

# PAGOSA SPRINGS

## OFFICIAL VISITOR GUIDE™



EVENTS | DINING | LODGING | SHOPPING | OUTDOOR ADVENTURES  
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT | MAPS | FAMILY FUN | HISTORY & MORE





# ARE YOU READY TO CALL SW COLORADO HOME?

There is something so special about finding your place here. From year-round activities to magnificent vistas to 300+ days of sunshine a year, our area offers something for everyone. Whether you are seeking a home away from home or a new beginning...let's start your journey together. We'd love to earn your business.

*The Pagosa Way*  Life Well Lived

## THE AREA'S #1 TEAM OF BROKERS SINCE 2006

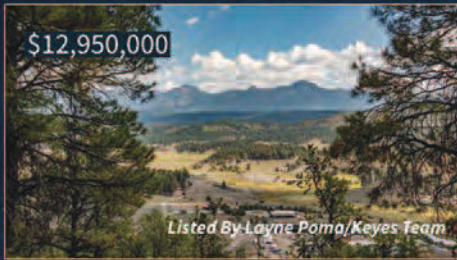


*Statistics based on MLS data 2006-2021*



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\$12,950,000

Listed By Layne Poma/Keyes Team

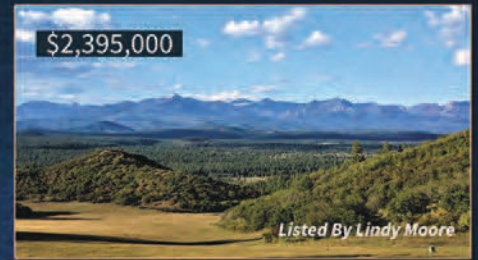
**492 +/- ACRES DOWNTOWN | 776552**  
Hot Springs Blvd./Hwy. 84 Frontage  
Development Approval ~ Mixed Use Zoning  
Potential Ranch/Development/Estate



\$2,899,000

Listed By Kim Brown

**ECHO CANYON RANCH | 785800**  
47.5 Acres ~ 7,167 SF Home ~ 4 BR/6 BA  
Big Mountain Views ~ Large Pond  
4CG/Shop ~ Paved, Gated Community



\$2,395,000

Listed By Lindy Moore

**BILLYGOAT POINT | 775430**  
162 Acres ~ 4,719 SF Home ~ 5 BR/4 BA  
Borders Nat'l Forest ~ Great Views  
Small Barn & Tack Room ~ No HOA



\$1,525,000

Listed By Marcie Lewis

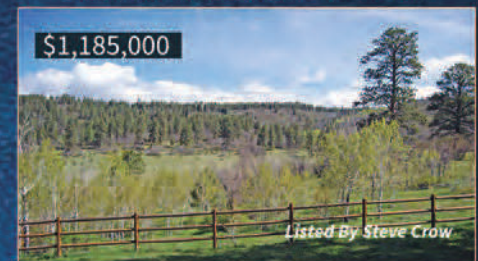
**PRISTINE BARNDOMINIUM | 778691**  
60 Acres ~ Borders 3 Sides Nat'l Forest  
1,400 SF Living ~ 2,800 SF Barn  
Bridge ~ Seasonal Creek ~ RV Hookups



\$1,397,000

Listed By Team Christians

**TIMBER RIDGE RANCH | 783626**  
4+ Acres ~ 3,881 SF ~ 4 BR/4 BA  
Beautiful Finishes ~ Solar ~ Big Views  
Workshop ~ Wrap-around Decks



\$1,185,000

Listed By Steve Crow

**HUNTING PROPERTY/RANCH | 783678**  
120 Acres ~ 3 Sides Nat'l Forest  
Pond ~ Barn, Pole Barn, Fencing  
Build Your Mountain Dream Home



\$995,000

Listed By Jill Morelock

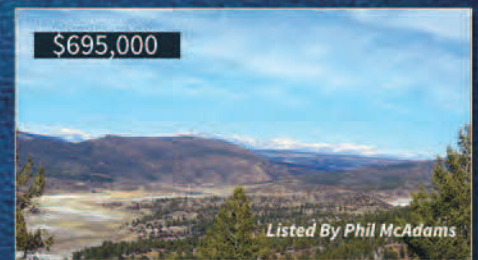
**NATIONAL FOREST-LAKEFRONT | 781438**  
35 Acres ~ 3,219 SF Custom Home  
3 BR/2.5 BA ~ Wrap-around Decks  
Elevator ~ Water Rights From Lake



\$988,000

Listed With The Keyes Team  
Co-listed with John C Pitcher Real Estate

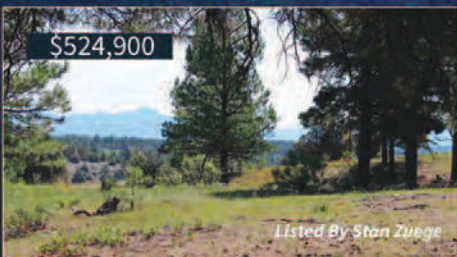
**SOUTHWEST MTN HOME | 786379**  
3 Acres ~ 4 BR/4 BA, 3,794 SF Home  
Mountain Views ~ Crowley Ranch Reserve  
Private Owner Hot Springs ~ Open Space



\$695,000

Listed By Phil McAdams

**MAJESTIC 160 ACRES | 780867**  
Borders Nat'l Forest & Chimney Rock  
120 & 40-Acre Parcels ~ Phone/Electric In  
Can Be Further Divided ~ Amazing Views



\$524,900

Listed By Stan Zuege

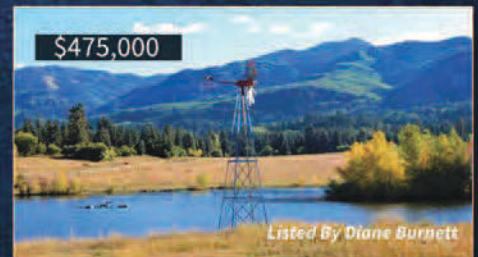
**35 ACRES TIMBER RIDGE RANCH | 772946**  
Build Your Dream Home Close To Town  
Multiple Build Sites ~ Mountain Views  
Paved Roads & Utilities To Site



\$504,000

Listed By Bill Kinsley

**SADDLE MOUNTAIN TOWNHOME | 783904**  
3 BR/3 BA ~ 1,692 SF Townhome  
2 Car Garage ~ Core Area  
Excellent Storage ~ Near Rec Center



\$475,000

Listed By Diane Burnett

**CIMARRONA RANCH LOT 2 | 777401**  
35 Acres ~ Borders Nat'l Forest ~ Big Views  
Year-round Maintained Roads ~ All Utilities  
Ranch Lake On Parcel ~ High Speed Internet



# Contents

Welcome .....	4	Groomed Nordic Skiing Trails.....	40
Frequently Asked Questions.....	6	Multi-Use Winter Trails .....	40
• Where is Pagosa Springs?		Back-Country Skiing & Snowshoeing Trails .....	41
• Who can I contact for info?		Avalanche Awareness .....	42
• What is it like at altitude?		Recreation Map .....	44
• What is the weather like?		Why so much snow?.....	45
• Is there a medical facility?		Rest Your Head .....	46
• Important phone numbers		Enhance your vacation experience with the Pagosa Springs Visitor Center and Visit Pagosa Springs	
Pagosa Springs .....	8	Flavor of Pagosa .....	49
Calendar of Events.....	10	Kick back with dinner and live entertainment after a day of fun	
Wolf Creek Ski Area Events.....	11	Retail Therapy .....	58
The Basics .....	12	Exploring the local character through shopping	
Marijuana Laws.....	14	Real Estate & Home Guide.....	65
WinterFest .....	16	Owning Property in Pagosa Springs may inspire you to think outside the box	
Family Fun.....	17	Getting Here.....	70
Something for Everyone.....	20	• Stevens Field Airport	
Downtown/Reservoir Hill Map.....	24	• Fixed Base Operator	
Rest & Relaxation .....	25	• Durango-LaPlata Airport	
World's Deepest Hot Spring.....	28	• Mileage from Pagosa	
Play Outside.....	30		
Running with the sled dogs			
Wolf Creek Ski Area.....	32		
Wolf Creek Ski Area Map .....	34		
Snowmobiling.....	36		
Cross-country Skiing.....	38		



CHRIS RAPP,  
COURTESY OF WOLF CREEK SKI AREA

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Photo: Dustin English



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working dogs while you enjoy this  
ancient method of winter travel.*

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- ✧ Large families and groups welcome
- ✧ Round-trip transportation from town included
- ✧ Ages 3 & up

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**Sled Dogs**



**970-507-0316**

**SanJuanSledDogs.com**

  **sanjuansleddogs**

**Peter@sanjuansleddogs.com**



# Welcome

For some visitors, winter in Pagosa has quite the reputation: plenty of snow and cold.

The reputation is only partly deserved.

Yes, we get some impressive snowfall here.

Yes, there are times the bank of snow at the side of the house creeps past the top of the windows as it slides from the roof.

The peaks of the San Juan Mountains just east of Pagosa Springs are known for amazing snowfall, and Wolf Creek Ski Area legitimately boasts the “most snow in Colorado” (as well as the best, with powder that can’t be equalled).

We handle it well. In fact, we enjoy it. When a “big dump” hits Pagosa Country, the crews that clear our roads and highways know their stuff and do a remarkably good job. It barely slows us down.

In other words, bring on the snow! We get around in fine fashion. So will you.

And it’s a good thing — there’s plenty to do and plenty to enjoy during the winter here.

Those of us who live in Pagosa Country year-round not only know how to deal with snow, but we welcome it. The more, the better.

Why?

Because it turns this part of the world into a winter playground with few peers — a remarkably beautiful alpine environment in which every winter, outdoor recreation option is maximized. Alpine skiers, snowboarders, showshoers, cross-country skiers, fat bikers, snowmobilers, sledders, skaters — all benefit from being in Pagosa Country, for a day, for a week, for the season.

Our snow is not a problem here in Pagosa Country — it’s a blessing.

Yes, it can get cold here. But it’s not the kind of cold you experience in low-altitude, high-humidity, windy environments. The winters here are fairly mild when it comes to the temperatures. The weather is usually perfect for peak winter experiences — offering some of the best winter fun you’ll find anywhere. The snow falls flat and often deep, and a general lack of wind makes for a white wonderland. The sun shines more often than not, and the sparkling vistas are magnificent, calling you out of doors, promising a satisfying and memorable experience.

When winter comes and the snow falls from the clouds, we are ready in other ways — ways that ensure you have a memorable visit. Our local business community — lodging establishments, outdoor recreation equipment sales and rental outlets, clothing stores and restaurants — are ready to welcome you and provide you with all you need. We locals frequent these establishments, we patronize the stores, we use the services, we eat at the restaurants, we go to the theater productions, the art galleries. The many people, places and products here make our winters pleasurable, too. Pagosa Country is chock full of tremendous businesses and wonderful talents, and they await your arrival.

Pagosa continues to be a special place to create memories you’ll look back on fondly. We still offer myriad places and activities to get away, try something new, revisit a much-loved winter hobby or just enjoy the winter wonderland with a warm beverage by the fireplace.

If you are a visitor during the winter, take advantage of all we have to offer. You are our guest; we welcome you.

Enjoy your time here, and return.





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# Frequently Asked Questions

## Where is Pagosa Springs?

Pagosa Springs is an outdoor-lover's paradise nestled at more than 7,000 feet in altitude in southwest Colorado's rugged San Juan Mountains. With spectacular fall colors, snow-covered peaks, Chimney Rock National Monument, incredible hunting, amazing wildlife, clean air and 2.8 million acres of National Forest, Pagosa offers countless opportunities to soak up the scenery in every season.

