, Figure 2-15, Figure 2-16, Figure 2-17, and Figure 2-18).

In the 2012/2013 season it is estimated that 8.2 million Americans alpine skied at least once, 7.4 million people snowboarded, and 3.3 million people cross-country skied, for a combined total of nearly 57 million skier visits. Colorado Ski Country USA estimated that Colorado's ski industry is responsible for contributing nearly \$3 billion to the state economy each year.

As is the case at many Western Slope airports, the majority of air passengers at GUC are inbound visitors vs. outbound residents. The Crested Butte Mountain Resort (CBMR) documented that the number of visitors to the ski resorts fluctuates with levels of air service at GUC, and that the majority of skiers fly into Gunnison County vs. drive. As a result, there is a direct correlation between the level of scheduled air service and visitors to the ski resorts in Gunnison County.

The ski industry in the Western U.S. in general, and the Western Slope Region in particular, is very competitive and skiers have numerous resorts to choose to visit. Ski resorts across the Western U.S. have highlighted that air service is an extremely important factor in the volume of visitors, and the subsequent economic impact on the host community and the region.

FIGURE 2-14 CBMR SKIER DAY STATISTICS



Source: Gunnison County Economic Indicators Report, August, 2014; Data from Crested Butte Mountain Resort

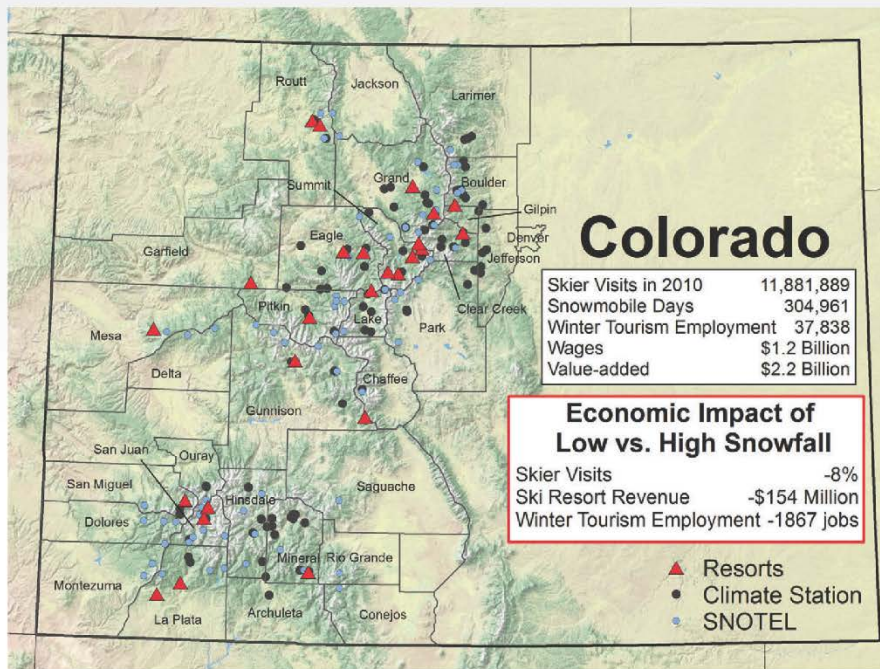
FIGURE 2-15 ECONOMIC IMPACT OF SKIER VISITS ON COLORADO

COLORADO

Colorado supports the largest ski industry in the United States, accounting for 20 percent of the total skier visits in the United States. In 2010, there were nearly 12 million skier visits and more than 300,000 snowmobile days. More than 37,000 employees earned \$1.2 billion in wages through direct, indirect, and induced economic activity, contributing \$2.2 billion in value added to the Colorado economy.

The difference in skier visits was 8 percent during lower-snowfall years (e.g., 2001/2002 and 2003/2004), compared to higher-snowfall years (e.g., 2002/2003 and 2007/2008). 1.86 million fewer skier visits during low-snow winters cost Colorado resorts an estimated \$154 million dollars in resort revenue compared to revenue from a high-snowfall winter and over 1800 jobs.

In Colorado, average winter temperatures are projected to increase an additional 5°F to 7°F under a higher-emissions scenario over the next century, resulting in a 25 percent to 75 percent decrease in snow depth depending on region.⁴ Additionally, a greater proportion of winter precipitation will fall as rain instead of snow. Strong increases in nighttime minimum temperatures will limit the effectiveness of snowmaking as an adaptation strategy for ski resorts, stress water resources, and exacerbate wildfire risk.



Sources: NSAA Economic Analysis Report, 2011; International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association; Bureau of Labor Statistics; and IMPLAN Economic Model. Statistics shown are for the 2009/2010 winter season. Economic impact data shown are for difference between top two highest snowfall and bottom two lowest snowfall years.

Source: Climate Impacts on the Winter Tourism Economy in the United States, NRDC, December 2012

