

- 1 - January 11, 2022 BOCC WS agenda
- 2 - COVID-19 Economic Recovery Update
- 3 - G Stewardship and STOR update
- 4 - Mt Emmons_Coal Creek Water Quality Update

GUNNISON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MEETING NOTICE

DATE: Tuesday, January 11, 2022

Page 1 of 1

PLACE: Board of County Commissioners' Meeting Room at the Gunnison County Courthouse
200 E. Virginia Avenue; Gunnison, CO 81230
(REMOTE OPTION BELOW)

GUNNISON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS WORK SESSION:

- 8:30 am • COVID-19 Economic Recovery Update
- 9:00 am • Gunnison Stewardship Fund, Sustainable Tourism and Outdoor Recreation (STOR) Corps, and STOR Committee Update
- 9:30 am • Mt. Emmons and Coal Creek Project; Water Quality Update
- Adjourn

Please Note: Packet materials for the above discussions will be available on the Gunnison County website at <http://www.gunnisoncounty.org/meetings> prior to the meeting.

ZOOM MEETING DETAILS:

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82753657556?pwd=MjNDdTZHTFNRVdDemZjdC91aVBIZz09>

Meeting ID: 827 5365 7556

Passcode: 471302

One tap mobile

+12532158782,,82753657556#,,,,*471302# US (Tacoma)

+13462487799,,82753657556#,,,,*471302# US (Houston)

AGENDA ITEM or FINAL CONTRACT REVIEW SUBMITTAL FORM

Agenda Item: COVID-19 Economic Recovery Update

Action Requested: Discussion

Parties to the Agreement:

Term Begins:

Term Ends:

Grant Contract #:

Summary:

Update from Loren Ahonen, Recovery Coordinator on County economic recovery

Fiscal Impact:

Submitted by: Cathie Pagano

Submitter's Email Address: cpagano@gunnisoncounty.org

Finance Review:

Required

Not Required

Comments:

Reviewed by:

Discharge Date:

County Attorney Review:

Required

Not Required

Comments:

Reviewed by:

Discharge Date:

Certificate of Insurance Required

Yes No

County Manager Review:

Comments:

Reviewed by: GUNCOUNTY1\mbirmie

Discharge Date: 10/21/2021

Consent Agenda Regular Agenda Worksession

Time Allotted: 30

Agenda Date: 11/23/2021

CHF Pulse Survey & Gunnison County COVID-19 Community Survey

A Comparison of Key Takeaways

12/17/21

Introduction

The recent publication of the Colorado Health Foundation's 2021 Pulse survey identified a variety of statewide socio-economic concerns and perspectives across a diverse range of Coloradans. While this was a statewide sampling – there are points of reference that are similar to concerns addressed in our local Gunnison County COVID-19 Community Surveys.

The Pulse survey is a point in time reflection and the Community Survey is a reoccurring reflection on a period of time. Also, the nature of how questions are asked are not uniform which makes some comparisons challenging. There are also methodological discrepancies between the surveys (with the results of the Community Survey having a much higher sampling bias). However, there remain similarities that are worth considering. The following is a quick summary of comparable points between the two surveys. For simplicity sake, the Pulse survey is compared to a direct round of the Community Survey (i.e. the most recent survey in which that question was asked) rather than aggregating and averaging response rates across Community Surveys. Which Community Survey the data is referenced to is listed with the metric. This is an imperfect comparison as the Pulse survey asks both forward looking and retrospective questions across 2021.

Unemployment and Fear of Unemployment

- 10% of respondents in the Pulse survey identified as being 'laid off' in the past 12 months
- 1% of Q3 2021 Community Survey respondents indicated they were currently unemployed due to the pandemic
 - However, in February 2021 3.6% indicated being unemployed due to the pandemic
 - Also in February, 27% of respondents indicated they were Somewhat or Very concerned about losing their job due to the pandemic
 - By April of 2021 this had declined to 10% of respondents indicated concern about losing their job due to the pandemic
- In the Q3 2021 Community Survey, 15% of survey respondents indicated some level of concern about losing their jobs between July-September
- Looking forward, the Pulse survey found that 33% expressed some level or worry about not being fully employed in the next year
 - Given that one of these questions is retrospective and the other is forward looking this is not a direct comparison

Affordable Housing

An astounding 82% of Pulse survey respondents indicated that 'the cost of housing' was an Extremely Serious of Very Serious problem in Colorado.

- 21% of respondents were Somewhat or Very Worried about losing their home due to inability to afford rent or a mortgage
- 7% of Q3 2021 Community Survey respondents described their housing as ‘unsustainable’
 - It’s worth noting these questions are gauging substantially different concerns (is housing a problem in the aggregate OR is it financially unsustainable for *me*)
 - The self-selection sample bias issues for the Community Survey likely exacerbate this discrepancy
- Additionally, nearly 13% indicated that affording their housing required lifestyle tradeoffs (paying rent but missing meals, etc.)

Mental Health and Managing Behavioral Health Challenges

According to Pulse Survey Data ‘those facing financial difficulties were more likely to suffer mental health challenges, as were unemployed respondents compared to employed ones.’

- In the Pulse Survey, 63% of respondents said Mental Health and Wellbeing were ‘Extremely’ or ‘Very Serious’ problems
- Pulse survey findings noted that 29% of respondents discussed mental health challenges with ‘a health professional’
- In the Q3 2021 Community Survey, 21% of respondents indicated that ‘they sought counseling or other mental health assistance’ in response to stress and other challenges during the pandemic
 - *While these questions are not formatted uniformly, the comparison is worth considering*
- In the Pulse survey
 - 44% indicate experiencing Anxiety in the last year
 - 38% indicate experiencing Depression
 - 35% expressed ‘Difficulty connecting with your family and friends’
- In the Q3 2021 Community Survey, 45% of respondents indicated using ‘Increased connections with family’ as a support for dealing with Stress
- 25% of Q3 2021 Community Survey respondents indicated an increased use of alcohol between July-September
 - 17% of Pulse survey respondents indicated that their consumption of alcohol increased in the last 12 months

Food Security

When asked “Thinking ahead over the next year, how worried are you that you might not always be able to afford enough food to feed yourself and your family” in the Pulse survey:

- 23% expressed worry about affording adequate food
 - 7% Very Worried
 - 16% Somewhat Worried
- In the Q3 2021 Community Survey, nearly 11% indicated they required assistance to adequately provide food for their household
 - 3.2% utilized SNAP, WIC or TANF to support food needs
 - 4.4% utilize the Gunnison Country Food Pantry or other non-profits to support food needs

- *An additional 3.2% indicated they need assistance with food needs but do not know where to start*

Childcare

In the Q3 2021 Community Survey, 53% of respondents who identified as having children indicated some-level of challenge with accessing the service due to cost, availability, or household impacts

- 7.5% indicated their ability to pay for childcare has declined
- 20% indicated providing their own childcare has limited their ability to work
- 21% of respondents expressed their access to childcare has been limited by available capacity

Pulse survey findings from parents indicated:

- 24% were 'unable to find child care that is affordable'
- 25% 'missed out on or declined a professional opportunity or taking on more responsibility at work because of a lack of child care'
- 39% 'found it more difficult to balance child care and other responsibilities'

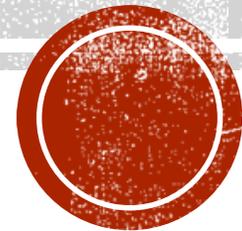
Rates of Vaccination

The Pulse survey offered some interesting considerations for their findings regarding vaccination. They are quoted directly here *"it must be kept in mind that a number of factors may lead to over-reporting of vaccination in survey research. First, to the extent that vaccination is seen as socially desirable, some unvaccinated Coloradans may over-report the degree to which they have received the vaccine – even if they have not managed to get vaccinated yet, or retain some ambivalence about the idea. Second, some of the same lack of trust in public institutions that steers people away from taking a vaccine may also make them less likely to participate in public opinion surveys."*

- Pulse survey findings show 71% of respondents indicate having at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine
- In the Q3 Community Survey, 84.7% reported 'I have already received the vaccine'

GUNNISON COUNTY SOCIO- ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Updates from late 2021



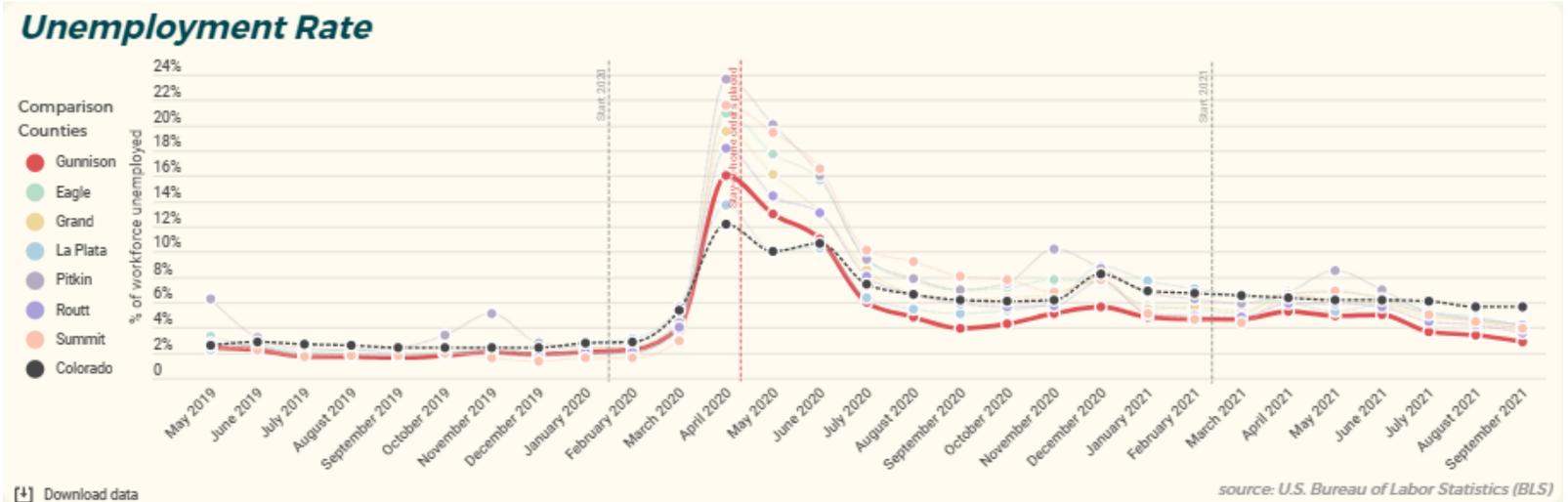
BUSINESS CLIMATE

Quarter 3 Gunnison County Business Survey

- 89% indicated business operations as 'Stable'
- Fully 89% indicated revenue stayed the same or increased from a typical year
 - 58% reported increased revenue in Q3
- Highest proportion of concern in relationship to macro economic challenges
 - 63% 'Very concerned' with supply chain disruption
 - 71% 'Moderately' or 'Very concerned' with US or Global Recession
- 55% of respondents indicated they had job openings
- 68% indicated their ability to recruit and retain qualified employees 'Declined/Gotten Harder' over the past year
 - 23% indicated 'Stayed about the same'
- **With surge in COVID-19 associated with Omicron many businesses saw staffing challenges exacerbated over the holidays and continue to do so**



UNEMPLOYMENT RETURNING TO 'NORMAL'



- November 2021 Unemployment**
- 3.5% in Gunnison County
 - This is within the November range for 2014-2019

