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## **W. RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL FACILITIES**

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### **1. Museums (Table W-1)**

Table W-1 lists 11 existing museums in 9 different locations which focus on various aspects of the Valley history. A regional museum association has been formed to present a more complete Valley package of offerings. Following are brief comments on each in the same order as the table listing:

- Luther E. Bean Museum --- Fine arts gallery including works by local artists and Woodard collection of artifacts from around the world.
- San Luis Valley Museum --- Contains the former SLV History Center Museum collections on the Valley's people and other memorabilia, combined with selected items of natural, artistic, and cultural interest on the region, state, and world.
- Conejos County Agricultural Implement Museum --- Display of restored vintage agricultural equipment including a threshing machine and Mormon haystacker.
- Jack Dempsey Museum --- Cabin that showcases mementos and history of a boy born and raised in Manassa who went on to become a prize-fighting legend.
- Antonito Museum --- Artifacts and history of Antonito and early settlements.
- San Luis Museum & Cultural Center --- A fascinating look at the cultural and historical events from early settlement in the 1850's to present day.
- Creede Historical Society Museum --- Located in the 1891 Denver & Rio Grande Railroad Depot, this building contains many of Creede's treasures.
- Creede Underground Mining Museum --- A 200-foot long underground museum where you can experience the atmosphere of a working hard-rock mine and see artifacts dating to Creede's "Boom Days" in 1892.
- Rio Grande County Museum --- Attractive setting which presents a complete history of San Luis Valley people and development, including Indian artifacts, historical clothing displays, and others. Noted for contemporary art exhibits and numerous cultural events.
- Transportation of the West Museum --- Features items from the horse and buggy days, and turn of the century railroads.
- Saguache County Museum --- A pioneer museum, with seven rooms filled with charming displays and memorabilia of the area. Also has original jail.

## **2. Golf Courses, Recreation Centers, and Community Centers (Table W-2)**

Four golf courses as shown in the table are located in valley and mountain settings. Alamosa and South Fork have 18-hole courses, and 9-hole courses are available in Monte Vista and Crestone. Boys and Girls Club facilities are located in Alamosa, La Jara, and Monte Vista. Monte Vista and Blanca/Fort Garland have year-round pools, and seasonal pools are operated in Alamosa and Sanford. Swimming facilities at Monte Vista's Ski Hi Park have been closed for several years now, mainly due to high maintenance costs and tighter budgets.

The City of Alamosa built the large multi-use recreation center as was mentioned in the last CEDS. Location is near the County's new office campus south of town. Blanca/Fort Garland's recreational facility has existed for a number of years, and Creede is using the Underground Mining Museum for community meetings. San Luis recently received funding for its recreation center and is preparing for construction.

## **3. National Heritage Area Application**

Efforts to designate part of the San Luis Valley as one of America's National Heritage Areas started over 5 years ago, and should be accomplished in the next CEDS timeframe. A bill introduced by Senators Ken Salazar and Wayne Allard to designate the "Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area" is still in committee, but should receive bipartisan support when it eventually goes for the final vote.

The area requested for designation is traversed by the Los Caminos Antiguos Scenic and Historic Byway in the counties of Alamosa, Conejos, and Costilla which have a rich settlement history and also contain the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve. Designation would ensure that the unique cultural landscape of the Los Caminos Antiguos is preserved in perpetuity for future generations, while not requiring additional federal land purchases. If successful, more areas in the Valley could be considered for study and appeal for designation.

As defined by the National Park Service, a National Heritage Area "..... is a place where natural, cultural, historic, and recreational resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally distinctive landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography." These patterns make National Heritage Areas representative of the national experience through the physical features that remain and the traditions that have evolved in the area. About 20 such areas have been designated across the United States. A request to designate the Northern Rio Grande National Heritage Area in neighboring Santa Fe, Rio Arriba, and Taos counties, which was based on a theme of Spanish colonization, was not successful but could be re-introduced.

Many of the qualities needed for meeting the NHA designation criteria have been preserved along the Los Caminos route. The physical features that still remain, and traditions that have endured include: historic

buildings, churches, and landmarks; preservation of language and traditions; museums and historical records; area-specific art, music, and literature; communal lands; celebrations of history and culture; land grant histories; and the unique and already nationally known features of the Great Sand Dunes. Added to this is the fortuitous timing of the Dunes monument to park upgrade, and Park Service personnel to assist with planning and implementation.