FIGURE 2-16 ESTIMATED STATE CONTRIBUTIONS FROM WINTER TOURISM 2009-2010

Table 4: Estimated State Contributions from Winter Tourism 2009/2010					
State	Skier Visits	Snowmobile Days	Employment	Labor Income (\$ millions)	Value Added (\$ millions)
Colorado	11,881,889	304,961	37,838	\$1,240.6	\$2,170.4
California	7,523,916	216,061	23,998	\$787.0	\$1,376.7
New York	3,985,053	1,269,241	14,627	\$485.2	\$845.8
Vermont	4,106,246	310,900	13,417	\$440.9	\$770.8
Utah	4,018,731	203,221	12,964	\$425.5	\$744.2
Pennsylvania	3,611,237	396,358	12,004	\$395.0	\$690.3
Wisconsin	2,374,208	2,180,105	11,077	\$373.4	\$647.7
Michigan	2,193,927	2,408,544	10,889	\$368.4	\$638.3
Minnesota	1,426,294	2,473,653	8,586	\$293.3	\$506.7
New Hampshire	2,223,783	501,280	7,819	\$258.5	\$451.1
Washington	1,761,851	303,371	6,039	\$199.3	\$347.9
Oregon	1,688,102	157,691	5,565	\$183.0	\$319.9
Maine	1,314,849	838,680	5,523	\$185.0	\$321.5
Idaho	1,516,837	435,130	5,488	\$181.8	\$317.1
Massachusetts	1,411,717	150,731	4,686	\$154.2	\$269.4
Montana	1,257,440	382,515	4,585	\$152.0	\$265.1
New Mexico	1,012,003	0	3,180	\$104.1	\$182.2
Wyoming	690,811	363,428	2,773	\$92.6	\$161.1
Alabama/North Carolina/Tennessee	778,134	0	2,445	\$80.1	\$140.1
Illinois/Indiana	537,124	455,721	2,444	\$82.3	\$142.8
Alaska	402,948	526,344	2,139	\$72.6	\$125.7
Maryland/Virginia	623,770	0	1,960	\$64.2	\$112.3
West Virginia	601,299	0	1,889	\$61.9	\$108.3
Ohio	548,795	47,236	1,803	\$59.3	\$103.6
Iowa/Missouri	332,416	296,893	1,537	\$51.8	\$89.8
Nevada	457,058	0	1,436	\$47.0	\$82.3
North/South Dakota	305,695	261,823	1,395	\$47.0	\$81.5
Arizona	430,508	0	1,353	\$44.3	\$77.5
New Jersey	401,392	0	1,261	\$41.3	\$72.3
Connecticut/Rhode Island	368,967	0	1,159	\$38.0	\$66.4
Nebraska	0	21,208	35	\$1.3	\$2.1
Total	59,787,000	14,505,096	211,911	\$7,010	\$12,231

Source: Climate Impacts on the Winter Tourism Economy in the United States, NRDC, December 2012

FIGURE 2-17 WINTER TOURISM EMPLOYMENT IN 2009-2010 WINTER

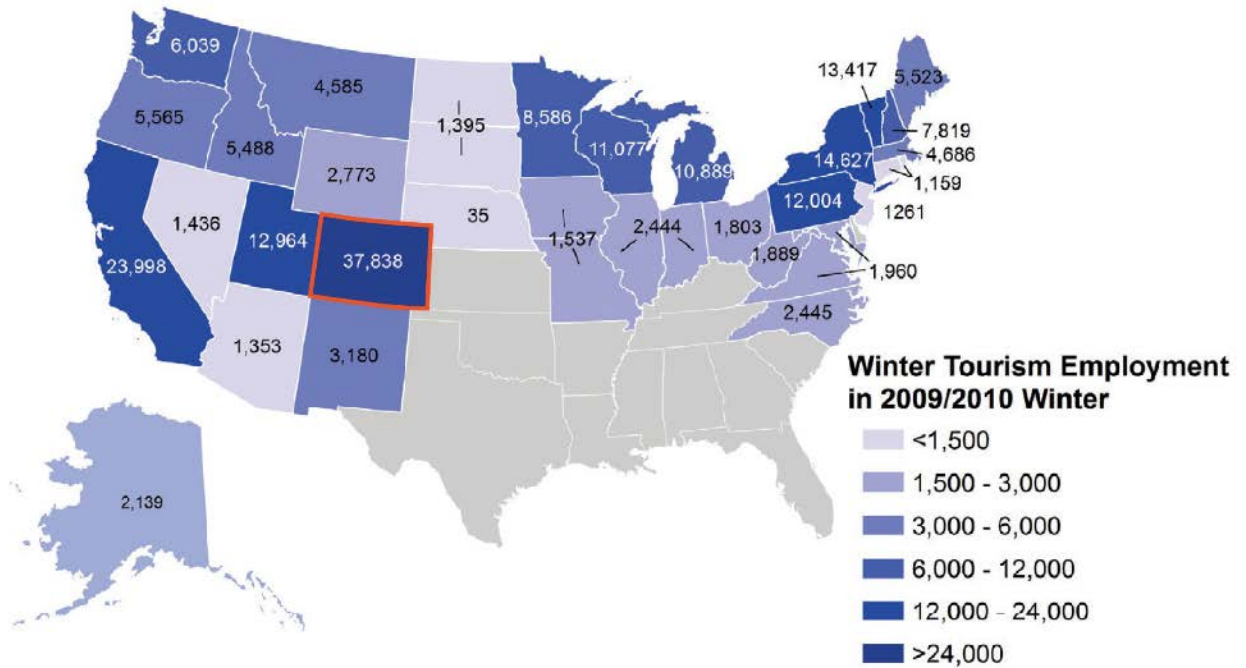
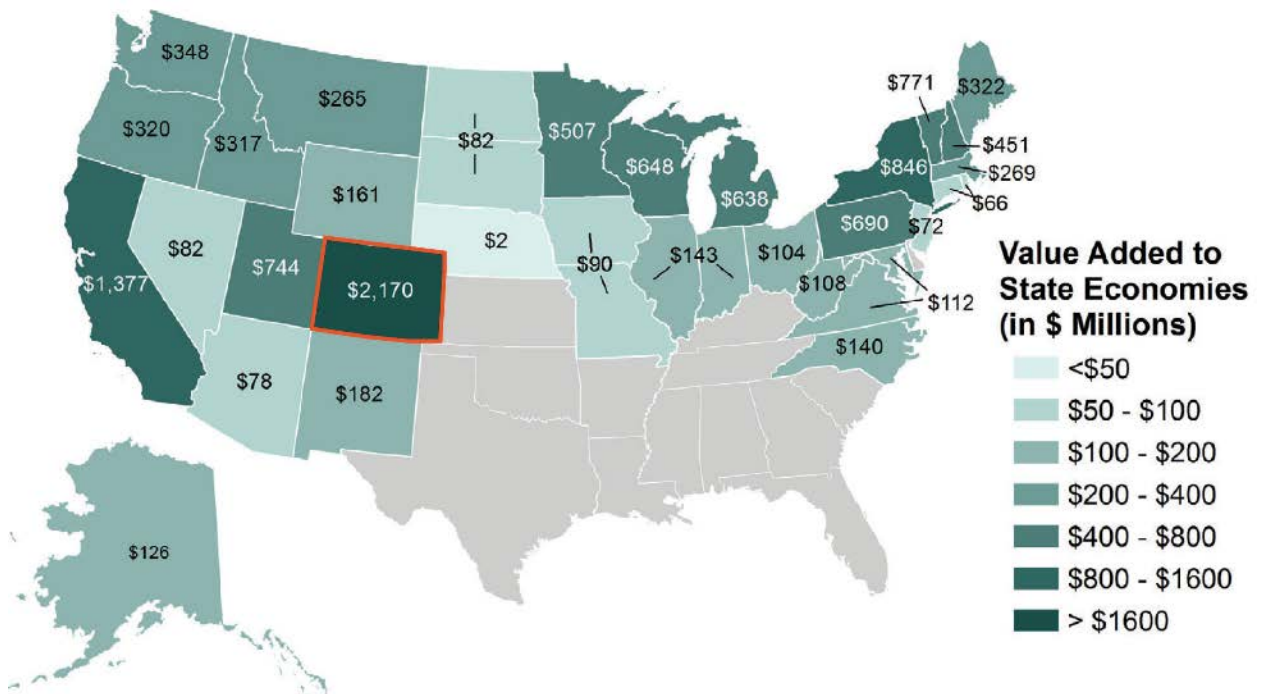