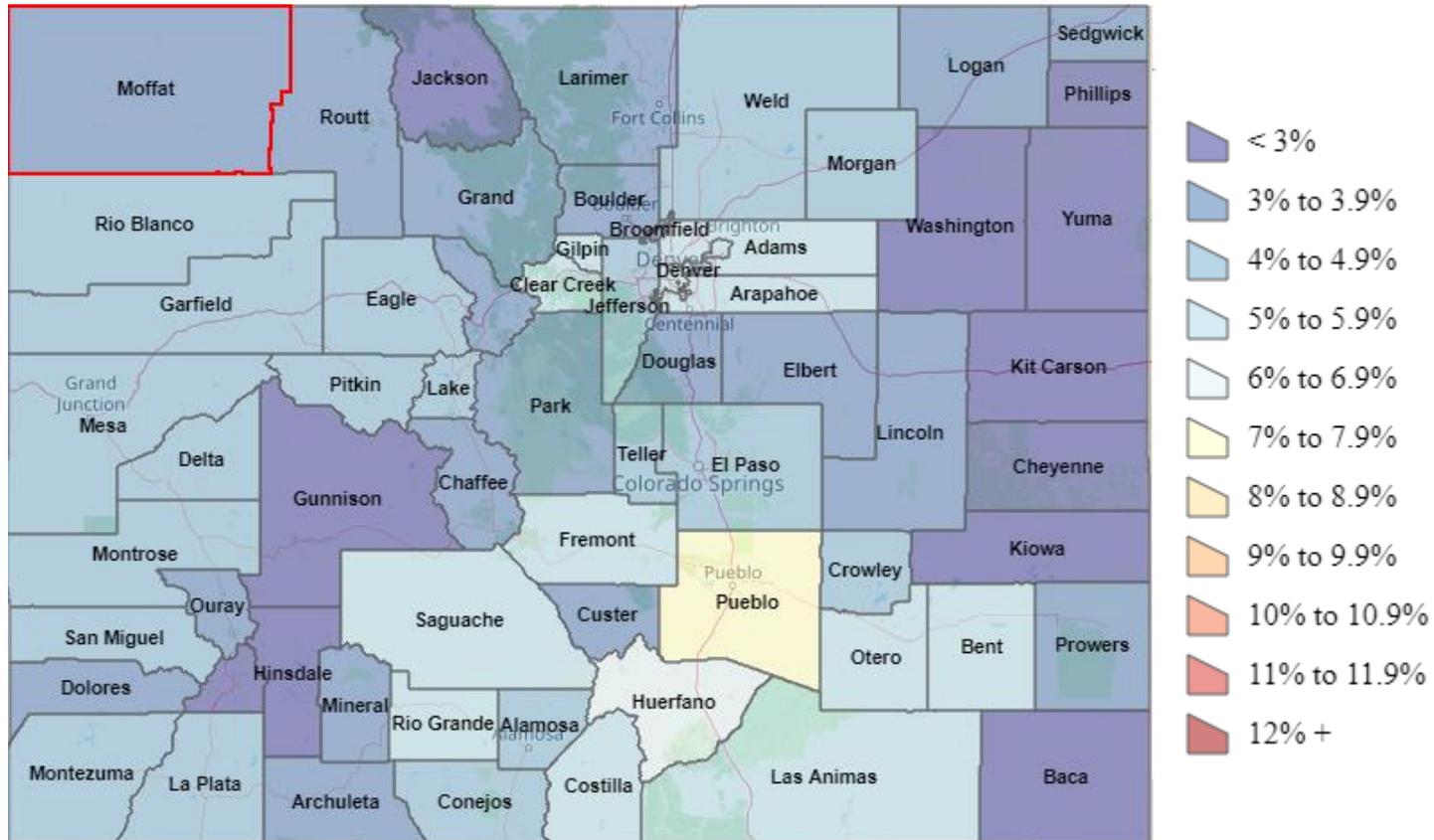
Unemployment Rate: Gunnison County



Data: Bureau of Labor Statistics API - Data not Seasonally Adjusted. BLS.gov cannot vouch for the data or analyses derived from these data after the data have been retrieved from BLS.gov. Visualization by the Colorado State Demography Office, Print Date: 11/10/2021



STATEWIDE UNEMPLOYMENT CONTEXT

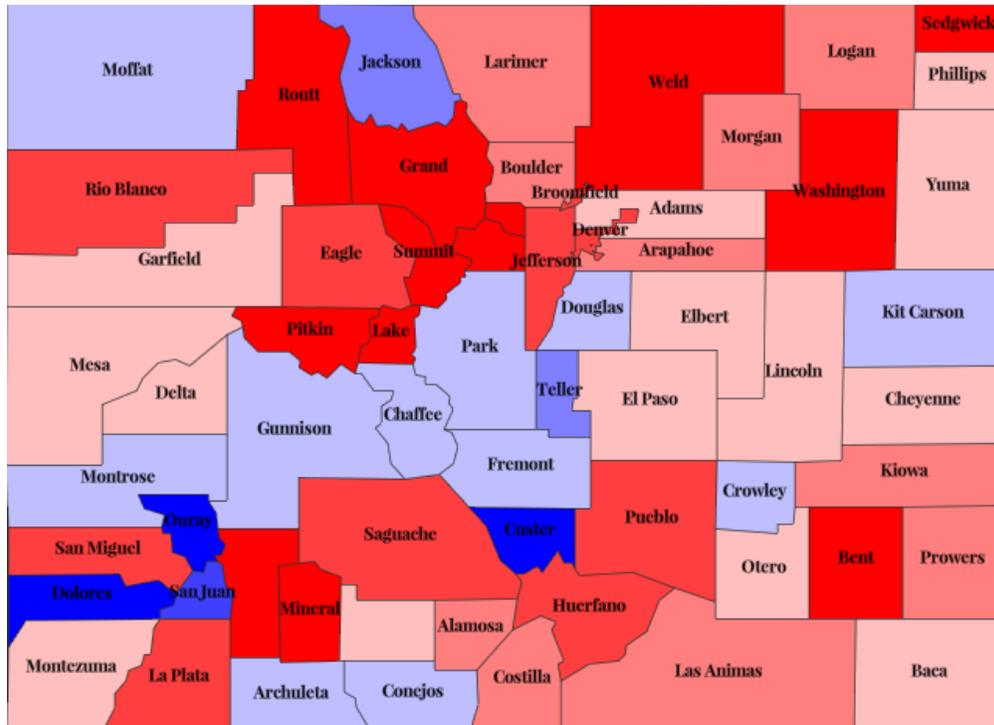


October 2021

- Gunnison County unemployment lower than most resort communities
- Matches many low unemployment rural communities