## Who can I contact for info?

To get started exploring Pagosa Springs, check out [www.ExplorePagosa.com](http://www.ExplorePagosa.com) for information on lodging, restaurants, recreational activities and more. Potential visitors can also call the Visitor Center's vacation line at (866) 438-4917. Archuleta County news and events can be found in The Pagosa Springs SUN, the community's weekly newspaper, with weekday online updates at [www.PagosaSUN.com](http://www.PagosaSUN.com).

## What is it like at altitude?

Regardless of your level of physical fitness, acute mountain sickness can strike anyone not acclimated to Pagosa's 7,000-foot elevation. To stay well during your visit and to get the most out of your time in Pagosa Springs, it is recommended that visitors follow a few pieces of altitude advice:

- Drink three to four quarts of water per day.
- Avoid overexertion, caffeine and alcohol for the first few days.
- Take a day or two to acclimate before venturing to higher-elevation destinations.
- Seek medical attention if persistent headache, fatigue, poor coordination or shortness of breath occur.

## What is the weather like?

In a word, the weather in Pagosa Springs is beautiful. Archuleta County is located just 28 miles north of the New Mexico border and along the western slope of the Continental Divide. The combination of high desert plateau and dramatic Rocky Mountains to the north and east creates an unusual microclimate. Because of this, Pagosa Springs has it all, with warm, pleasant summers,

long autumns with gorgeous colors and plenty of dry, powdery snow. On average, Pagosa residents enjoy 300 days of sun each year, as well as four distinct and uniquely beautiful seasons. With low wind and warm sunshine, residents can enjoy a variety of year-round recreational activities.

**Average Days of Sunshine:** 300 per year

**Annual Precipitation:** 20.87 inches/year

**Annual Snowfall:** 107 inches/year

### Average Monthly Temperatures:

Month	High	Low	Month	High	Low
Jan.	38.2°F	2.3°F	Jul.	82.6°F	45.0°F
Feb.	43.6°F	9.2°F	Aug.	80.2°F	44.8°F
Mar.	50.1°F	17.8°F	Sep.	73.5°F	36.8°F
Apr.	58.7°F	23.7°F	Oct.	63.2°F	26.5°F
May	67.8°F	31.0°F	Nov.	48.6°F	15.7°F
Jun.	78.0°F	37.2°F	Dec.	39.9°F	5.6°F

## Is there a medical facility?

Pagosa Springs Medical Center includes a critical-access hospital located at 95 S. Pagosa Blvd. The emergency room is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Phone (970) 731-3700. Dial 911 for emergency services. There are multiple clinics in the community offering a variety of services.

## Important phone numbers:

### EMERGENCIES DIAL "911"

(ambulance, EMT, fire, police)

**For non-emergency ambulance, fire, EMT, police, dial (970) 731-2160**

Archuleta County Dispatch .....	(970) 731-2160
Archuleta County Commissioners ..	(970) 264-8300
Archuleta County Sheriff's Office.....	(970) 264-8430
Archuleta School District 50 Joint ...	(970) 264-2228
Colorado State Patrol Headquarters	(303) 239-4501
Colorado State Patrol District 5 .....	(719) 589-2503
Emergency Medical Services.....	(970) 731-2160
La Plata Electric Association.....	(970) 247-5786
Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation ..	(970) 731-2691
Pagosa Fire Protection District .....	(970) 731-4191
Pagosa Springs Police .....	(970) 264-4151, ext. 228
Pagosa Springs Post Office.....	(970) 264-5440
Pagosa Springs Town Hall .....	(970) 264-4151
The Pagosa Springs SUN.....	(970) 264-2100
Senior Center .....	(970) 264-2167
Black Hills Energy.....	(800) 563-0012
Southern Ute Indian Tribe .....	(970) 563-0100
Stevens Field Airport, Manager.....	(970) 731-3060
Stevens Field FBO .....	(970) 731-2127
Ruby M. Sisson Memorial Library ...	(970) 264-2209
Rise Above Violence.....	(970) 264-9075





# Giving *You* The Care You Deserve In The Mountains You Love

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PRIMARY CARE APPOINTMENTS MON-FRI | WALK-INS MON-FRI  
ORTHOPEDIC & GENERAL SURGERY | BEHAVIORAL HEALTH  
GASTROENTEROLOGY | CANCER CARE & INFUSION THERAPY  
PRENATAL | WOMEN'S HEALTH | RADIOLOGY | NEUROLOGY  
CARDIOLOGY | EAR, NOSE & THROAT | TELEMEDICINE | LAB  
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# Pagosa Springs

SHARI PIERCE

For more than a century, Pagosa Country has enchanted visitors with its stunning natural beauty.

Snow-covered mountain peaks, clear blue skies and healing mineral waters captivate guests who cannot help but be charmed by the relaxed, friendly atmosphere of life in the San Juan Mountains.

The elements that contribute to Pagosa Country's magic are many: wild game, stately timbers, lush valleys, sparkling rivers, scenic seclusion and the craggy peaks of the rugged San Juan Mountains.

Unlike so many modern "retreats" in the Rockies, Pagosa Country doesn't offer everything money can buy, but it does offer countless things money can't buy.

Leave the hustle and bustle of city living and the glitz of Rocky Mountain resort towns — escape to Pagosa.

## Basic services abound

Pagosa has everything guests and residents need to be entertained and accommodated. A public library, art galleries, museums, numerous restaurants and a variety of specialty shops provide plenty of opportunities for amusement. Churches, gas stations, grocery stores, hotels, motels and public and private health care facilities are also available to fill any need.

## Information is available

Head to the Visitor Center for directions and information on all Pagosa has to offer. Located on the right side of Hot Springs Boulevard just after you cross the bridge over the San Juan River, the Visitor Center, which is designed to represent one of Pagosa Springs' early-day bathhouses, offers a wealth of information. With a knowledgeable staff familiar with the ins and outs of Pagosa, the Visitor Center is the place to go for questions, concerns, tips and advice, as well as pamphlets, maps and brochures for the area's

events, destinations and other attractions.

## World's deepest hot spring

A short walk south from the Visitor Center will take you to "The Great Pagosa Hot Spring" — certified by the Guinness Book of World Records as the deepest geothermal hot spring in the world. From the Visitor Center, follow the sidewalk down Hot Springs Boulevard until you're southwest of The Springs Resort and Spa and follow the paved path to the right.

Outdoor pools and a variety of outdoor geothermal hot tubs are located next to the San Juan River, featuring water temperatures to suit every need and taste. Take in the sights and sounds of beautiful Pagosa Springs while relaxing in the warmth of the springs and the coolness of the mountain air. You'll even find a rooftop pool with mountain views.

## Outdoor activities

Pagosa Springs is overflowing with opportunities to engage in outdoor adventures. To help you find the best places to enjoy your favorite activities, stop by the U.S. Forest Service Pagosa Ranger District Office at the corner of 2nd and Pagosa streets. The staff there can provide a wealth of information on all manner of seasonal activities, including hunting, area ski or snowshoeing routes, snowmobiling, winter camping opportunities, ice fishing, rafting, hiking and horseback riding.

For the area's earliest Native inhabitants, Pagosa was considered a land of healing waters. For today's vacationers, Pagosa is a land of invigorating experiences, from the depths of the healing pools to the mountains and valleys that beckon enthusiasts year-round.

If this is your first time to Pagosa Country, make yourself at home in the midst of the most beautiful scenery and friendliest people in Colorado.

If you've been here before, welcome back.





Where can I see this?



When can I do this?



When can I see this?



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Call us at 800.252.2204.

Chat with us on Social Media.    





# Calendar of Events

## October

### Month of October

#### Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Events all month long

[riseaboveviolence.org](http://riseaboveviolence.org)

Oct. 21

#### Quarterly Coffee Talk

9 a.m.

Tennyson Building Event Center  
and Facebook Live

197 Navajo Trail Dr.

[riseaboveviolence.org](http://riseaboveviolence.org)

Oct. 22

#### Art Walk Fundraiser

Time to be determined

450 Lewis St., A1

[riseaboveviolence.org](http://riseaboveviolence.org)

Oct. 23

#### Rotary Club of Pagosa Springs

Jewels and Jeans Barn Dance

6:30 p.m., CSU Extension building

Tim Sullivan and his band

[Pagosaspringsrotary.org](http://Pagosaspringsrotary.org)

Oct. 23

#### Halloween Carnival

Noon-2 p.m.

Riverwalk behind Town Hall

(970) 264-4152

## December

Dec. 2

#### Festival of Trees

Noon-6 p.m. Public viewing and voting

Ross Aragon Community Center

(970) 264-4152

Dec. 3

#### Festival of Trees

5:30 p.m.

Ross Aragon Community Center

(970) 264-4152

Dec. 18

#### Old Fashioned Christmas Celebration

5:30-8:30 p.m.

Participate in a walking "parade" to celebrate the holiday season. The event centers around an old fashioned Christmas theme and the spirit of giving.

[www.visitpagosasprings.com](http://www.visitpagosasprings.com)

(970) 585-1200

## January

Jan. 8

Pagosa South West Nordic Series Freestyle 20km Race; also includes:

Freestyle ski: Citizens 5k, Youth 3k

Classic ski: Citizens 5k, Youth 3k, KidK race

Cloman Nordic Park

9 a.m. start

[PagosaNordic.com](http://PagosaNordic.com)

Jan 9

Learn to Cross-Country Ski Clinic

Skate ski and classic cross-country

ski lessons. Limited space.

Cloman Nordic Park

10 a.m. start

Registration at [PagosaNordic.com](http://PagosaNordic.com)

Jan 14

Moonrise Cross-Country Ski Social Sunset

Cloman Nordic Park

5:30 p.m. start

[PagosaNordic.com](http://PagosaNordic.com)

Jan. 21-23

#### WinterFest

A number of activities are slated for the weekend where people can participate or enjoy the festivities through spectating.

(970) 264-2360, [pagosachamber.com](http://pagosachamber.com),

[admin@pagosachamber.com](mailto:admin@pagosachamber.com)

Jan. 22

Winterfest Learn to Cross-Country Ski Clinic

Skate ski and classic cross-country ski lessons. Limited space.

Cloman Nordic Park

10 a.m. start

Registration at [PagosaNordic.com](http://PagosaNordic.com)

Jan 23

WinterFest Red Ryder BB Gun Biathlon

16k competitive, 4k citizens,

2k youth, KidK

Yamaguchi Park

Super fun race for all ages and abilities.

9:30 a.m. start

[PagosaNordic.com](http://PagosaNordic.com)

## February

### Month of February

#### Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

Events throughout the month to promote awareness. Led by Youth Rise.

[riseaboveviolence.org](http://riseaboveviolence.org)

Feb. 4

#### DUST2 Fat Bike Race

9 a.m.

Wolf Creek Pass, FS Road 725

Registration and check-in 8:30 a.m.

Fun for all ages and abilities.

(970) 398-1168, [www.dustx2.com](http://www.dustx2.com)

Feb. 5

Learn to Cross-Country Ski Clinic  
Skate ski and classic cross-country  
ski lessons. Limited space.

Cloman Nordic Park

10 a.m. start

Registration at [PagosaNordic.com](http://PagosaNordic.com)

Friday, Feb. 11

Moonrise Cross-Country Ski Social Sunset

Cloman Nordic Park

5:30 p.m. start

[PagosaNordic.com](http://PagosaNordic.com)

## April

### Month of April

#### Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Events all month.