FIGURE 2-18 VALUE ADDED TO STATE ECONOMIES (IN \$ MILLIONS)



The future demand for winter tourism is dependent on a number of factors, including the overall performance of the economy, growth of disposable personal income (DPI), competition from non-winter related recreational activities for discretionary spending, energy costs (e.g. impact on cost of travel, lodging, etc.), and dependable winter weather—in particular, snow cover. As noted in Figures 2-14 through 2-18, Colorado enjoys the largest benefits in terms of winter tourism and employment in the United States. Air service and aviation activity levels at Western Slope airports, including GUC, are heavily dependent on the future of winter visitors.

At the same time, cities and counties such as Gunnison are also attracting year-round businesses, including “location-neutral businesses.” They are frequently high-tech start-ups—incubator companies founded by individuals whose primary location choice was determined by lifestyle and personal connections vs. economic factors such as energy costs, taxes, etc. Such location-neutral businesses have been growing rapidly throughout the Western Slopes region, and are helping generate demand for year-round transportation, including air service.

2.3 Environmental Overview

There are a number of sensitive environmental resources on and in the vicinity of GUC, which fall into the following categories:

- Wetlands
- Floodplains
- Historic Property
- Land Use and Noise

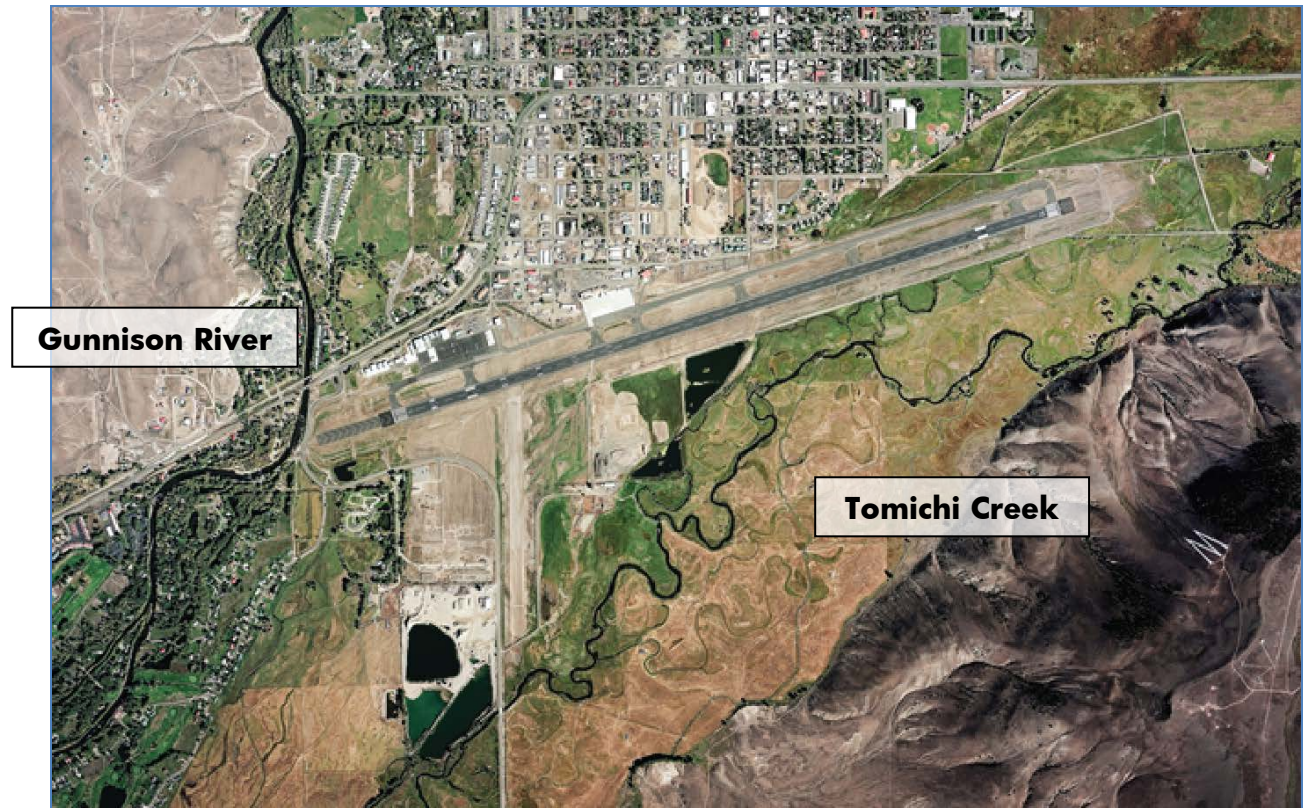
The Airport is adjacent to the Gunnison River and Tomichi Creek, and is located in wetlands and floodplains. As noted by FEMA in their Flood Insurance Study, Gunnison, CO:

“Large floods occurred in Gunnison on the Gunnison River in 1917, 1918, 1920, 1921, 1957, 1984, and 1985. These floods have caused major damage by disrupting highway and railroad traffic and communication services, drowning livestock, and destroying agricultural lands, roads, bridges, and buildings. Flooding problems near the City of Gunnison are aggravated by the restrictions of drainage channels by vegetation growth and accumulated debris. In July of 2004 water was reported one to two feet deep flowing across Highway 50, 2 miles southeast of Gunnison. During the same storm event, a section of County Road 72 washed out along Tomichi Creek near Highway 50. In August of 1999 a similar flooding event occurred 8 miles southeast of Gunnison. Heavy rains estimated at over 2.5 inches per hour resulted in flash flooding over at least five sections of U.S. Highway 50, in some instances up to five feet deep.”

It should be noted that bridges and other structures are monitored during spring runoff to ensure that debris jams do not create flooding issues. Furthermore, vegetation growth is a benefit to stream bank

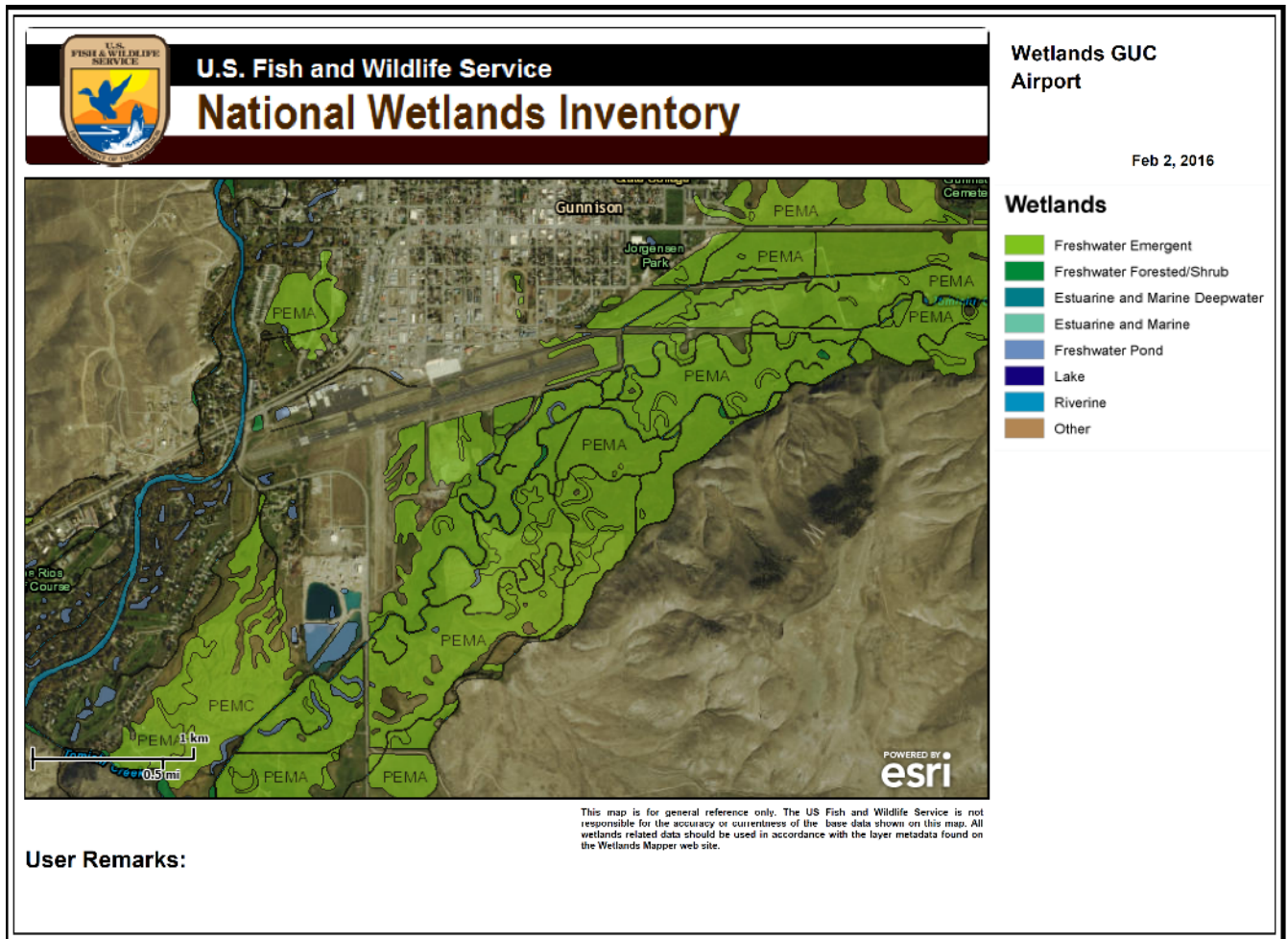
protection and reduces flood water velocity. Removing vegetation is not a beneficial flood mitigation action.