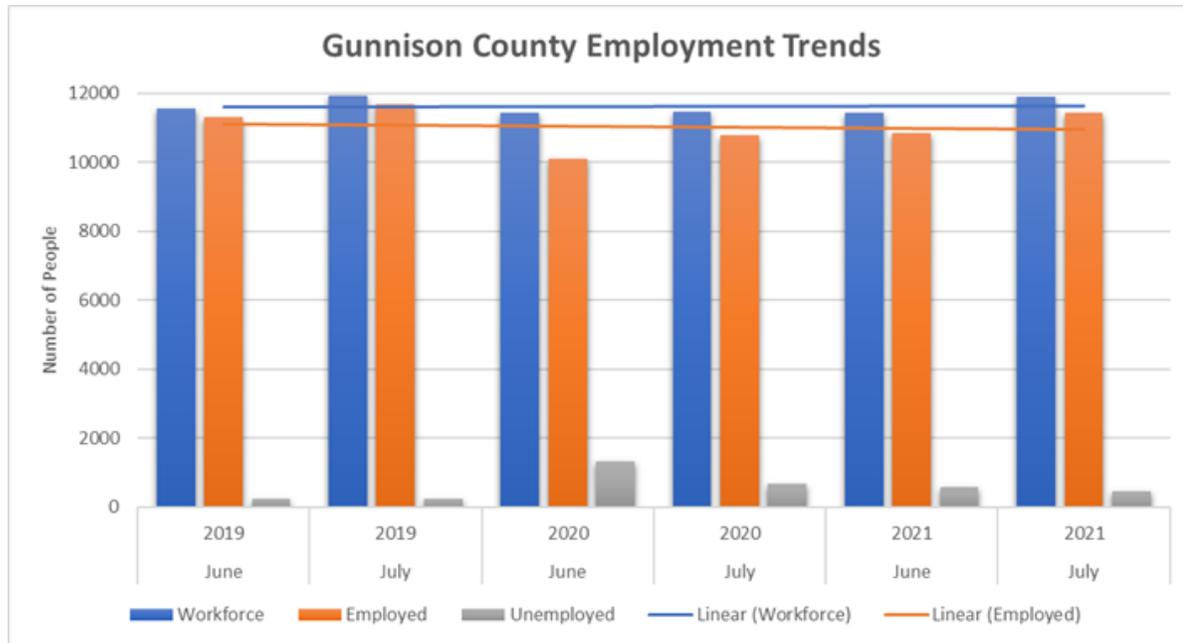
BUT WHAT ABOUT THE WORKFORCE?



- Bureau of Labor Statistics tracks Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages data by Quarter
- At the end of Q1 (March 2021), Gunnison County employment was up 83 jobs from March 2020
- Gain of 0.9%
- Building in the right direction unlike most Colorado communities
- But progress is slow



LOCAL WORKFORCE



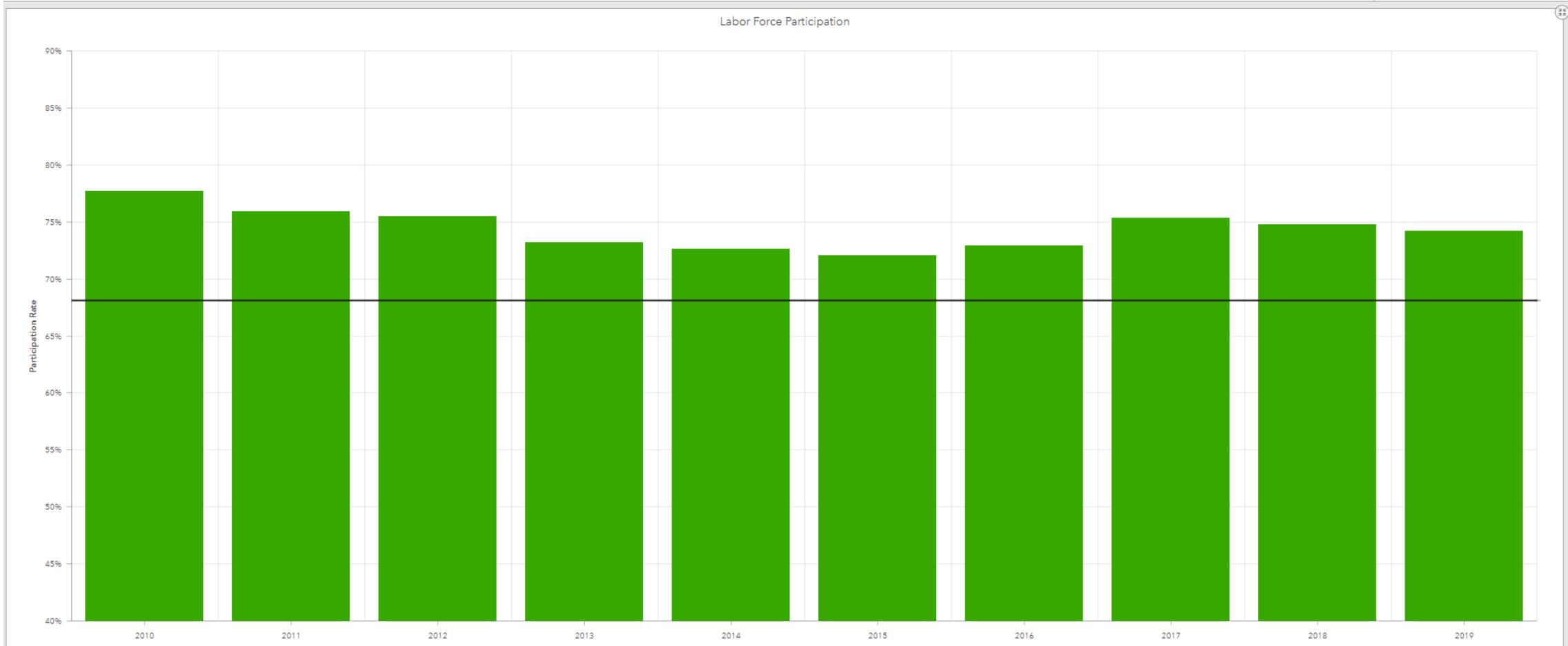
- Comparison of June & July total workforce and employed individuals over the last three years
- July 2021 countywide down -227 employed individuals from July 2019
 - This is a substantial amount of jobs in a community of our size
- Pre-pandemic staffing challenges existed in 2019
- Workforce has not expanded substantially either



LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION

Labor Force and Unemployment

Statewide or County
Gunnison



*Population denominator does not include active duty armed forces, prison/jail, and institutional care



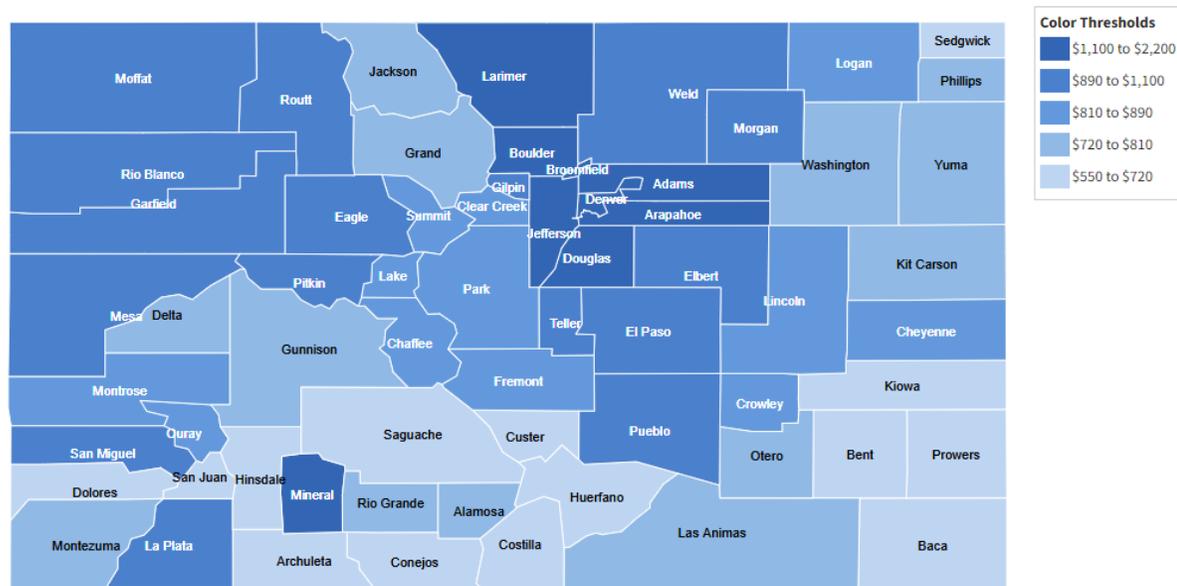
WHO WORKS IN GUNNISON COUNTY?

COUNTY	CFIPS	YEAR	AGE	GENDER	Labor Force	Universe	Participation Rate
Gunnison County	51	2019	16 to 19		522	1,218	42.87
Gunnison County	51	2019	20 to 24		1,352	1,579	85.65
Gunnison County	51	2019	25 to 34		2,061	2,222	92.77
Gunnison County	51	2019	35 to 44		2,430	2,663	91.24
Gunnison County	51	2019	45 to 54		2,093	2,319	90.24
Gunnison County	51	2019	55 to 64		1,672	2,008	83.27
Gunnison County	51	2019	65 and over		486	2,306	21.09



GUNNISON COUNTY WAGES

Average weekly wage, Total, all industries Total Covered Q1 2021 (p)



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (www.bls.gov)

- As of March 2021, Gunnison County's average weekly wage was \$772
- Weekly average wages vary across Quarters in Gunnison County on an annual basis
 - Highest wage quarter is usually Q4 with Q3 not far behind
- Averages wages in Gunnison County continue to increase year to year
- However, not make substantive ground compared to cost of living

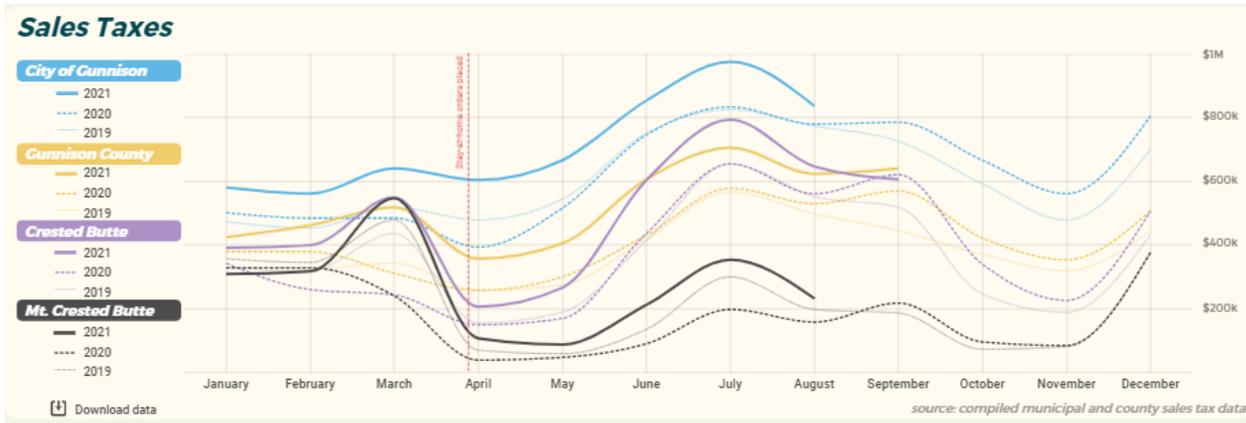


POPULATION AND DISPLACEMENT?