Month long Push Up Challenge

Wear Teal Day — April 5

Coffee Talk TBD

[riseaboveviolence.org](http://riseaboveviolence.org)

April 27

#### Denim Day

Noon

Join a walk around Pagosa Street in support of victims and survivors of sexual assault.

Wear your jeans with a purpose: Support survivors and educate yourself and others.

[riseaboveviolence.org](http://riseaboveviolence.org)

Be sure to check  
The Pagosa Springs SUN  
and PREVIEW for  
up-to-date information.

An events calendar  
can be found at  
[PagosaSUN.com](http://PagosaSUN.com).





SAMUEL BRICKER/WOLF CREEK SKI AREA

## Wolf Creek Ski Area Events

Nov. 10 .....	Local's Day	Jan. 31 .....	Ms. Monday Clinic
Nov. 14 .....	College Day	Feb. 1 .....	Forever Young Clinic
Nov. 17 .....	Local's Day	Feb. 2 .....	Local's Day
Nov. 20 .....	Cosmic Mountaineering Race	Feb. 5 .....	Camp Robbers
Nov. 29 .....	Local's Day	Feb. 6 .....	Fun Race
Nov. 30 .....	Local's Day	Feb. 8 .....	Tuesday Turns Clinic
Dec. 1 .....	Local's Day	Feb. 9 .....	Local's Day
Dec. 2 .....	Local's Day	Feb. 12 .....	Camp Robbers
Dec. 5 .....	College Day	Feb. 13 .....	Local's Day
Dec. 6 .....	Local's Day	Feb. 13 .....	Valentine's Day Race
Dec. 7 .....	Local's Day	Feb. 20 .....	President's Day Race
Dec. 8 .....	Local's Day	Feb. 27 .....	College Day
Dec. 9 .....	Local's Day	Feb. 27 .....	Mardi Gras Race
Dec. 11 .....	Fun Race	Feb. 28 .....	Ms. Monday Clinic
Dec. 24 and 25 .....	Santa Visits Wolf Creek	March 1 .....	Forever Young Clinic
Jan. 2 .....	New Year's Day Race	March 6 .....	Jane and Pitch Tribute
Jan. 9 .....	Fun Race	March 6 .....	Local's Day
Jan. 10 .....	Ms. Monday Clinic	March 6 .....	Tribute Race
Jan. 11 .....	Forever Young Clinic	March 13 .....	Spring Fling Fun Race
Jan. 16 .....	Martin Luther King Jr. Race	March 20 .....	Fun Race
Jan. 18 .....	Tuesday Turns Clinic	March 27 .....	Fun Race
Jan. 19 .....	United Way Day	March 29 .....	Tuesday Turns Clinic
Jan. 22 .....	Camp Robbers	March 30 .....	Local's Day
Jan. 23 .....	Fun Race	April 2 .....	Wolf Creek Super G Race
Jan. 29 .....	Camp Robbers	April 2 .....	College Day
Jan. 29 .....	Wolf Creek Giant Slalom Race	April 3 .....	Local's Day
Jan. 30 .....	College Day	April 3 .....	Tentative Closing Day





RANDI PIERCE

# The Basics

## Location

Archuleta County is located in southwest Colorado, situated at the junction of highways 160 and 84 at an elevation of 7,079 feet. The county seat, Pagosa Springs, is located just 28 miles north of the New Mexico border and 60 miles east of Durango. It is also near the Four Corners, where Colorado, Utah, New Mexico and Arizona meet.

## Geography

Land area (square miles) — 1,350  
Persons per square mile — 9.1

## Physical Description

Archuleta County comprises 872,960 acres. Only 34 percent of lands in Archuleta County are in private ownership. Tribal lands comprise 14.4 percent of the county. Most of the northern and eastern portions of the county (51.6 percent) are within the San Juan National Forest and are under the management of the U.S. Forest Service. There is a total of approximately 2.8 million acres of national forest and Bureau of Land Management land surrounding Archuleta County.

## Population Archuleta County

2019 Estimate — 14,029

## Newspaper

The Pagosa Springs SUN  
Weekly newspaper with daily online updates at [www.pagosasun.com](http://www.pagosasun.com).  
Located at 457 Lewis St.  
(970) 264-2100

## Housing and Income

Median value of housing — \$314,400  
Households — 5,858  
Persons per household — 2.23  
Per capita money income — \$31,629  
Median household income — \$52,221  
Persons in poverty — 10.8 percent

## Taxes

**Sales and User Tax:** 2.9 percent state and 4 percent county. County tax revenue is divided between county and town.

**Lodgers' Tax:** A 4.9-percent tax is collected from the lodging industry. Those revenues are used for tourism promotion in both the town and the county.

**Primary source of town and county revenue:** Retail sales taxes, property taxes and charges for services.

## Government

**Town Government:** [www.pagosasprings.co.gov](http://www.pagosasprings.co.gov)  
Home Rule Municipality  
Town council with elected mayor and six councilors elected for alternating four-year terms, town administrator is appointed.  
Date of Incorporation: 1891.

**County Government:** [www.archuletacounty.org](http://www.archuletacounty.org)  
Three county commissioners elected for alternating four-year terms.

## Tourism and Business Development

The Pagosa Springs SUN  
(970) 264-2100  
[www.explorepagosa.com](http://www.explorepagosa.com)  
[www.pagosasun.com](http://www.pagosasun.com)  
Pagosa Springs Community Development Corp.  
(970) 264-2360  
[pagosapringscdc.org](http://pagosapringscdc.org)  
Pagosa Springs Area Chamber of Commerce  
(970) 264-2360  
[pagosachamber.com](http://pagosachamber.com)  
Pagosa Springs Area Tourism Board  
(866) 438-4917  
[visitpagosasprings.com](http://visitpagosasprings.com)

## Related Web Site Links and Info

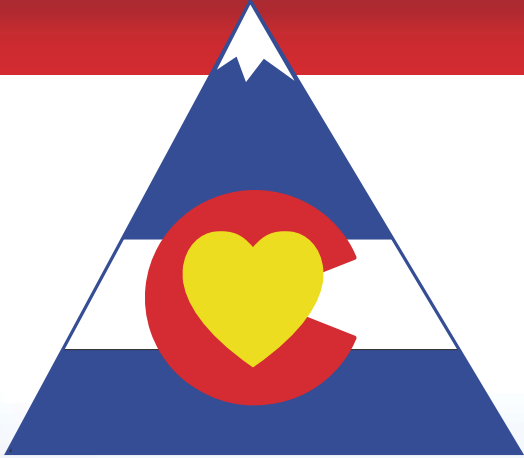
U.S. Postal Service, Hot Springs Boulevard  
(970) 264-5440  
U.S. Forest Service Pagosa Ranger District Office  
(970) 264-2268, [www.fs.fed.us](http://www.fs.fed.us)  
Stevens Field Airport  
(970) 731-3060, [www.stevensfield.com](http://www.stevensfield.com)  
AWOS frequency 127.175  
FBO (970) 731-2127  
Durango-La Plata County Airport  
(970) 382-6050  
<http://www.durangogov.org/202/Airport>

## Road Conditions

Colorado Department of Transportation  
(303) 639-1111, [cotrip.org](http://cotrip.org)  
New Mexico Road Report  
(800) 432-4269, [nmroads.com](http://nmroads.com)



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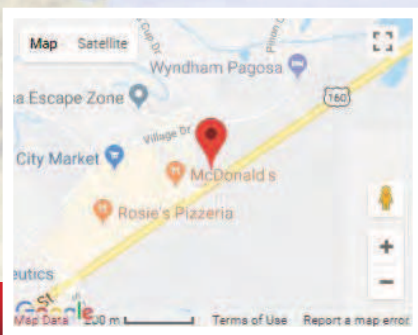
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# Marijuana Laws: remain responsible and legal

Marijuana — both for medicinal and recreational purposes — is legal in Colorado. But, while it may be legal, there are a few things you should know if you plan on partaking to remain responsible and legal.

First, there are differences in the laws regarding medicinal and recreational marijuana. To obtain marijuana for medicinal purposes, you must be a Colorado resident with a state red card, which can only be obtained with recommendation from a doctor. With that red card, medicinal users can obtain marijuana from a licensed center, primary caregiver or can grow a limited amount themselves. For more information about medical marijuana, visit [www.colorado.gov/enforcement/marijuanaenforcement](http://www.colorado.gov/enforcement/marijuanaenforcement).

To buy or possess retail marijuana for recreational purposes, you must be 21 or older. It's illegal to give or sell retail marijuana to minors.

Retail marijuana can be purchased at licensed retail stores. There are multiple licensed retail stores within the town of Pagosa Springs and Archuleta County.

Adults 21 and older can purchase and possess up to 1 ounce of marijuana at a time in the state of Colorado. Having more can result in legal charges and fines.

Marijuana, however, cannot be consumed publicly, on public land (including, but not limited to, the national forest and Wolf Creek Ski Area), or be accessible to the public. It also cannot be consumed in any indoor, public areas — like restaurants, bars or common areas in buildings.

Private business owners, including lodging facilities, can choose whether or not to allow marijuana in their establishment. To determine if consumption is allowed in any lodging establishment or not, check with the company's staff.

Marijuana is permissible in cars, but cannot be in an open container or cross state lines (with neighboring states sometimes actively checking cars leaving Colorado). It is illegal to consume marijuana in vehicles or to drive while under the influence of marijuana.

Possession and consumption rules are the same no matter the form (edible or to be smoked), and violators are subject to prosecution, with penalties ranging from fines to possible jail or prison sentences. It should also be noted that marijuana, of all kinds, remains illegal at the federal level.

Too, any partaking should be done carefully and responsibly. For more information, visit [www.colorado.gov/marijuana](http://www.colorado.gov/marijuana).

# The Pagosa Springs Official Visitor Guide™

Published two times per year by  
The Pagosa Springs SUN  
Publishing, Inc.

For correspondence, subscriptions  
and advertising:

P.O. Box 9  
Pagosa Springs, CO 81147  
970.264.2100

To order this publication:  
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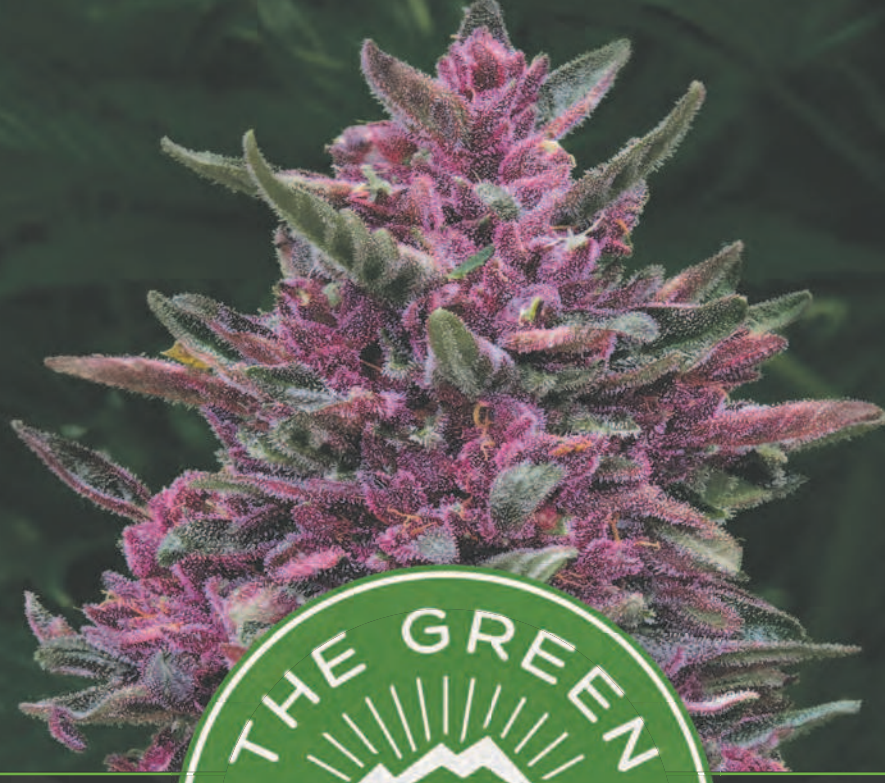
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RANDI PIERCE

# WinterFest

WinterFest weekend is the time to visit Pagosa Springs, with all the fun activities going on in addition to the great skiing at Wolf Creek Ski Area. WinterFest 2022 is set for Jan. 21-23, giving the locals a little break from shoveling snow and allowing them some great fun. A number of activities are slated for the weekend where people can participate or enjoy the festivities through spectating.