FIGURE 2-19 GUNNISON RIVER AND TOMICHI CREEK



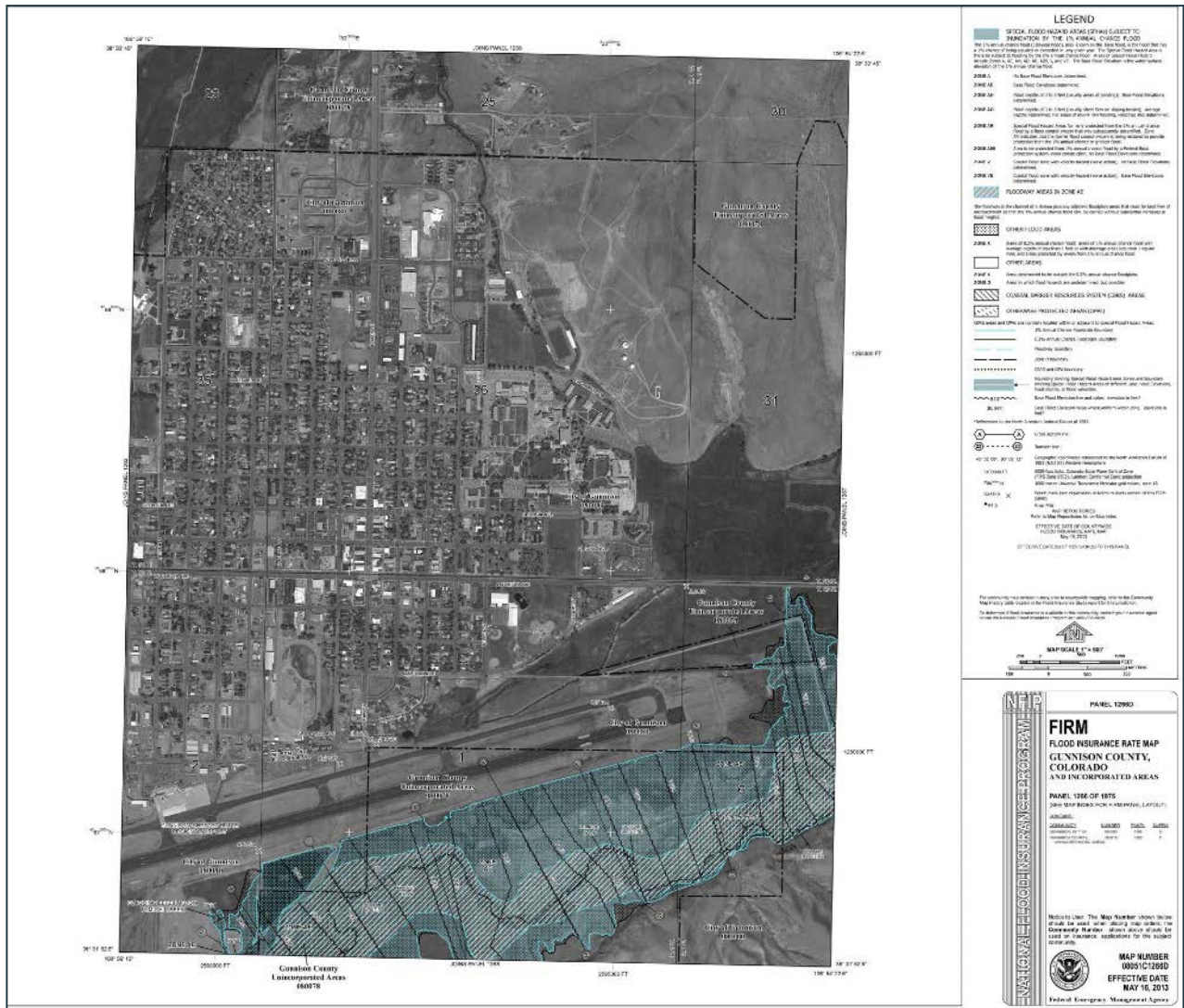
Source: GUC Airport Management Records

FIGURE 2-20 WETLANDS IN VICINITY OF GUNNISON AIRPORT



Source: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

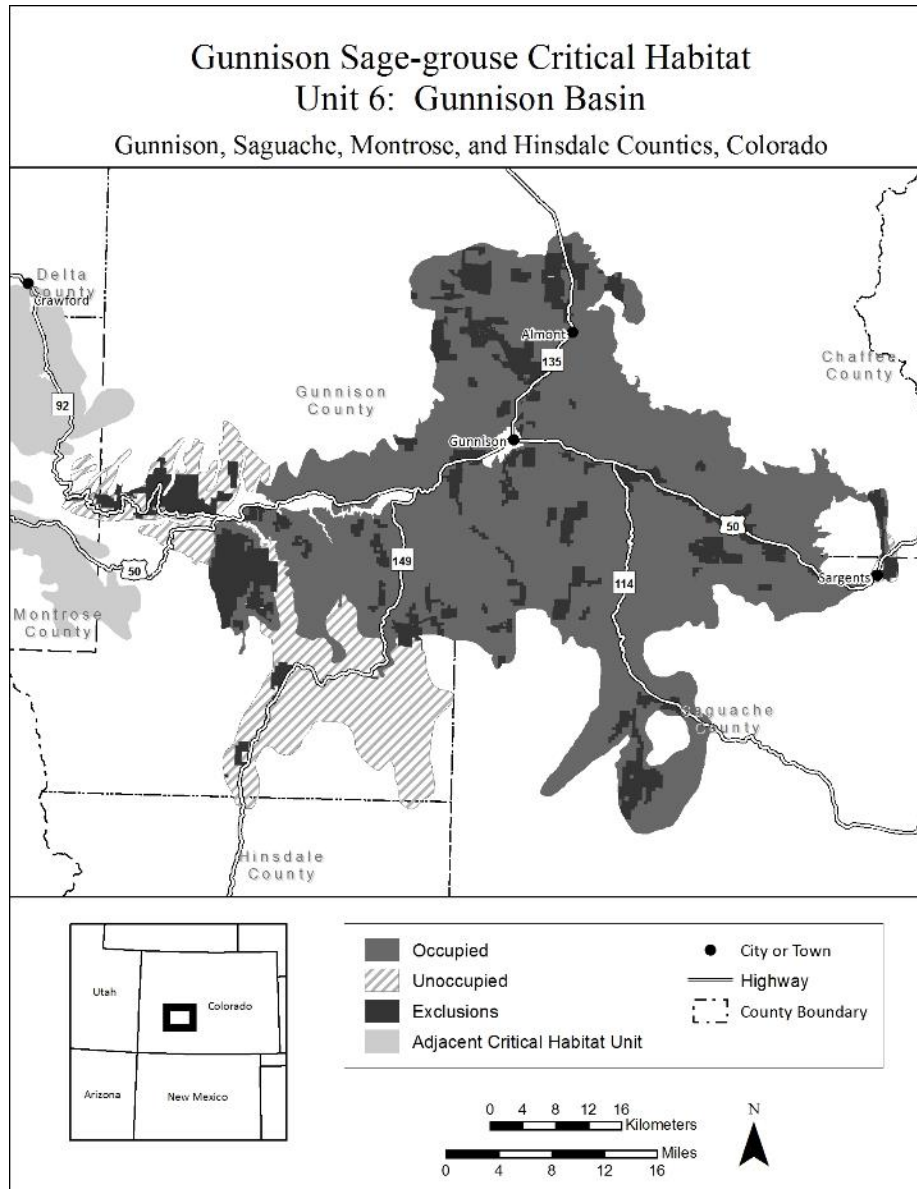
FIGURE 2-22 FLOODPLAINS IN VICINITY OF GUNNISON AIRPORT



Source? Flood insurance Rate Maps, U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency

Other sensitive environmental resources include protected species and habitat on and in the vicinity of GUC. As noted in a press release on November 12, 2014, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has determined that the Gunnison Sage-grouse, a ground-dwelling bird found only in southwestern Colorado and southeastern Utah, requires the protection of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) as a threatened species. Gunnison County also has an active program to protect the Gunnison sage-grouse.

FIGURE 2-23 GUNNISON SAGE-GROUSE CRITICAL HABITAT



Source: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

2.3.1 Historic Sites and Properties

Both the Gunnison County Historic Preservation Commission and the National Historic Register have designated a number of sites and properties as historic in Gunnison County (see Appendix 2-4). The Gunnison River Bridge I and II on U.S. 50 are in the vicinity (south side) of Gunnison Airport.

FIGURE 2-24 HISTORIC BRIDGE IN THE VICINITY OF GUC



Source: Jviation, Inc.

The City noted that a requirement of the Gunnison Rising Annexation was to complete an archeological inventory for the annexation property. The report, which was submitted to the State Archeologist for review, noted that the Denver and Rio Grande railroad track alignment was defined as a cultural resource. Based on historical aerial photographs, the railroad alignment traversed a portion of the Airport property. Additionally, the City noted that there is a cemetery located in the central portion of the Airport to the south of Runway 6-24.

2.3.2 Aircraft Noise and Land Use

See Chapter 5 for a detailed discussion about land uses and aircraft noise. The FAA works closely with airport sponsors to promote and enhance compatible land uses on and adjacent to airports. The FAA grant assurances, which airport sponsors (including Gunnison County) are legally obligated to comply with, state:

FAA Grant Assurance # 6. Consistency with Local Plans.