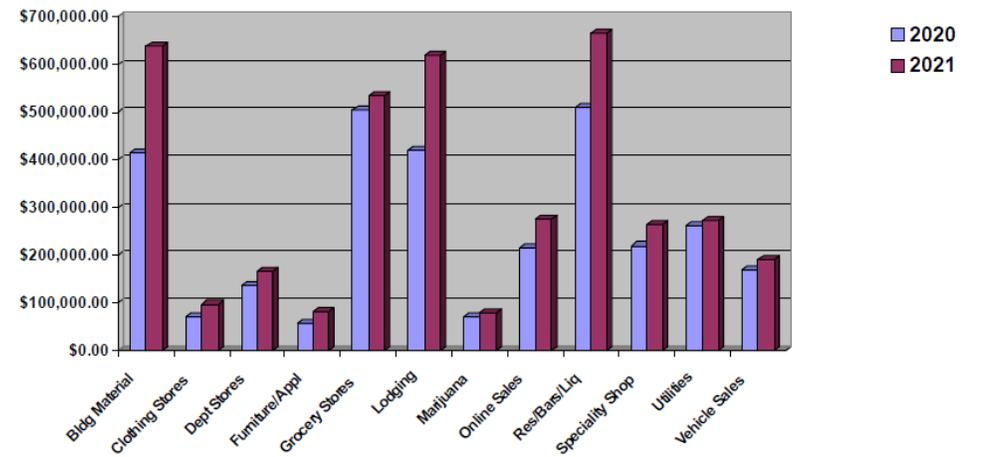
- American Community Survey and Demographers office estimates for 2020 population were 17,400+
- 2020 Census indicates 16,918 people in Gunnison County
 - Pandemic related Census undercount?
 - Displacement?
 - Lack of growth?
- Over the last three years population has grown by 1.6% countywide
 - Gained 129 households and 236 people
- City of Gunnison population expanded 12.1% from 2010-2020 (6,560)
- Crested Butte population grew 10.2% over the same time frame (1,639)



GUNNISON COUNTY SALES TAX



2020/2021 YTD INDUSTRY COMPARISON AS OF SEPTEMBER



SALES TAX NUANCES

City of Gunnison

- YTD Accommodations up 73% over 2020
 - Best performance over last five years
- Food Service and Drinking Places up 49%
 - Best performance over last five years
- Services returning to pre-pandemic collections
- Central Business District bouncing back to pre-pandemic levels

North Valley

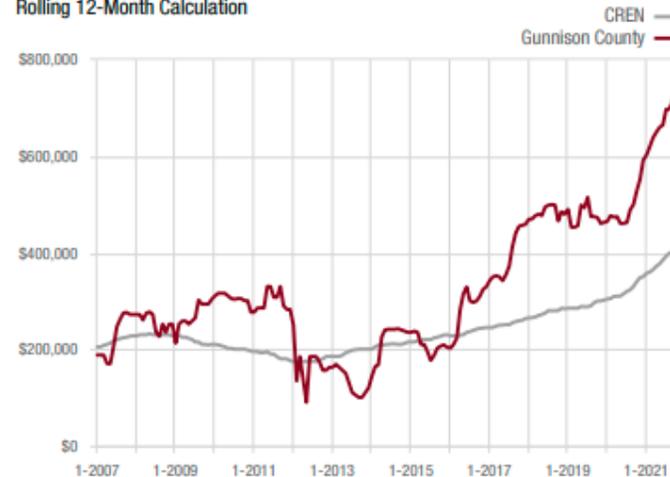
- Mt. CB is back!
- Peak summer CB collections are huge
 - Trends continue - YTD through November CB collections up 23% over 2020
- Extended 'shoulder season' continues for CB bars and restaurants
 - September Bars & Restaurants exceeded 2020
- Lodging leading in MT. CB
- Mt. CB Restaurants up 200% in August '21
 - But, still below historic averages



HOUSING MARKET

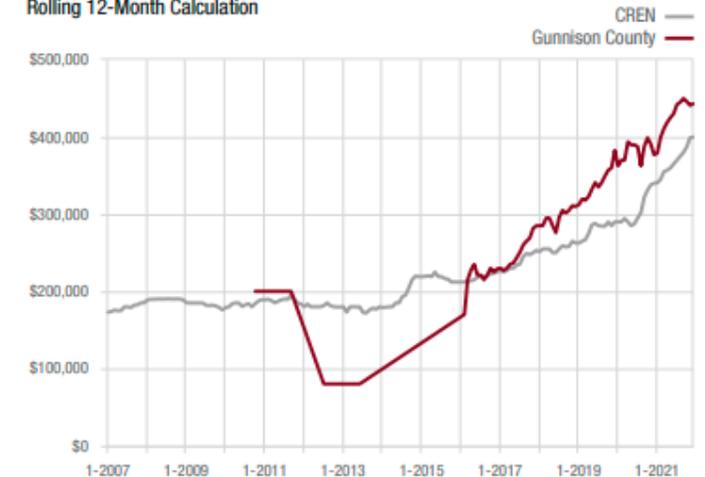
- YTD (12/21) Gunnison County SFH Median Sales Price grew by 22% compared to YTD (12/20)
- Median sale price \$522,500 (SFH) and \$320,000 (Condo/TH) countywide in 2021
- Median Sale Price SFH in City of Gunnison at \$450,000 in 2021
- Median Sale Price SFH in CB South at \$995,000

Median Sales Price - Single Family
Rolling 12-Month Calculation



A rolling 12-month calculation represents the current month and the 11 months prior in a single data point. If no activity occurred during a month, the line extends to the next available data point.

Median Sales Price - Townhouse/Condo
Rolling 12-Month Calculation



Current as of January 5, 2022. All data from Colorado Real Estate Network. Report © 2022 ShowingTime.