A magical part of the weekend is the colorful hot air balloons that grace the winter skies — weather permitting. The snowy white mountains and the crystal blue skies make for a stunning backdrop to the multicolored balloons. Bring your camera, dress warmly and capture the splendor as the balloons mass ascend on Jan. 22 and 23. Both mass ascensions will take place from various locations on the west side of town where you may see a balloon take a skip and a hop on the frozen lakes.

On Saturday, the festivities include the Sledz on Rez Race, hosted by the Build Pagosa construction vocational group. Homemade sleds “race” down Reservoir Hill located downtown. Materials such as satellite dishes, wheelbarrows, kayaks or a crate are joined with skis or snowboards for imaginative sled creations. The crowd jeers and cheers as the sledders wield their way down the hill.

Another highlight of WinterFest is the Penguin Plunge, where hardy participants jump into the frigid San Juan River (approximately 32 degrees) as they raise money for their favorite

nonprofit organization. The event takes place on Saturday around noon in front of the Visitor Center, where the plungers float down the river a bit and then go over “Davey’s Wave” for a full-body experience. Spectators can view the antics from the Riverwalk.

For the athletically inclined, there are several activities to participate in over the weekend. The Pagosa Nordic Club will host a Learn to Ski XC Ski Clinic Saturday, Jan. 22. The Red Ryder BB Gun Biathlon will be held on Sunday morning, Jan. 23, around 9 a.m. This event offers participants a cross-country course to fit your skill level. There will be 16 km competitive, 4 km citizens-youth and kid courses. Each skier shoots at targets, with BB guns provided, three times between  $\frac{1}{4}$  ski distances.

An exciting addition to the WinterFest schedule is action-packed skijoring. This rapid-paced event will take place at the Archuleta County Fairgrounds/Western Heritage Event Center on Saturday and Sunday. Watch as horses pull skiers through an obstacle course and jumps while at a full-out run. This event will definitely keep your blood pumping.

Be sure to check The Pagosa Springs SUN and [www.Pagosa-SUN.com](http://www.Pagosa-SUN.com) for up-to-date information closer to event time. As WinterFest activities are subject to Mother Nature, all events are contingent upon weather conditions, including the launching of the balloons.

WinterFest is an interactive festival perfect for the family. You’ll not want to miss the fun.





# Family Fun

GEORGE HUNYADI

Of all the descriptions usually applied to Pagosa Country, “family friendly” ranks among the most treasured by visitors and locals alike.

While winter’s snowy brush paints a picture that pleases the child in all of us, with the town taking on a magical quality as if suddenly populated by gingerbread houses covered with icing, it’s not just the postcard-perfect landscape that gives the area a family-friendly reputation. It’s myriad safe and fun activities available for all ages have made Pagosa Country a favorite family destination for decades.

Pagosa Country businesses and nonprofits work hard to pull out all the stops to keep the whole family having fun, entertained and well-fed.

With freshly plowed roads forcing us to slow down and appreciate the view, a quick glance reveals numerous slopes for sledding or getting little legs accustomed to skis or a snowboard, and meadow trails for skiing and snowshoeing.

A traditional local hot spot for a downhill thrill is Reservoir Hill (downtown, just behind The Healing Waters Resort and Spa on the east side of Hot Springs Boulevard), which was improved in recent years. Unless a spell of dry weather has brought out brown patches (with over 300 sunny days a year on average, not an unheard-of condition in the Pagosa area), the slopes promise a good time for kids of all ages.

Parents hoping to spend a day on the more substantial slopes at Wolf Creek Ski Area can enroll children ages 5 to 8 in the Wolf Pups ski school and 9 to 12 in the Hot Shots ski school. Prices and deals on ski school programs can be found at <http://wolfcreekski.com/wolf-creek-beginner-ski-school.php>. Equipment rental is not included in the ski school price.

Those looking to stay slightly lower in elevation can glide across frozen water, with the pond at The River Center Park open for skating from mid-December through mid-February. To check conditions and hear if ponds are open, call the Pagosa Springs Sports Hotline, (970) 264-4151, ext. 301.

The Pagosa Multi-Purpose Pavilion Winter Ice Rink, located at South Pagosa Park on South 8th Street, opens for ice skating, hockey, curling and broomball.

For those with an aversion to the white stuff and cold air, Pagosa Springs offers several indoor alternatives certain to please those not inclined to slap boards on their feet for the purpose of sliding down a mountain.

Of course, the bookish will want to seek out the Ruby M. Sisson Memorial Library at 811 San Juan St. (on the southeast corner of 8th Street and U.S. 160). With a wide selection of children’s, young adult and adult fiction, as well as nonfiction and reference, the library offers visitor library



cards for those wanting to take some books back for curling up with next to a warm fire. While there, free Internet and computer use are available. The library also offers programs for adults and children throughout the winter — check a copy of The Pagosa Springs SUN ([www.pagosasun.com](http://www.pagosasun.com)), call the library at (970) 264-2208 or visit [pagosa.colibraries.org](http://pagosa.colibraries.org) for program times and schedules.

The Ross Aragon Community Center at 451 Hot Springs Blvd. offers programs for young and old alike. From bridge to yoga, pick-up basketball games to mahjong, the center is open to the public and many programs and classes are free.

Finally, during that most magical time of year, plenty of holiday events take place. Among these are a visit with Santa at the Visitor Center, The Festival of Trees, and numerous holiday music and theater events.

New to the community's holiday lineup this year will be a collaborative event between the Town of Pagosa Springs and The Pagosa Springs SUN hosting the inaugural It's a Wonderful Life: An Old Fashioned Pagosa Christmas Celebration on Saturday, Dec. 18 from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. along the Riverwalk in downtown Pagosa Springs. The magical evening will be a walking "parade" to celebrate the holiday season and will center around the theme of an old-fashioned Christmas and the spirit of giving. The event will be held outdoors with foot traffic leisurely moving in one direc-

tion. There will be multiple entry points along the route in order to ease congestion. Area nonprofits, church groups, businesses, musicians and more will be participating in this magical evening.

Check The PREVIEW section of The Pagosa Springs SUN ([www.pagosasun.com](http://www.pagosasun.com)) or visit the calendar of events at [www.pagosasun.com](http://www.pagosasun.com) for up-to-date information and details on the happenings in Pagosa Springs.

Whether seeking a hot time in the snow or cool activities inside, young folks, from toddler to teenager, will find plenty to do in Pagosa Country during the winter season.

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# Something for Everyone

PAGOSA NORDIC CLUB

Whatever your soul seeks — skiing, snowboarding, ice skating, fishing, snowmobiling, soaking in the hot springs, shopping, sleeping and satiating your appetite for food or drink — Pagosa Country offers choices that are sure to please you and everyone in your family or group.

Nestled at an elevation of 7,079 feet alongside the San Juan River, Pagosa Springs is surrounded on the east and north by the craggy spires of the Continental Divide, the Weminuche and South San Juan wilderness areas. “The most snow in Colorado” falls upon the majestic San Juan Mountains and Wolf Creek Ski Area more frequently than any other mountain range in the state. Yet, it is here in Pagosa that uncommonly blue skies prevail more often than not.

## Alpine skiing

Wolf Creek Ski Area, considered by many as one of the best-kept secrets in Colorado, offers skiers and snowboarders an abundance of powder and packed powder on sun-drenched slopes. Guests love it because the lift lines are short, the runs are long and the prices are lower than most areas in Colorado. You will also find more snow here than just about anywhere else in the state.

Throughout the ski season, the Wolf Creek Ski Area calendar is jam-packed with myriad activities designed for fun and families and all levels of expertise. The ski school is renowned for its excellence, and there are plenty of fun programs for skiers and boarders of all ages.

## Backcountry

Fans of snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, telemark and alpine touring often find themselves just plain giddy

when they discover the beautiful, pristine backcountry areas available for their adventures. You can bring your own equipment, book a tour with an outfitter or rent whatever you need at a number of sporting goods shops in Pagosa.

Beginner and more relaxed cross-country trails surround Pagosa Springs. For those seeking a “wilder” experience, there are cross-country trails in the vicinity of Wolf Creek Pass and in other parts of the San Juan National Forest. With plenty of trails and an abundance of snow, there are innumerable opportunities for the skilled and well-equipped backcountry adventurer.

## Cross-country skiing

If alpine skiing isn't your forté, the Pagosa Nordic Club undertakes an ambitious program to bring a variety of groomed classic cross-country and skate skiing opportunities to the Pagosa Springs area.

In town, the club grooms trails in Yamaguchi Park. Cloman Park and the Laverty Ranch, and the West Fork trailhead located east of Pagosa Springs offer scenic views. The Pagosa Ranger District grooms Coyote Hill and Wolf Creek Ski Area grooms Alberta Park for more Nordic skiing opportunities.

If you would like to improve your Nordic skiing skills, there are clinics held throughout the winter months and a number of family-oriented race events. For event and trail information, visit the club's website at [PagosaNordic.com](http://PagosaNordic.com).

## Ice fishing

If braving the cold to catch perch, trout or bass is your sport, then try ice fishing at one of the spots favored by locals, such as Williams Creek Reservoir or Echo Lake.



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Numerous businesses and sporting goods stores sell fishing licenses and can give you the inside scoop on winter fishing.

### Ice skating

During the height of winter, when a day on the slopes is (for whatever reason) out of the question, people trade in their boards for a pair of blades and head to the ponds.

Located at the eastern edge of town, just north of U.S. 160 next to the San Juan River and adjacent to the River Center shopping complex, ice skating is available to visitors and locals alike on the lower west-end pond at the River Center Park.

The pond is usually groomed for skaters from about mid-December — just before the Christmas break rush — until mid-February (depending on weather conditions, of course).

The Pagosa Multi-Purpose Pavilion Winter Ice Rink, located at South Pagosa Park on South 8th Street, opens for ice skating, hockey, curling and broomball.

### Mineral hot springs

A long, relaxing soak in Pagosa Springs' world-famous healing waters is the perfect way to end a day of winter fun. Visitors and locals alike laud the waters' curative powers. Three mineral hot springs facilities are enjoyed by thousands of guests year-round.

### Holiday festivities

If you happen to be in Pagosa for the holidays, you're in for a treat. Merchants traditionally roll out the red shopping carpets to help you find the perfect gifts, and the governments, businesses and nonprofits work to make the holidays magical.

Christmas in Pagosa Springs is a special time of year with holiday lights twinkling throughout town. Santa sightings occur throughout December in town, at the visitor center, at Wolf Creek

Ski Area and other locations. Join us for a downtown tree lighting on the Friday after Thanksgiving at dusk, as Santa arrives at the Visitor Center on a fire truck to greet kids and light a tree. Enjoy a self-guided tour of the festive decor displayed at many businesses and residential properties in the surrounding area.