“It (i.e. the airport sponsor) will ensure that the project is reasonably consistent with plans (existing at the time of submission of this application) of public agencies that are authorized by the State in which the project is located to plan for the development of the area surrounding the airport.”

Grant Assurance # 21. Compatible Land Use.

“It (i.e. the airport sponsor) will take appropriate action, to the extent reasonable, including the adoption of zoning laws, to restrict the use of land adjacent to or in the immediate vicinity of the airport to activities and purposes compatible with normal airport operations, including landing and takeoff of aircraft. In addition, if the project is for noise compatibility program implementation, it will not cause or permit any change in land use, within its jurisdiction, that will reduce its compatibility, with respect to the airport, of the noise compatibility program measures upon which Federal funds have been expended.”




The FAA, as well as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) have adopted guidelines in terms of comparing specific types of land uses with aircraft noise levels, and which noise levels are considered non-compatible with certain types of land uses (Figure 2-25).

Computer-generated noise contours is the primary tool used by the FAA and other federal agencies (including the EPA and HUD) to assess land use compatibility. The noise contours are based on a number of factors, including specific types of aircraft (and engines), total number of takeoffs and landings by each type of aircraft, flight tracks, climb rates, altitudes, time of day, and noise abatement procedures, among other factors.

The noise contours are developed using the FAA’s Aviation Environmental Design Tool, v.2a (AEDT). The AEDT recently replaced the Integrated Noise Model (INM). Noise contours are expressed as Day-Night Sound Levels (Ldn). Federal agencies use the 65 Ldn contour as the threshold to determine whether certain land uses are compatible or are non-compatible with aviation activity. FAA’s Land Use Noise Sensitivity Matrix is shown in Figure 2-25. KB Environmental Sciences used FAA’s AEDT model to develop noise contours for GUC based on current levels of aviation activity in November 2015; they concluded that, “The DNL 65 dB contours for the Existing Conditions 2014 and Future Conditions 2034 scenarios were within the airport’s property boundary. Therefore, no incompatible land uses (residences, schools, places of worship, etc.) were within the limits of the DNL 65 dB contours.”