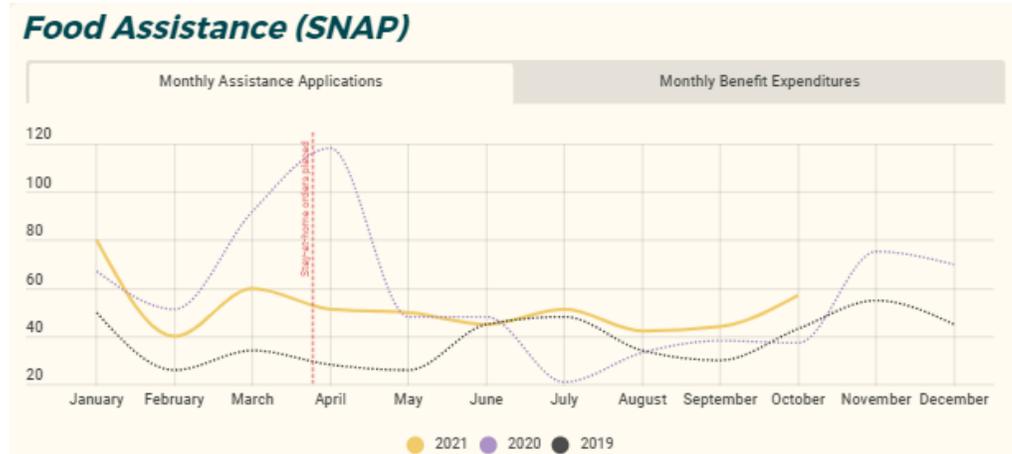


SECURITY IN HOUSING

- Housing/Rent assistance at HHS is relatively stable
 - Need continues at relatively high-level
 - Including temporary/transitional housing in motels
 - Immediate sheltering challenges after emergencies are real
 - Parkview Apartments situate is a strong example
- Q3 Community Survey found:
 - 79% of respondents said their housing costs were 'sustainable'
 - 13.5% indicated costs are unsustainable
 - 13% indicated they make lifestyle tradeoffs (i.e. skipping meals to pay rent)
- *These are likely undercounts due to the survey methodology and sampling*



FOOD SECURITY



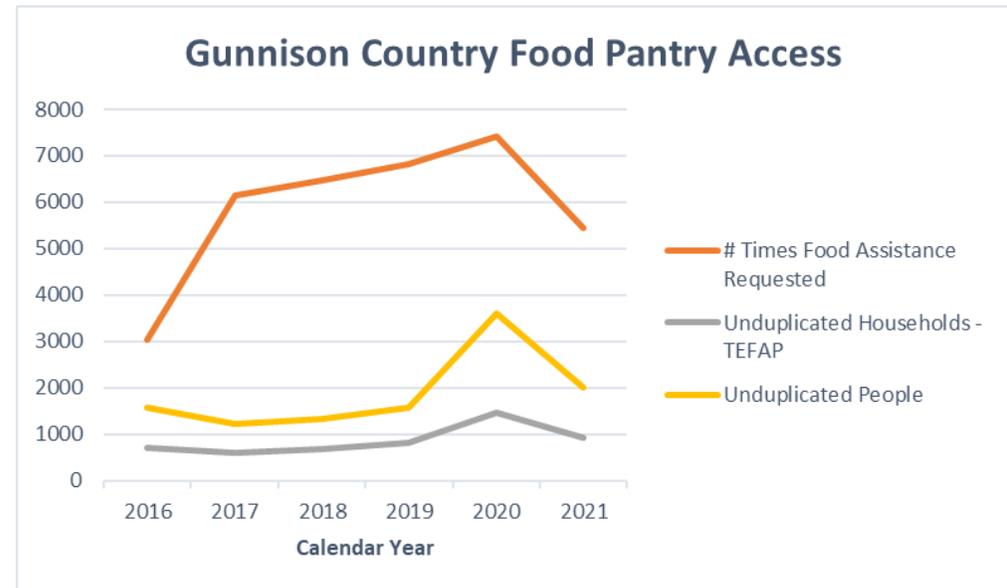
Q3 2021 Update

- Food assistance applications continue to run high
 - Monthly applicants exceeds 2019 and 2020 in late summer and fall
- Benefit expenditures maintain a high plateau relative to applicants.
- This is largely based on Federal level decisions



ACCESS TO FOOD ASSISTANCE

- Through October, the Pantry has served 932 unique households in the TEFAP program
 - Census data shows 2,225 households living below subsistence levels in Gunnison County
- Through October the pantry has served 34% more unduplicated households than through the same period in 2019
- *Numbers down from 2020*
- But numbers higher (or on track to be) than each year 2016-2019



HOUSEHOLD SPENDING

Community surveying for Q3 indicated:

- 57% of respondents had either returned to normal spending habits or intended to immediately
- This is a 10% reduction from April 2021 surveying
- A larger portion (21%) also indicated they would return to spending in 8 weeks
- Why?
 - Correspondence with Delta Surge may have tampered household level enthusiasm
 - Self-selection bias in survey sampling



HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- In the Pulse Survey, 63% of respondents said Mental Health and Wellbeing were 'Extremely' or 'Very Serious' problems
- Pulse survey findings noted that 29% of respondents discussed mental health challenges with 'a health professional'
- In the Q3 2021 Community Survey, 21% of respondents indicated that 'they sought counseling or other mental health assistance' in response to stress and other challenges during the pandemic
 - *While these questions are not formatted uniformly, the comparison is worth considering*
- 25% of Q3 2021 Community Survey respondents indicated an increased use of alcohol between July-September
 - 17% of Pulse survey respondents indicated that their consumption of alcohol increased in the last 12 months



WHAT UNITES US?

Figure 4: Divisions in Perceptions of the Seriousness of Problems Facing Colorado, by Party

(Ranked by % Extremely/Very Serious Among Registered Voters)

Problem	All Respondents	Party		
		Democrats	Independents	Republicans
The cost of housing	82%	87%	81%	79%
The cost of living	73%	79%	72%	64%
Homelessness	72%	79%	68%	66%
The cost of health care	65%	76%	64%	53%
Mental health	63%	70%	63%	57%
Divisions between people of different political parties	61%	60%	66%	61%
Harm to the economy caused by coronavirus	61%	64%	59%	63%



AGENDA ITEM or FINAL CONTRACT REVIEW SUBMITTAL FORM

Agenda Item: Gunnison Stewardship Fund, Sustainable Tourism and Outdoor Recreation (STOR) Corps, and STOR Committee Update

Action Requested: Discussion

Parties to the Agreement:

Term Begins:

Term Ends:

Grant Contract #:

Summary:

Update from Joe Lavorini, Stewardship Manager on Gunnison Stewardship Fund, STOR Corps and STOR Committee

Fiscal Impact:

Submitted by: Cathie Pagano

Submitter's Email Address: cpagano@gunnisoncounty.org

Finance Review:

Required

Not Required

Comments:

Reviewed by:

Discharge Date:

County Attorney Review:

Required

Not Required

Comments:

Reviewed by:

Discharge Date:

Certificate of Insurance Required

Yes No

County Manager Review:

Comments:

Reviewed by: GUNCOUNTY1\mbirmie

Discharge Date: 10/21/2021

Consent Agenda Regular Agenda Worksession

Time Allotted:

Agenda Date: 11/23/2021

AGENDA ITEM or FINAL CONTRACT REVIEW SUBMITTAL FORM

Agenda Item: Mt Emmons & Coal Creek Water Quality Update

Action Requested: Discussion

Parties to the Agreement:

Term Begins:

Term Ends:

Grant Contract #:

Summary:

Ashley Bembenek, Principal Scientist and Owner of Alpine Environmental Consultants will be presenting this update on 1/11. Her memo is here for your review.