The annual Festival of Trees hosted by the Ross Aragon Community Center benefits numerous nonprofits in Pagosa Springs. Attendees can marvel in the beautifully and creatively decorated trees, enjoy the music and delicious food and get caught up in the "bidding wars." It is certainly a festive night while benefitting our community nonprofit agencies. This year's auction event is set for Dec. 3, with the public viewing set for Dec. 2.

As the winter season progresses, the community welcomes visitors for WinterFest, which is set for Jan. 21-23.

WinterFest blows the blahs out of everyone as challenging sports, fun games, contests and antics are held all over town. Colorful hot air balloons decorate the blue skies with a background of snow-capped mountains on Saturday and Sunday mornings from the west side of town. Enjoy the Sledz on Rez Race as homemade sleds "race" down Reservoir Hill. The Penguin Plunge brings the hardest or craziest plungers out to take a swim in the frigid San Juan River — all to raise money for their favorite charity. The Nordic Club hosts a bb gun biathlon race for kids, novice or more-experienced cross-country skiers. If you are a cyclist, try your hand at the fat tire bike race. The Skis and Saddles Skijoring event returns this year. Watch the fast-paced action as riders on horseback take skiers through an obstacle course all while being timed. It is a family-fun weekend where you can participate or spectate.



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Family Fun

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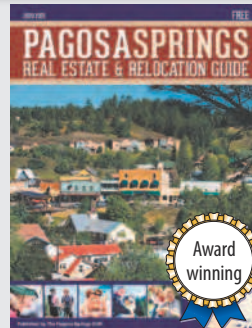
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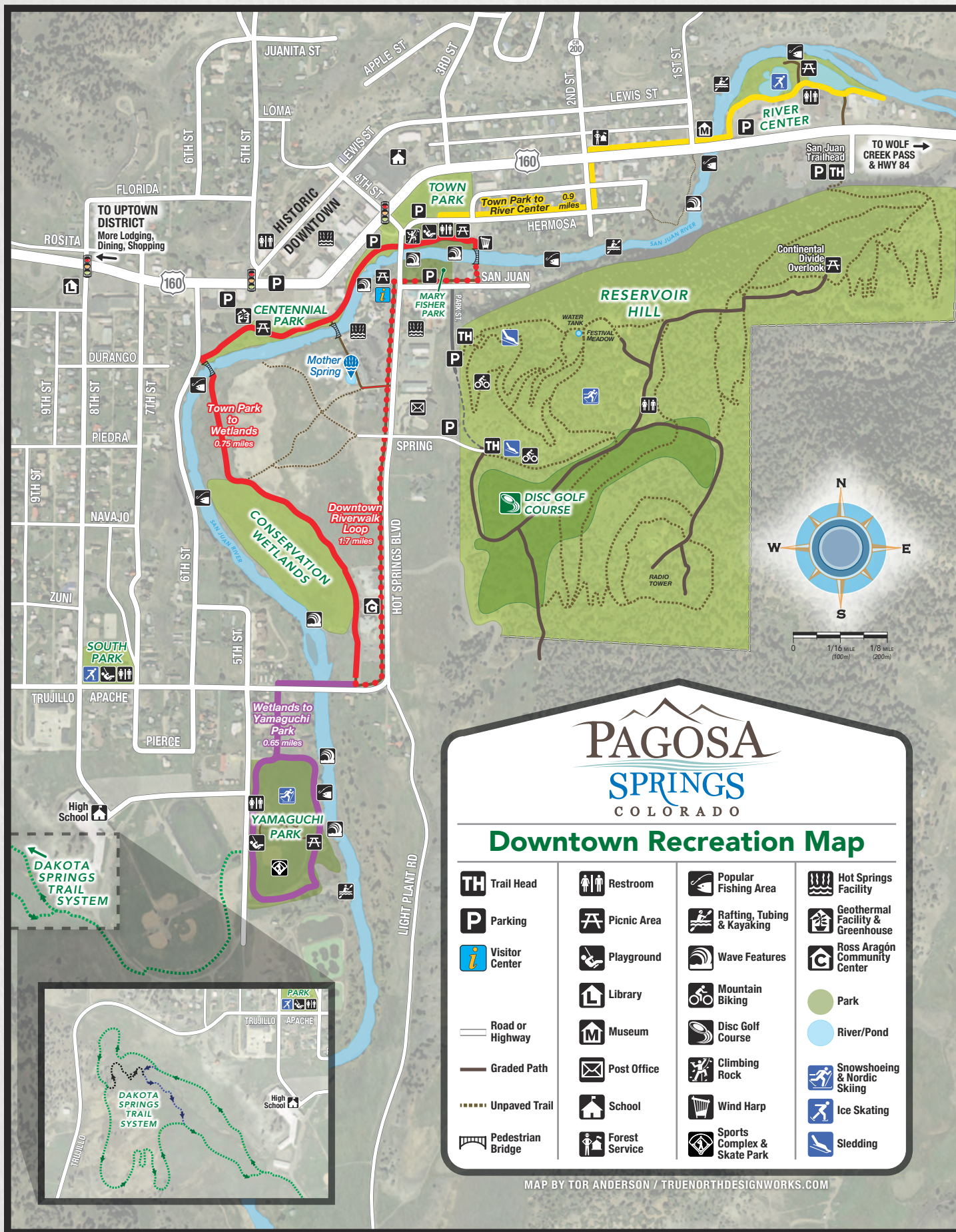
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# PAGOSA SPRINGS COLORADO

## Downtown Recreation Map

<b>TH</b> Trail Head	Restroom	Popular Fishing Area	Hot Springs Facility
<b>P</b> Parking	Picnic Area	Rafting, Tubing & Kayaking	Geothermal Facility & Greenhouse
Visitor Center	Playground	Wave Features	Ross Aragón Community Center
Road or Highway	Library	Mountain Biking	Park
Graded Path	Museum	Disc Golf Course	River/Pond
Unpaved Trail	Post Office	Climbing Rock	Snowshoeing & Nordic Skiing
Pedestrian Bridge	School	Wind Harp	Ice Skating
	Forest Service	Sports Complex & Skate Park	Sledding

MAP BY TOR ANDERSON / TRUENORTHDESIGNWORKS.COM



# Rest & Relaxation



MICHAEL PIERCE PHOTOGRAPHY



Rest & Relaxation





Each of Pagosa's bathing facilities offers its own unique take on the traditional soaking experience, and the savvy soaker does well to switch things up, experiencing how differently each place relaxes the spirit and heals the body.

While the mother spring's water remains at a natural temperature of 144 degrees and is far too hot for a relaxing soak, all the facilities cool the water for bathing and recreational purposes.

In planning how to split your time and experience Pagosa Country's healing waters, be sure to check the status and availability of each facility, if there are any special requirements that must be followed, and what amenities are available at the time of your visit.

Located on the main street of Pagosa Springs, the Overlook Hot Springs Spa offers soaking and massage services housed within old-world Victorian opulence. Offering indoor and outdoor pools, including a private tub room, massage and a steam room, the Overlook provides bathers an opportunity to soak while escaping the elements, or to take in the sights while soaking.

Those sights are best soaked in from the pools located on the building's roof, which give the Overlook its name and notoriety. With a panoramic view of historic downtown and beyond, the pools are a favorite with locals and visitors alike. There's also a sauna and geothermal tub. Also outside, the Overlook's courtyard features individual tubs, as well as a Jacuzzi. Inside, there are four open pools and a private pool room that can be rented by the hour by bathers who prefer to soak in a more intimate setting.

Snacks and drinks (including beer, wine and champagne) are available for purchase to sate the appetites of soakers who prefer to ease aching muscles with a tasty beverage and absent a grumbling tummy. Additionally, the Overlook features changing rooms with shower stalls, steam showers and more.

Just around the corner on the east side of Hot Springs Boulevard is the Healing Waters Resort and Spa, offering a large outdoor swimming pool, both indoor and outdoor tubs, hotel rooms, suites, cabins, and pull-through RV spaces with full hook-ups. The ambiance here is down home, western and friendly. Through long years of service, the hosts have learned to satisfy the needs of the most discriminating guest.

The resort offers 100 percent mineral water in its hot springs amenities, which include separate men's and women's indoor baths.

Across the street, The Springs Resort and Spa, home to the mother spring, offers luxury hotel rooms, food establishments, two bars, a full-service spa and 25 steamy pools (the most in Colorado) on the banks of the San Juan River.

A variety of therapeutic pools have temperatures ranging from 45 to 114 degrees, with waterfalls, mineral formations and other unique features. There is also a swimming pool of geothermal water with a temperature in the high 80s to low 90s.

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# World's Deepest Hot Spring

SAN JUAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY





## Come on in, the water's fine!

For centuries, the waters in Pagosa Springs have drawn visitors who wish to take advantage of the healing qualities of the world's deepest natural hot spring.

Prior to the arrival of Hispanic and Anglo settlers, members of various tribes of Native Americans came to heal and refresh themselves in the local waters. Historians report that Native Americans preferred to coat themselves with mud mixed with the mineral water rather than soaking directly in the pools. The rationale was simple: at 144 degrees Fahrenheit, undiluted spring water is far too hot for a pleasurable soak.

Although early Hispanic and Anglo settlers took advantage of the hot springs from time to time, the healing properties of the waters remained largely a local secret. Eventually, however, word was passed regarding the "magical properties" of The Great Pagosa Hot Spring and travelers sought out the medicinal qualities of the water. Since then, visitors from all over the world come to seek out a healing experience that had once been known only to the local inhabitants.

Today, few of life's pleasures are more rewarding than surrendering your body to hot, soothing waters after a day on the slopes, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, snowshoeing the backcountry, skating the River Center Park pond or sledding the numerous hills in Pagosa Country.

Locals call this luxury "ski and soak," a combination guaranteed to ease the aches and pains of even the most tired muscles.

## Experience the 'magic'

Time and again, visitors here comment on the friendliness and laid-back demeanor of our residents. More than that, many visitors ask why so many of our locals seem so healthy, vibrant and appear much younger than their age — an observation that inevitably leads to the question, "So, what's in the water?"

Local spin has it that the Ute term, "Pagosa," describes the mystical qualities of the legendary Great Pagosa Hot Spring, repeating the apocryphal tale that the phrase translates as "Healing Waters."

Alas, the truth might be much more hackneyed, but no less descriptive: local historian John Motter writes that, "According to the dictionary prepared under the auspices of and with the help of Southern Utes in Ignacio, Pagosa comes from two Ute words meaning 'stinking water.'"

Certainly, there is an unmistakable aroma accompanying the springs, but are they really also healing waters? You can judge for yourself, but abundant testimonials say, "yes."

And while Native Americans visited the geothermally heated waters, certain the Great Spirit had endowed the bubbling cauldron with superhuman virtues, reverence for the "Healing Waters" has not abated with passage of time. In recent years, The Great Pagosa Hot Spring has attracted more visitors than ever before. And why not? It is a unique experience, providing comfort and relaxation unmatched anywhere.

Making it all possible is The Great Pagosa Hot Spring, that bubbling fountain of natural mineral water and the world's deepest hot spring.

How can we make the claim of "the world's deepest hot spring?" Because the Guinness Book of World Records says so! A judge from the New York office of the Guinness Book of World Records visited Pagosa Springs to verify measurements on The Great Pagosa Hot Spring made by Durango-based hydrologist John Casey.