As noted elsewhere, there are both single- and multi-family residential neighborhoods adjacent to the GUC property boundary, as well as proposed future residential development north and east of the Airport. In particular, there is a large planned residential and commercial development (Gunnison Rising) proposed in the vicinity of GUC, north and east of Runway 6-24.

FIGURE 2- 25 LAND USE NOISE SENSITIVITY MATRIX

		55-65 DNL	65-75 DNL	75+ DNL
 Residential	1-2 Family	Yellow	Red	Red
	Multi-Family	Yellow	Red	Red
	Mobile Homes	Yellow	Red	Red
	Dorms, etc.	Yellow	Red	Red
 Institutional	Churches	Yellow	Red	Red
	Schools	Yellow	Red	Red
	Hospitals	Yellow	Red	Red
	Nursing Homes	Yellow	Red	Red
	Libraries	Yellow	Red	Red
 Recreational	Sports/Play	Yellow	Yellow	Red
	Arts/Instructional	Yellow	Red	Red
	Camping	Yellow	Yellow	Red
Commercial	All Uses	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
Industrial	All Uses	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
Agricultural	All Uses	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow

PER FAR PART 150	COMPATIBLE	Yellow
	INCOMPATIBLE	Red

Source: FAA

In 2001, the Gunnison County Commissioners adopted a resolution that imposed a voluntary curfew on takeoffs and landings between 10:30pm and 6am local time “in recognition of adverse noise and light glare effects on residential neighborhoods.” The resolution also noted that no “runway lights, snow plowing, wildlife patrols, runway condition reports, ARFF or other services are available at the Airport during these hours.” The County excluded “emergency situations” from the curfew, such as Life Flight and the military. The FAA’s Airport Facility Directory (A/FD) for GUC states: “Arpt CLOSED 0530Z – 1300Z exc for emerg.”

2.4 Gunnison Airport Financial Condition

As noted previously, GUC is owned and operated by the County of Gunnison. The Airport is one of seven Enterprise Funds within the County’s budget, which means that the Airport is identified as a separate line item in the County’s budget with its own revenues and expenses. Enterprise Funds are typically required to be financially self-sufficient, so revenues and expenses associated with each fund are tracked within the

budget. The County budget also has an airport construction fund that serves as the local match for federal and state grants for capital improvements.

An airport’s financial condition is determined by a variety of expenses and revenues. Some revenues and expenses are tied driven to the level of aviation activity (e.g. aircraft landing and parking fees, fuel flowage fees, auto parking revenue, etc.), while other airport revenues and expenses are generally independent of traffic levels (e.g. interest income, land leases, debt servicing, etc.) Many federal and state grants, including passenger facility charge (PFC) revenue, are dedicated to airport capital improvements and cannot be used for operating and maintenance (O&M) expenses. The FAA strongly encourages airports to develop rates and charges that result in the Airport being financially self-sufficient, to the extent feasible. The FAA also notes that rates and charges must be ‘reasonable and non-discriminatory’, and that airport tenants are subject to the same requirements.

TABLE 2-4 AIRPORT REVENUES AND EXPENSES

Revenues	Expenses
Operating (e.g. land & building leases, land fees, fuel flowage fee, etc.)	Operating & Maintenance (O&M)
Non-Operating (e.g. interest dividends, non-aeronautical sources, etc.)	Non-Operating (e.g. debt servicing,
Capital Improvement Grants (e.g. FAA entitlements, discretionary, CDOT, etc.)	Capital Improvements
Passenger Facility Charges (PFC)	
Other (e.g. inter-governmental transfers, etc.)	

Source: ACRP and Aviation

GUC currently generates revenue from a variety of sources, including building and land leases with tenants in the terminal building and the FBO, as well as fuel flowage fees and airline landing fees. The Airport also collects passenger facility charges (PFC), \$4.50 per enplaned passenger, with a total anticipated collection of \$3,125,482 by 2023. However, PFCs are dedicated to specifically identified capital improvements, and they require prior FAA approval before collecting and expending.

There are potential revenue sources that may be available at GUC that are not currently being collected, such as landing and parking fees on general aviation aircraft, fuel sales to transient military aircraft, rental car company customer facility charges (CFCS), etc., that are addressed in Chapter 7 of this study.

2.5 Airport User/Tenant Surveys

Two surveys were conducted as part of the master plan study. The first was polling the participants of the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) at the meeting held in September 2014. Comments about GUC from the participants include:

- General airport appearance needs improvement – in particular the terminal building, grounds, area around the Airport. The Airport buildings and grounds do not present the best picture of Gunnison to

arriving and departing passengers. The terminal building and area around the terminal are both the first and last things that visitors see of Gunnison when they fly in.

- GUC Airport needs a new commercial airline terminal as well as new GA terminal building
- GUC needs more airline service - in particular more frequency of flights to Denver
- The Airport needs additional air service year-round, as well as lower air fares.
- Participants expressed a desire for non-stop service to Phoenix and Los Angeles
- There is a need more ramp space for GA aircraft
- There is a need for more food concessions including a restaurant, as well as more passenger services, in the terminal building.

In addition, online surveys were sent to airport tenants (see Appendix 2-3 for a copy of the survey form). Airport tenants indicated that:

- Peak season typically runs between December and March.
- There is a need for additional auto parking and dedicated rental car parking.
- The terminal building needs improvements.
- Some tenants in the terminal need additional space, while others have sufficient space.
- Tenants have generally seen traffic increase at the Airport in the last two to three years.
- Unlike the airlines, the peak period for general aviation/corporate activity typically occurs in July and August.
- Need was expressed for new hangars and general aviation terminal facilities.
- Need to develop year-round activity/traffic levels and not be completely reliant on seasonal service.