Fiscal Impact:

Submitted by: Melanie Bollig

Submitter's Email Address: mbollig@gunnisoncounty.org

Finance Review:

Required

Not Required

Comments:

Reviewed by:

Discharge Date:

County Attorney Review:

Required

Not Required

Comments:

Reviewed by:

Discharge Date:

Certificate of Insurance Required

Yes No

County Manager Review:

Comments:

Reviewed by: GUNCOUNTY1\mbirmie

Discharge Date: 1/7/2022

Consent Agenda

Regular Agenda

Worksession

Time Allotted: 30

Agenda Date: 1/11/2022

Mt. Emmons Project Water Quality Updates

Prepared by Ashley Bembenek on January 7, 2022.

The purpose of this document is to update the Crested Butte Town Council and Gunnison County Board of County Commissioners on water quality issues related to Mt Emmons and the Keystone Mine site.

Summary of Issues Scoping Hearing on November 8, 2021

The issues scoping hearing is an administrative action hearing (i.e., no formal decisions) before the Colorado Water Quality Control Commission. The purpose of the hearing was to identify the topics that will be the subject of the Regulation 35 Rulemaking Hearing.

MEMC reported to the Commission that they have satisfied the terms of the temporary modifications, made progress to address uncertainty, and need additional time to develop site-specific water quality standards. During the Regulation 35 Rulemaking hearing, MEMC will report on activities from 2018 to present including: water quality monitoring results, site characterization results, and reclamation work. MEMC will also update the plan to resolve uncertainty which address conditions in the Coal Creek Watershed and long-term plans for the Keystone Mine site. MEMC will request that the temporary modifications be extended for five more years.

During the September stakeholder update, WQCD reported that they do not intend to propose any changes to Regulation 35 that would affect the water quality standards applied to Coal Creek.

Regulation 35 Rulemaking Hearing on June 13 and 14, 2022

The WQCC will consider the water quality standards applied in the Gunnison River Basin in a rulemaking hearing on June 13 and 14, 2022. The hearing process will begin in March 2022. The temporary modifications applied to Coal Creek will be reviewed as part of the hearing.

Temporary modifications are a tool to provide regulatory relief to dischargers while the discharger and interested parties address uncertainty associated with the water quality standard applied to the stream and feasible improvements to reduce pollutant concentrations in the permitted discharge. In time, the temporary modifications will likely be replaced by site-specific water quality standards for cadmium, copper, and zinc in Coal Creek. Depending on several factors, MEMC may need to pursue additional regulatory relief to comply with their discharge permit (e.g., a discharger specific variance).

In August 2021, the WQCC adopted regulatory changes to the process to review temporary modifications. The changes to the regulations make the review process more robust and transparent. The review will assure that water quality conditions in both Coal Creek and the WTP effluent have met the status quo (i.e., no significant changes) during the term of the temporary modifications. The process to establish and review the status quo is new and important, especially if the temporary modifications may be extended further.

During the course of the Regulation 35 hearing, I will review MEMC's pleadings to determine whether it is reasonable to extend the temporary modifications. At this time, the request

appears reasonably well-justified. The duration of the proposed extension is longer than typically recommended by WQCD. I am most interested in the following elements of the review:

- **Status quo:** How will MEMC choose to demonstrate that water quality in the WTP effluent and in Coal Creek has maintained the status quo? Ideally, loads and concentrations will be evaluated.
- **Benefits of work completed to date:** Will MEMC's evaluations of the benefits be realistic? Because continued uncertainty is required to support a temporary modification, the eligibility criteria do not encourage proponents to be optimistic about the benefits of projects.
- **Process to select and implement alternatives to improve water quality:** The revised plan to resolve uncertainty must identify process to evaluate uncertainty associated with underlying water quality standards and alternatives to improve water quality on site. A well-developed plan would be useful to on-going collaboration, but may not be likely given the number of unknowns at this time, chiefly the land exchange.

Long Term Water Quality Issues

Keystone Mine WTP Discharge Permit. The discharge permit for the Keystone WTP remains on administrative extension. When the permit is renewed, the Town and County should thoroughly review the draft permit and provide comments, as needed, to assure the permit limits and terms are appropriate and protective. Long term flow data from Coal Creek is essential to the permitting process. It is strongly recommended that local parties, currently the Town of Crested Butte and the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District, continue to fund the USGS gage in Coal Creek.

Standard Mine Superfund Site. CDPHE's Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division (HMWMD) manages the Standard Mine Superfund site, with support from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Phase I Remedial Action was completed in 2017 and 2022 will be the fifth year of the interim monitoring program. The purpose of the interim monitoring program is to determine whether the Phase II Remedial Action (water treatment) is required. HMWMD has proposed extending the interim monitoring program for an additional five years. HMWMD and EPA are also considering site-specific water quality standards cadmium, copper, and zinc in Elk Creek.

Metals that originate from the Standard Mine influence water quality in Elk Creek and Coal Creek; Elk Creek is a tributary of Coal Creek. As a result, the management activities at the Standard Mine influence the process to develop site-specific standards in Coal Creek.

Town of Crested Butte Water Supply. Coal Creek is the town's primary raw water supply. The Town's drinking water intake is located upstream of the confluence of Keystone Mine discharge in Coal Creek, near the Winter Trailhead. The Keystone Mine is located within the Town's Watershed Protection District. The Watershed Protection District was established through an ordinance used to protect the Town's drinking water supply.

Town of Crested Butte Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF). The WWTF is exploring options to meet a future permit limit for zinc. Because the Keystone and Standard mines are

substantial sources of zinc in the Coal Creek Watershed, decisions related to these mine sites affect the WWTF's ability to meet future permit limits.