How deep is it? We wish we could say. So far, attempts to plumb the depths of the spring have defied the best efforts to find out. When Casey dropped a 1,002-foot long plumb line into the "mother spring," it didn't hit the bottom; instead, the plumb line ran out. So now, the official measurement is 1,002 feet and, according to the Guinness Book of World Records, that's the deepest hot spring in the world.

Prior to that, however, the depth of the spring had been measured using a 2,500-foot plumb line. The same thing happened: before the plumb line reached the bottom of the spring, the line ran out.

So, the mystery remains unsolved. Deeper still, however, is the mystery of our water's ability to soothe, heal and relax even the most harried soul. Visit the site of the spring and experience it for yourself. Take the opportunity to avail yourself of Pagosa's healing waters, its mystery, its spirit-rejuvenating properties and, yes — it's magic.



# Play Outside

## Running with the sled dogs

If you're visiting Pagosa Springs during the winter season and looking for an adventure that involves man's or woman's four-legged friends, then Pagosa has the answer in two unique and fun businesses that thrive during the winter season.

Those businesses are Mountain Paws Dog Sled Tours and San Juan Sled Dogs.

Mountain Paws Dog Sled Tours is owned and operated by Joy Marx and her husband, Michael.

"Basically I have been working professionally for 9 years and before that, it was a hobby for 15 years. I had done a couple of week-long dog sled adventures in Canada," Marx said.

Marx runs two sleds and 21 sled dogs. Marx's husband, Michael, helps out as a substitute guide when they get busy. The couple moved to Pagosa two years ago.

"We really like it here. We are staying. We are not moving again," Marx said.

The sled dogs receive training from the time they are puppies. One of Marx's dogs, a Siberian named Timber, began his training by

greeting people and sitting in the sled.

"The first time I put a harness on him and hooked him up to the gang line, he was really nervous for about 5 seconds and then he said, 'oh cool, this is what we are doing' and took off. It's ingrained, it's just what they do. They love it," Marx said.

When it comes to teaching the lead sled dog, it can take a little longer. "Normally we have one of the older dogs kind of train the younger dogs to be a leader," Marx said.

If the snow is less plentiful, Marx can also accommodate guests on tours that are pulled by the dogs in the Navajo State Park near the watchable wildlife pavilion, mile marker 19 off of Colo. 151.

"I do have a summer cart tour where we teach the people how to harness and hook the dogs up," Marx said.

When the snow on the ground is plentiful, Marx likes to take guests on the trails in the Upper Blanco Basin area.

"It is about 2.5 hours or longer and we go 6 to 7 miles, and what I do is I train the clients to drive the sled themselves. So with my sleds, they are not the big touring sleds, you can have one passenger and one driver per sled," Marx said. "They get to know the dogs, help with the harnessing and the hookup, they follow me as the guide on the snowmobile and I make sure the people and the dogs are all good and I really get to experience the fun of it that way."





It is a little bit more athletic of an adventure.”

Marx recounted some of her more memorable client experiences. “My youngest solo driver was 9 years old. He was very proud to drive the sled himself with his mom and little brother in the basket.”

She also noted, “We have had a number of engagements on the trail, That’s always fun! The guys usually make plans with me in advance and I take pictures of him asking. The girls have always said ‘yes.’”

You can contact Mountain Paws Dog Sled Tours at [mountain-pawdogsledding.com](http://mountain-pawdogsledding.com) or call (970) 819-5022.

For the family or larger group that may also be looking for a dog sledding experience, San Juan Sled Dogs welcomes you.

Peter Bartels and his wife Morgan Buckingham, who Bartels said, “it’s all her fault” when asked how he and his wife got into the dog sledding business, run the organization.

Bartels explained that his wife has been dog sledding for about 20 years and they have been running San Juan Sled Dogs for the past 11 years. “I think it’s wonderful, I love being with dogs. It’s challenging work for me, but it’s really her vocation, she is the driving force behind the company for sure,” he said.

“We actually have two business partners that helped us start the company, Chris and Christina Bouchard. Then we have one part-time employee that helps out a little bit during the off season and while we are in the thick of dog sledding, we have three other employees that work with us. Our busy season is the week before Christmas all the way through spring break if the snow is still flying.

We are usually pretty busy through the whole winter as long as there is still snow,” said Bartels

Most of the dogs That San Juan Sled Dogs use are rescue dogs according to Bartels. The company has 50 dogs. “Most of our dogs are Alaskan Malamutes but we do have a number of Alaskan Huskies, too. Huskies are smaller and faster than the Malamutes. We love the Malamutes because they have big personalities and they are super loving and even though they are slower, they are stronger. So, that means we can take out big groups, we can take out a big family of like 10 on a couple of different sleds,” Bartels added. “The great thing is we have all these working dogs who know the deal and so when we have puppies, they first start training with the dogs by running free out on a training run,”

Once the puppies reach the age of three or four months, “we have these little harnesses and will leave a space open on the team to put the puppies in to run with the team and then we will let them loose again so they are not working too hard,” Bartels noted.

When Bartels and Buckingham take clients out on a trip, they typically go about 3 or 4 miles.

“Our first season, I was a little nervous because I hadn’t really done commercial dog sledding, I had done training with Morgan in Montana where we were doing long distance runs but that didn’t involve kids and older folks and everything, just seeing how happy all the people were just to be interacting with all the dogs. A lot of these people just really like hanging out with the dogs after the tour. With our dogs getting that much attention every day from all different kinds of people, I was surprised at how immediately rewarding that was,” Bartels said.

San Juan Sled Dogs is an all-inclusive experience for everyone, Bartels explained. They do everything for the clients from taking pictures, transportation to and from town and handling large groups or families who just want to enjoy the dog sled ride and enjoy the dogs, too.

You can contact San Juan Sled Dogs to book a trip by going to their website, [sanjuansleddogs.com](http://sanjuansleddogs.com), contacting Peter via email at [peter@sanjuansleddogs.com](mailto:peter@sanjuansleddogs.com), or by calling (970) 507-0316.



SAN JUAN SLED DOGS





ROSANNE PITCHER

# Wolf Creek Ski Area

At more than 85 years old, Wolf Creek Ski Area is time-tested. Wolf Creek Ski Area is known for having the most snow in Colorado. The unique — yet successful — 2021-2022 ski season had consistent snowfall from October through the end of March with a number of prolific powder days, exceptional conditions and 362 inches of snowfall.

Wolf Creek is eagerly anticipating a more “normalized” 2021-2022 ski season; however, public health will make recommendations, if any, later this fall and early winter. For more on what to expect during your time on the slopes, visit [www.wolfcreekski.com](http://www.wolfcreekski.com).

Wolf Creek is known for having an exceptional variety of terrain, abundant snowfall and plenty of powder days. Wolf Creek has terrain that ranges from gradual sloping, wide green runs for beginners to excellent expert terrain that will give advanced skiers and boarders an in-bounds backcountry experience. Finding an intermediate groomer to cruise down to start your day isn't hard to do, and tree skiing is endless.

Wolf Creek is unique in that the location of the ski area is in the

beautiful Southern San Juan Mountains, eliminating the frustration of driving on a heavily trafficked corridor to ski. The ski area has the advantage of being located on U.S. 160 near the summit of Wolf Creek Pass, which is a beautiful and well-maintained mountain pass with three and four lanes of highway.

The low-density skiing experience at Wolf Creek Ski Area makes Wolf Creek a destination hot spot for powder hounds, families and new skiers alike.

Wolf Creek stands out from other ski areas in Colorado not only for being family owned and operated, but for also having affordable lift tickets and lesson options. Adding to Wolf Creek's uniqueness is the phenomenal homemade food found in all eateries at Wolf Creek and convenient amenities that are complimentary, like paved parking and shuttle services.

For the past several years, Wolf Creek has undertaken construction projects to fine-tune and improve its offerings.

Major lift improvements started in 2013-2014 with the Treasure Stoke, a high-speed detachable quad lift. The previous Ctec Triple



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- 3 Wolf Creek Lodge
- 4 Prospector
- 5 Base Camp
- 6 Wolf Pup Center
- 7 BoarderDome
- 8 Lynx Learning Center
- 9 Noel Sports: Equipment Retail
- 10 Ski School Meeting Place





Treasure Chair was then transformed the following season to become a refurbished beginner and intermediate lift named Elma, with its purpose of assisting guests in returning to the base area and providing access to an area of the mountain that was previously underutilized. The Lynx, a covered conveyor lift, followed and helped redesign and compliment the novice skiers' first day at Wolf Creek by transporting guests to the Lynx Adult Learning Center. The introduction of the Charity Jane Express to the Wolf Creek Lift System came in December of 2018, with the high-speed detachable quad benefiting all ability levels and bolstering a previously underutilized 55 acres.

In the summer of 2019, the ski area added Orion's Beltway — a trail cut to link both side of the mountain, making it the longest intermediate run at Wolf Creek.

Wolf Creek has always been a leader in maintaining sustainable business practices by purchasing renewable energy, using biodegradable oils in machinery and having water-free rest-rooms.

The 2021-2022 ski season will be the 16th season Wolf Creek has used a form of renewable energy year-round, for day and night use. Wolf Creek is also a large supporter of the Penitente Solar Project in the San Luis Valley.

Wolf Creek furthered environmentally friendly efforts by constructing an onsite electric vehicle charging station. The charging station offers five connections with one being Level 3 (fast charge) and the remaining four being Level 2 (medium charge).

Additional information can be found on [www.WolfCreekSki.com](http://www.WolfCreekSki.com) or by calling (970) 264-5639 or 1(800) SKI-WOLF.





MICHAEL PIERCE PHOTOGRAPHY

# Snowmobiling

For some, making snow angels just doesn't cut it for winter fun. Nor does a downhill sled taken to any of the area's popular sledding destinations. Or soaking in the hot springs as the steam rises around you, immersing you in warmth.

Some need a little more adventure and adrenaline.

But not to worry, if you want to rev it up, snowmobiling might be the activity for you.

Pagosa Country offers plenty of opportunities for snowmobile adventures and travel. Thanks to the San Juan National Forest Pagosa Ranger District, among others, there is a wide selection of designated snowmobile routes. The routes follow unplowed forest roads and trails, many of which are groomed by a local volunteer group, the Wolf Creek Trailblazers Club, under authorization of the Forest Service.

Grooming frequencies vary due to conditions and resources, and most routes are only minimally marked, making route-finding skills, maps, avalanche awareness and good pre-trip planning essential for a safe expedition into the Pagosa backcountry during the winter months.

Trail descriptions have been developed to assist visitors in locating snowmobile opportunities in the Pagosa area. Mileages are approximate and do not represent round-trip distances from trailheads. Please be familiar with the rules, regulations and tips for safe winter travel and be respectful of the other trail users such as bikers, skiers, walkers and snowshoers you'll see out on the groomed trails.

## Rules and regulations

- Cross-country winter travel is generally permitted in the Pagosa Ranger District. However, there are areas in which snowmobiles are prohibited or restricted to designated routes.

- Snowmobiles are prohibited in the Weminuche Wilderness, the South San Juan Wilderness and the Piedra Area.



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• Please refer to the San Juan National Forest Visitor Map and reference the area table for information about the location of areas where travel is restricted to designated routes.

• Each over-the-snow vehicle that is operated on public land in Colorado must be registered with Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Out-of-state residents who bring snowmobiles into Colorado must purchase a Colorado nonresident OHV permit. For more information, contact Colorado Parks and Wildlife at (303) 791-1920 or [www.cpw.state.co.us](http://www.cpw.state.co.us).