2.6 Economic Benefits Provided by GUC Airport

The Colorado DOT (CDOT) sponsored a statewide economic impact study in 2013 that analyzed each public use airport in the state, including GUC. The report concluded that GUC has a significant direct and indirect economic impact on the region, both in terms of the spending by visitors as well as by employment at and directly attributable to GUC Airport.

FIGURE 2-26 ANNUAL VISITOR ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR GUC

	Initial	Multiplier Effect	Total
Commercial Airline Visitor Impacts			
Jobs	463	162	625
Payroll	\$13,282,000	\$5,967,000	\$19,249,000
Output	\$37,340,000	\$19,185,000	\$56,525,000
General Aviation Visitor Impacts			
Jobs	107	37	144
Payroll	\$3,058,000	\$1,375,000	\$4,433,000
Output	\$8,524,000	\$4,418,000	\$12,942,000

Source: Colorado DOT, 2013 Economic Impact Study for Colorado Airports

FIGURE 2-27 ANNUAL AIRPORT, TENANT & CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR GUC

	Initial	Multiplier Effect	Total
Jobs	92	77	169
Payroll	\$7,940,000	\$3,122,000	\$11,062,000
Output	\$19,082,000	\$9,984,000	\$29,065,000

Source: Colorado DOT, 2013 Economic Impact Study for Colorado Airports

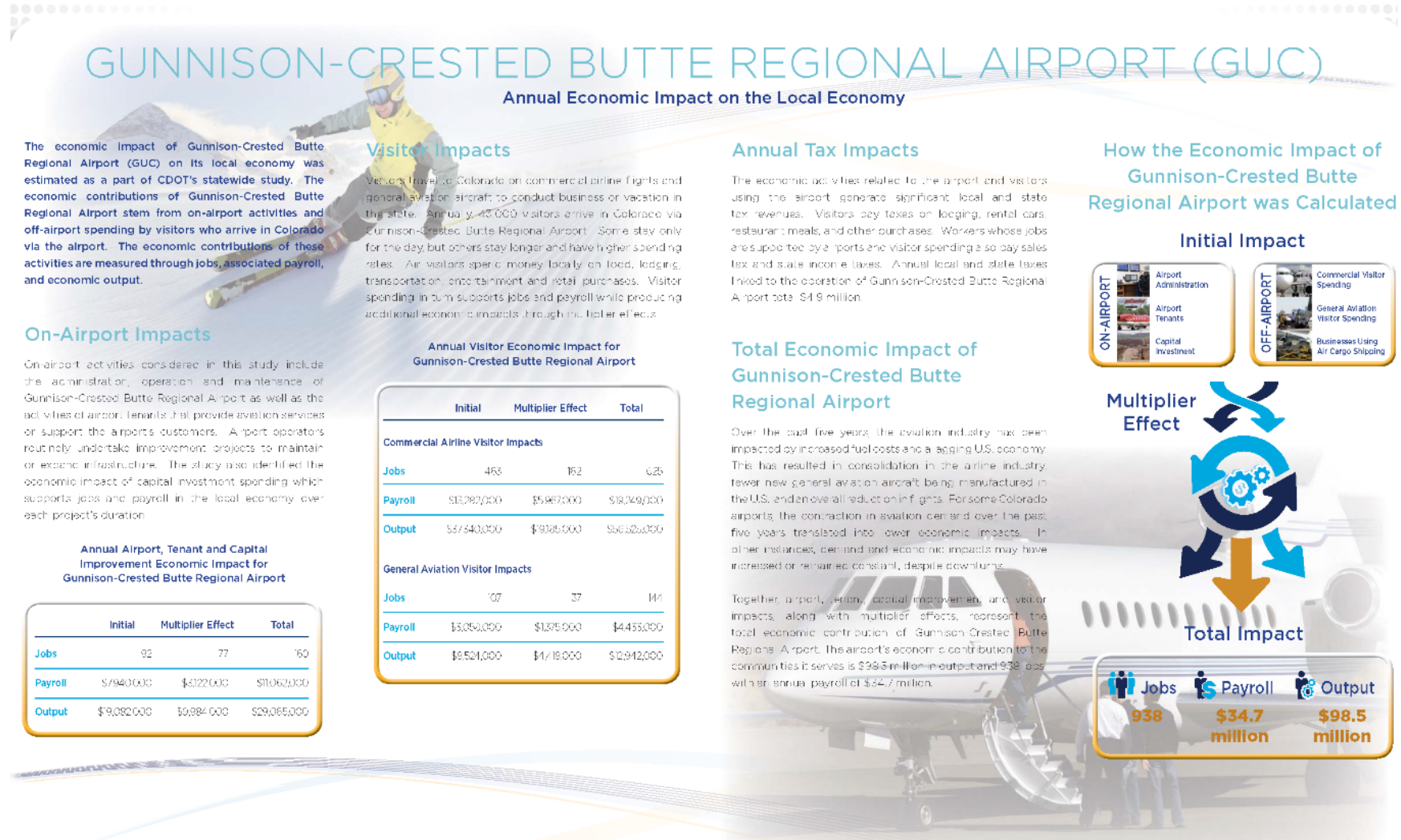
FIGURE 2-28 STATE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF GUNNISON-CRESTED BUTTE REGIONAL AIRPORT



Prepared by
**ICF SH&E, Inc. with Aviation EDR Group
and KRAMER aerotek, Inc.**

Source: Colorado DOT, 2013 Economic Impact Study for Colorado Airports

FIGURE 2-29 ANNUAL LOCAL ECONOMIC IMPACT OF GUNNISON CRESTED BUTTE REGIONAL AIRPORT



Source: Colorado DOT, 2013 Economic Impact Study for Colorado Airports