A few of the anticipated NHA benefits include:

- Preserving the integrity of the cultural landscape and local stories so that future generations of the community will be able to understand and define who they are, where they come from, and what ties them to their home.
- Recognition of community efforts in the NHA initiatives.
- Potential opportunities for businesses that further the goals of the heritage area.
- The NHA model is based entirely on local initiative and control as an alternative to more land acquisition and Federal government management.
- Educational assistance and grants to communities along the Los Caminos to preserve, renovate, and interpret historical and cultural sites and locations. Legislation provides amounts up to \$1 million/year for this purpose.

## **Table W-1**

### **Museums**

#### **Alamosa County**

**Luther Bean Museum - Adams State College campus**  
208 Edgemont Avenue, Alamosa

San Luis Valley Museum  
4<sup>th</sup> Street and Hunt Avenue, Alamosa

#### **Conejos County**

**Conejos County Agricultural Implement Museum**  
17705 Hwy 285, La Jara

**Jack Dempsey Museum**  
412 Main Street, Manassa

Antonito Museum  
US Hwy 285 and CO 17 intersection

#### **Costilla County**

**Fort Garland Museum**  
29477 Hwy 159, Fort Garland

**San Luis Museum & Cultural Center**  
401 Church Place, San Luis

#### **Mineral County**

**Creede Historical Society Museum**  
17 South Main Street, Creede

**Creede Underground Mining Museum**  
407 N. Loma, Creede

#### **Rio Grande County**

**Rio Grande County Museum**  
580 Oak Street, Del Norte

**Transportation of the West Museum**  
916 First Avenue, Monte Vista

#### **Saguache County**

**Saguache County Museum**  
Hwy 285, Saguache

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**Source:** San Luis Valley Museum Association, May 2002, and 2007 update.

**Table W-2**

**Golf Courses, Recreation Centers, Community Centers**

<b><u>County/Place</u></b>	<b><u>Facilities/Features/Comments</u></b>
<b>Alamosa County</b> <b>Alamosa</b>	<p><b>Cattails Golf Course</b> - Public course with 18 holes, clubhouse, restaurant/bar. Pro shop, cart &amp; equipment rentals, driving range. Open 7 days/wk.</p> <p><b>Boys and Girls Club</b> - For youth 6-18, capacity 200. Recreation/games, gym, arts/crafts, photo lab, pottery, drafting, computers/Internet, and summer programs. Closed weekends.</p> <p><b>Splashland Hot Springs Pool</b> - Recreation, lap swimming, swim lessons. Open 6 days/wk, May through Sept.</p> <p><b>Family Wellness Center</b> - Construction pending, planned opening date April 2003. All ages, capacity 700. Cardio room, suspended track, gym, locker rooms, multipurpose spaces, accommodations for children/infants, arts/crafts, education programs. Planned use of geothermal well as supplemental heat source. Open 7 days/wk except summer Sundays.</p>
<b>Conejos County</b> <b>La Jara</b>	<b>Boys and Girls Club</b> - For youth, 6-18, capacity 50. Education, social/recreation, health & PE, arts/crafts, Smart Moves, and summer programs. Closed weekends.
<b>Sanford</b>	<b>Sanford Pool</b> - Public swimming pool
<b>Costilla County</b> <b>Fort Garland</b>	<b>Blanca/Ft. Garland Community Center</b> - All ages. Swimming pool, hot tub, dry sauna, weight room with cardio equipment, arts/crafts. Closed Friday and Saturday.
<b>San Luis</b>	Recreation center in planning stages.
<b>Mineral County</b> <b>Creede</b>	Underground Mining Museum accommodates a number of community meetings and events.
<b>Rio Grande County</b> <b>Monte Vista</b>	<p><b>Monte Vista Golf Course</b> - Public course with 9 holes, clubhouse, snack bar, cart &amp; equipment rentals, driving range. Open 7 days/wk.</p> <p><b>Ski Hi Pool and Waterslide</b> - All ages. Water aerobics, recreation, and swim lessons. Open 7 days/wk, year round.</p> <p><b>Boys and Girls Club</b> - For youth 6-18, capacity 80. Activities similar to other Boys and Girls Clubs. Closed weekends.</p>
<b>South Fork</b>	<b>Rio Grande Club</b> - Semi-private course with 18 holes, clubhouse, restaurant/bar, pro-shop, cart & equipment rentals, driving range. Open 7 days/wk.
<b>Saguache County</b> <b>Crestone/Baca</b>	<b>Challenger Golf Club</b> - Public course with 9 holes, clubhouse, restaurant, cart & equipment rentals, driving range. Open 7 days/wk.

**Source:** SLV Development Resources Group, July 2002.