• Per Colorado law, it is unlawful to operate a snowmobile on some plowed public roads, including plowed roads located on national forest lands. It is also unlawful to pursue, drive at or otherwise intentionally disturb or harass any wildlife. For more information regarding state law, go to [cpw.state.co.us/thingstodo/Pages/SnowmobileLawRegs.aspx](http://cpw.state.co.us/thingstodo/Pages/SnowmobileLawRegs.aspx).

### Pre-plan and prepare

The Forest Service does not manage or post signs for all hazards. That said, always be prepared for and aware of:

- Changing weather conditions.
- The potential for altitude sickness and hypothermia.
- The need to find your own way or turn back if conditions become too difficult for your skills, ability or equipment.

### Avalanche danger

- Carry essential equipment and know how to use it.
- Be familiar with accepted winter travel procedures and rescue techniques.
- Daily avalanche forecasts can be obtained online at <http://avalanche.state.co.us> or (970) 247-8187.
- More educational information, including a listing of available training, can be obtained at [www.avalanche.org](http://www.avalanche.org).

### Route finding

Before setting out on untracked snow, remember that some trails are minimally maintained or unmarked. Route-finding skills are necessary. Always carry maps, such as the San Juan National Forest Map and current topographic maps. Avoid trespassing on private property adjacent to, or surrounded by, national forest lands.

On ungroomed trails, users will be relying upon their own route-finding skills, maps and, perhaps, the knowledge and skills of those who traveled before them.

### Parking

Parking areas may not be plowed; therefore, parking space is often limited and may not be available after snowstorms when snow removal is in progress. Please park considerately without blocking gates or other vehicles.

### Grooming conditions

There is not a set schedule for grooming and some trails may not be groomed for an entire season. For information about grooming conditions or to learn how you can help, go to [www.coloradosledcity.com](http://www.coloradosledcity.com) and click on "Trail reports/Maps." When the map loads, select Pagosa Springs, then scroll down through the Groomer Reports.

### Search and rescue

In an emergency, call 911. The local sheriff's office is the lead agency for search and rescue. Colorado Outdoor Recreation Search and Rescue Cards cover search and rescue mission costs, support Colorado search and rescue volunteers, and contribute to well-trained and equipped search and rescue teams. Cards are available at outlets that sell hunting and fishing licenses. Anyone with a current hunting/fishing license, or boat, snowmobile or ATV registration is already covered by the fund.

### Pagosa Ranger District Office

For maps and additional information, the Pagosa Ranger District Office is located at 180 Pagosa St. in Pagosa Springs. Call (970) 264-2268 or go to [www.fs.usda.gov/sanjuan](http://www.fs.usda.gov/sanjuan).

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# Cross-Country Skiing



BETH TOLLEFSEN



## Courtesy of the U.S. Forest Service and the Pagosa Nordic Club

The opportunities for snowshoeing, classic cross-country skiing and skate skiing in Pagosa Country are plentiful, no matter your level of experience. Some trails/areas cater to those attempting the sports for the first time, while others will challenge even the most experienced winter enthusiasts. The routes described are a mix of groomed trails and unplowed, ungroomed Forest Service roads closed to most vehicles except snowmobiles.

The U.S. Forest Service, Wolf Creek Trail Blazers Snowmobile Club, Wolf Creek Ski Area and the Pagosa Nordic Club all work in conjunction with each other to groom trails for the public to use for skate skiing, classic cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and snowmobiling.

The Forest Service roads listed below are enjoyed and shared by people on skis, snowshoes and snowmobiles. Check with the Pagosa Ranger District Office in downtown Pagosa Springs or go to [PagosaNordic.com](http://PagosaNordic.com) to learn more about groomed trail opportunities.

## Parking

Parking may present a problem and at times may prevent the use of a particular route. Park considerately, taking no more space than needed to avoid blocking other vehicles or impeding access to trails, and without impeding access for emergency vehicles. Leave room for vehicles and trailers to turn around. Colorado Department of Transportation crews clear parking areas along state highways adjacent to trail access, but their first priority is to clear the road. Avoid parking along highway travel lanes.

## Trail etiquette

Cross-country skiers might find all types of winter recreation enthusiasts on trails in the Pagosa Springs area. Please don't ride fat bikes, walk or snowshoe on groomed trails. Yield the right of way to downhill traffic. Use caution when approaching or overtaking another user. Do not interfere with or harass other users. Do not disturb wildlife. Only friendly dogs under voice control are permitted and all dog defecation should be removed from the ski trail. In addition, pack out everything you pack in.

## Safety

Before venturing out onto unpacked snow, take the time to learn emergency procedures and backcountry travel and winter camping skills. Weather and

snow conditions can change rapidly in Colorado's mountains. Plan ahead and know what conditions to expect. Your trip will be much more enjoyable if you are physically and mentally prepared for whatever may arise. Be prepared for medical emergencies and leave a detailed description of your trip plans with a responsible person each time you go. Make sure the person you leave your plan with knows to contact the sheriff's office if you fail to return. In addition, consider purchasing a Colorado Outdoor Recreation Search and Rescue (CORSAR) card to ensure that the county can recover all of your search and rescue costs. Cards cost \$3 for one year or \$12 for five years and are available at hunting and fishing license vendors.

## Weather

When planning any backcountry trek, check current and forecasted weather conditions before you leave home and continue to monitor the weather throughout your trip. Dramatic weather changes can occur in minutes throughout Pagosa Country, especially in the mountains. Be informed about avalanche terrain and conditions. The Colorado Avalanche Information Center provides current information on weather and avalanche conditions at <http://avalanche.state.co.us>.

## Stay within limits

Recognize and stay within your limits. Carry the appropriate gear for your trip, including extra clothing, a space blanket, sunscreen, sunglasses or goggles, matches or lighter, extra food and water. If traveling with a dog, carry plastic bags for cleaning up after your pooch. Carry a compass and topographical maps and know how to use them. For backcountry trips, avalanche safety skills and equipment, including a snow shovel, avalanche beacon and probe, are essential. In addition, be prepared to repair equipment and carry a simple field repair kit that includes supplies for common breakdowns.

Visit [www.PagosaNordic.com](http://www.PagosaNordic.com) or the Pagosa Ranger District office at 2nd Street and U.S. 160 in downtown Pagosa Springs for up-to-date trail status and conditions.

## Recommended equipment

As a general rule, dress in layers so you can add and subtract layers as you become hot or cold. Remember, it can be quite cold in the morning, warm up considerably during the day, and get cold as soon as the sun moves behind the hills or a cloud. Avoid cotton cloth-

ing, especially next to the skin. You can be sure that you will get wet from sweat, from falling down, or from snow falling off trees. You may get cold if you stop for any amount of time. The weather may change dramatically if a front is coming in or if it starts snowing. In a group, some items can be shared.

## Equipment and clothing

Skis, boots, poles — no-wax skis, maxiglide or other for sticking; waxable skis — waxes, cork, scraper and snow thermometer; sunglasses or glacier glasses; sunscreen; day pack or fanny pack; Swiss army knife; compass; maps; quart-size canteen or wide-mouth bottle filled with water; long underwear (polypropylene or other synthetic); intermediate layer — sweater (wool or synthetic) or shirt (wool or synthetic); windbreaker layer (nylon, 60/40 cloth, avoid garments that are heavily treated with waterproofing); pants or knickers (wool or synthetic, blue jeans are not recommended); socks (wool or synthetic); liner socks; hat (wool or synthetic) — you must be able to cover your ears; high-energy snacks and lunch, if appropriate; toilet paper and plastic bag for used paper; first aid kit; flashlight; vest (down or synthetic) or warmer jacket (down or synthetic); poncho and/or space blanket; extra hats, extra gloves; balaclava or ski mask; neck gaiter; ear band (knit-wool or synthetic); thin polypropylene or other synthetic gloves to operate equipment such as cameras; matches in a waterproof container; candle; whistle; duct tape; ski tip.

## Be prepared for avalanche danger

Carry an avalanche shovel, beacon and probe for each person. Always test equipment and make sure all beacons are compatible and have adequate battery power.

Always check conditions with an avalanche forecasting group before going out. Daily avalanche forecasts can be obtained online at [www.avalanche.state.co.us](http://www.avalanche.state.co.us) or by calling (970) 247-8187. More educational information, including a listing of available training, can be obtained at: [www.avalanche.org](http://www.avalanche.org) and [www.avalanche.state.co.us](http://www.avalanche.state.co.us) (Colorado Avalanche Information Center).

Maps and trail information are available from the U.S. Forest Service Pagosa Ranger District, 180 Pagosa St. or call (970) 264-2268.

For grooming reports, trail maps and events information, visit [PagosaNordic.com](http://PagosaNordic.com).



# Groomed Nordic Skiing Trails

Groomed Nordic ski trails are for classic cross-country skiing and skate skiing only. Other users should avoid groomed surfaces.

Visit [PagosaNordic.com](http://PagosaNordic.com) for full trail details.

## Alberta Lake Nordic Loop

A beautiful 10km loop that starts at the end of the Alberta parking lot of Wolf Creek Ski Area and travels through the forest. Wolf Creek Ski Area has groomed this cross-country ski trail for many years with no use fees required.

**Ability levels:** Beginner 20 percent, intermediate 50 percent, advanced 30 percent.

### Special features:

- The Wolf Creek Ski Area grooms up to 10km for skate skiing and classic cross-country skiing.
- The first km is an intermediate access to the Alberta Meadow Nordic loop. Beginners should be aware of the slope and that speed control is needed.
- There is no ability level signage.

**Getting there:** Travel 24 miles east on U.S. 160 to the Wolf Creek Ski Area. The parking attendant can guide you to the far east end of the Alberta parking lot where the Alberta Park cross-country ski trail begins.

## Fall Creek Nordic Trail

(Forest Road 039)

Beginning at about 9,600 feet in elevation, this popular ski route climbs gradually for about 5.5km. Great early and late-season snow conditions. 5.5km groomed for cross-country skiing typically groomed early in the season only, prior to other trails opening for the season.

**Getting there:** Travel 19 miles northeast on U.S. 160 to Fall Creek Road (Forest Road 39). Once cleared, there is a large parking area on the south side of the highway. Avoid parking along highway travel lanes.

## West Fork Nordic Trail

With an abundance of flat, groomed and natural terrain, the West Fork area provides fantastic cross-country opportunities for beginners and families as well as experienced skiers. The area offers skiers the chance to ski through stands of giant conifers, as well as scenic views of the valley floor and the headwaters of the San Juan River.

**Ability levels:** Beginner 80 percent, intermediate 10 percent, advanced 10 percent.

**Special features:**

- The Pagosa Nordic Club grooms up to 15km for skate skiing, with set tracks for classic cross-country skiing.

**Getting there:** Drive 14 miles east of Pagosa Springs on U.S. 160 — look for the Bruce Spruce Lodge sign on the left side of the road. Turn left onto West Fork Road (Forest Road 648). Drive to the end of the road (.25 miles). Park on the side of the road where it is plowed. The trails are groomed exclusively for cross-country skiing. Walkers and snowshoers are prohibited on the groomed trails.

## Coyote Hill

Coyote Hill is another great family and beginner area with three levels of loops. The Pagosa Ranger District grooms up to 14km for skate skiing, with set tracks for classic cross-country skiing. The first level — just off the parking area — offers 3km of beginner, groomed trails. From the main trail, skiers can continue up to the second level for an additional 3km of intermediate terrain. The upper loop offers another 6km of intermediate terrain and 2km of advanced terrain.

**Ability levels:** Beginner 20 percent, intermediate 70 percent, advanced 10 percent.

**Special features:**

- The trails are groomed exclusively for

cross-country skiing. Walkers and snowshoers are prohibited on the groomed trails.

Snowmobiles are prohibited on Coyote Hill. **Getting there:** Drive 6.3 miles north of U.S. 160 on Piedra Road (County Road 600). The trailhead is on the right, just after the cattle guard. Please park in the pull-off if it is plowed.

## Cloman Park Nordic Ski Trail

10km groomed by the Pagosa Nordic Club for skate skiing with set tracks for classic cross-country skiing. Located 2 miles north of U.S. 160 on Piedra Road to Cloman Boulevard, then two miles to the trailhead (past airport and sawmill). Friendly dogs welcome, though some portions enter private property, which prohibits dogs. Snowshoeing allowed off of groomed ski trails please.

**Ability levels:** Beginner 40 percent, intermediate 40 percent, advanced 20 percent.

**Special features:**

- Close proximity to town and has recently been expanded. Please respect private property and stay on groomed trails. Good parking and portable toilet available.

## Laverty Ranch Nordic Ski Trail

10km groomed by the Pagosa Nordic Club. One mile east of town at 2197 E. Hwy. 160.

**Special features:**

This area is for Nordic skiing only. Venue is private property and other winter uses are prohibited. No dogs allowed. Beginner terrain is accessible from the parking lot with plenty of intermediate and advanced terrain. Do not park on pavement during business hours Monday-Friday. Pagosa Nordic Club membership or trail-use fee required for this trail use.

**Ability levels:** Beginner 10 percent, intermediate 40 percent, advanced 50 percent.

# Multi-Use Winter Trails

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## Fourmile (winter) Trail

Follows Fourmile Road (CR 400, FR 645) from the winter closure point to its end.

**Length:** 4.6 miles.

**Trailhead:** Fourmile Road (CR 400) at winter closure.

**Grooming:** Frequently groomed.

**Connections:** Plumtaw Trail (FR 634).

## Plumtaw Trail

The trail is accessed via the Fourmile (Winter) Trail (FR 645). It follows Plumtaw Road (FR 634) to end at McManus Road (FR 633).

**Length:** 18.3 miles.

**Trailheads:** Fourmile Road (CR 400) or McManus Road (FR 633) at winter closure

points.

**Grooming:** Frequently groomed.

**Connections:** The McManus-E. Toner Connector (5.8 miles) crosses the Middle Fork of the Piedra River. The route consists of a groomed trail to E. Toner Road (FR 637), then follows E. Toner Road to Middle Fork Road (FR 636) and continues southwest to a parking area at the junction with Piedra Road (FR 631).

## East Fork Road

(Forest Road 667)

An enjoyable route for one or several miles, this route parallels the East Fork of the San Juan River. It is eight miles to the historic Silver Falls Guard Station. Please

stay on the road as it passes through private property. This area sees significant snowmobile use, is groomed occasionally by the Wolf Creek Trail Blazers snowmobile club, and can provide a quality distance ski.

**Getting there:** Travel 9.5 miles east on U.S. 160, turn southeast on East Fork Road, then continue about 3/4 mile to the parking area at the end of the plowed road.

## Turkey Springs Trail

**Length:** 8.5 mile loop.

**Trailhead:** Turkey Springs Trailhead on Piedra Road (FR 631).

**Grooming:** Occasionally groomed.

**Connections:** Monument Trail (FR 630).



# Back-Country Skiing & Snowshoeing

## Lobo Overlook

This route climbs generally uphill for 1.5 miles to the Lobo Overlook, the Continental Divide Trail (and the microwave tower). Skiers will be rewarded with breathtaking views at the top. Snowmobiles are allowed on the forest service road and provide a packed trail for the ascent.

**Getting there:** Travel 23.2 miles northeast on U.S. 160. Parking and the road to the overlook are north of the highway just past the Continental Divide.

## Nipple Mountain Road

(Forest Road 665)

In addition to traveling Nipple Mountain Road, there are a few other options in this area. The hardy person with a map and back-country skills may identify lengthy or loop trips.

**Getting there:** From downtown, go east on U.S. 160 to the junction with U.S. 84. Travel 1/8 mile south on U.S. 84 and turn left on Mill Creek Road (County Road 302), drive approximately 5 miles to trailhead parking before the junction with Nipple Mountain Road (665).

## Blanco River Road

(Forest Road 656)

Blanco River Road is closed at the highway. The route generally parallels the river for 2.5 miles from the highway to Blanco River campground.

**Getting there:** Travel 11 miles south on U.S. 84 to Blanco River Road. Parking is limited.

## Kenney Flats Road

(Forest Road 006)

This road through open, fairly level terrain is good for beginners and provides several possible routes.

**Getting there:** Travel 14 miles south on U.S. 84 to Kenney Flats Road. Parking is located on the east side of the highway.

## Williams Creek Area

Open, fairly flat area that is good for beginners. Enjoy spectacular views of mountains and large, open parks. Unplowed road continues past Williams Creek Reservoir to Poison Park and Williams Creek trails.

**Getting there:** From downtown, travel two miles west on U.S. 160, turn north on Piedra Road. Travel 22 miles, and then turn right on Williams Creek Road, continue to reservoir.

## Jackson Mountain Road

(Forest Road 037)

Gradual, uphill, 4-mile route to the end of an unplowed road with additional opportunities to travel other roads in the area. Jackson Mountain is a popular area for snowmobiles.

**Getting there:** Travel 7.3 miles northeast on U.S. 160. Parking is on the left at Jackson Mountain Road.

## Wolf Creek Road

(On Wolf Creek Pass — Forest Road 725)

There are three access points along approximately three miles of road with some fairly open, moderate terrain in this area. Views are spectacular. This area is popular for snowmobiling. Skiers typically use Lobo Overlook, 1/2 mile east of the Wolf Creek Pass summit, on the north side of the road.

**Getting there:** To trailhead: Travel 20 miles northeast on U.S. 160 to Wolf Creek Road.



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# Avalanche Awareness

Thirty-seven people were killed by avalanches in the U.S. in the winter of 2020-2021, including 12 in Colorado.

While avalanches are a serious threat to winter backcountry travelers everywhere, they are particularly so here. In fact, according to the Colorado Avalanche Information Center, Colorado has recorded more avalanche-related deaths since 1950 than any other state. Therefore, knowing how to recognize the elements that cause avalanches is essential for remaining safe while traveling in the mountains.

As a long spine of high inland peaks, the Colorado Rockies usually accumulate a colder, shallower snowpack than that of the mountain ranges nearer to the west coast. As a result, certain physical characteristics merge to create persistent fragile layers ripe for avalanche, once sufficient stress develops. The San Juan Mountains, for example, possess abundant steep terrain while receiving ample annual snowfall. As simple gravity increases stress, combined forces routinely elevate the risk of an avalanche.

A combination of weather, steep terrain and existing snowpack structure may give rise to avalanche danger. Weather factors typically include heavy snowfall, high winds and wildly fluctuating temperatures. Avalanche terrain is mainly determined by slope steepness and slope orientation to the wind and sun. Relevant snowpack characteristics include the formation and presence of weak layers vulnerable to increasing stress.

As stress on a slope overcomes the strength of its snowpack, an avalanche can result. Stress can increase dramatically under the weight of new snowfall, the sudden release of a cornice (or snow overhang), or, as an individual or group of skiers, snowboarders or snowmobilers moves across unstable snow. Most often, avalanche victims trigger the slides that overtake them or other members of their group.

Travelers should move singly in avalanche terrain to reduce stress on the snowpack, while possessing the equipment and the skills necessary to successfully affect an avalanche rescue. Because a victim buried just 30 minutes stands less than a 35 percent chance of survival, time is of the essence. To aid in location and rescue efforts, each well-equipped party member should carry an elec-

tronic avalanche beacon, probe pole and lightweight shovel. In too many cases involving unintentional slides, ignorance, arrogance, fatigue or peer-group pressure can result in backcountry travelers ignoring obvious warning signs.

Backcountry travelers caught in an avalanche may not fare well. Whether being buried alive and deprived of oxygen for several minutes or being carried over cliffs, into trees, rocks or other large objects, serious injury — or worse — can result. Therefore, an immediate rescue is essential to increasing a victim's odds of survival. An individual's beacon helps companions locate him or her quickly, while a probe pole and shovel allow individuals to pinpoint and uncover companions buried in the snow. Backcountry enthusiasts can purchase this equipment from various recreational retailers in Pagosa Springs.

The Colorado Avalanche Information Center provides daily mountain weather and avalanche hazard forecasts available on the Web at [avalanche.state.co.us](http://avalanche.state.co.us). Daily forecasts begin in early November and continue through most of May. Backcountry travelers should use this information as a basis for their own risk assessment and trip planning.

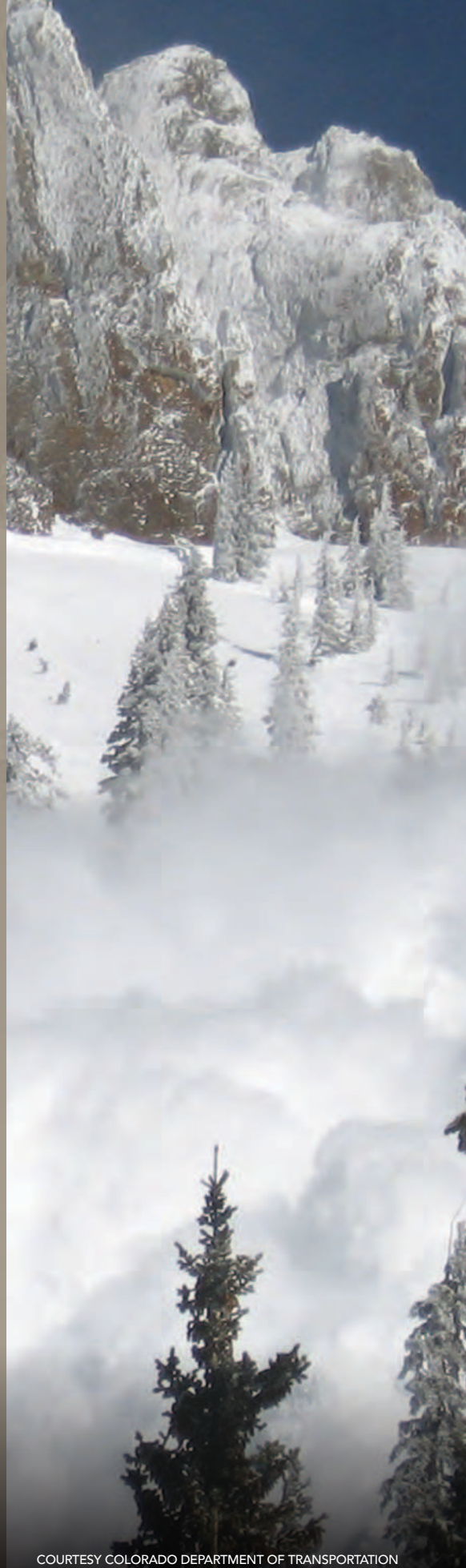
Educate yourself. Seek out knowledgeable people, read books, take an established avalanche course and — most important — always pay attention to the clues nature provides, as you travel the backcountry.

## Recommended research:

Good books on avalanches are available at the library, or check information available online at [avalanche.state.co.us](http://avalanche.state.co.us) and [avalanche.org](http://avalanche.org).

Also, watch The Pagosa Springs SUN and local outdoor shops for announcements about community avalanche awareness talks from the experts who monitor and forecast local avalanches for the Colorado Avalanche Information Center and Colorado Department of Transportation.

The Colorado Avalanche Information Center is a program within the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, Executive Director's Office, and is a partnership between the Department of Natural Resources, Department of Transportation and the Friends of the CAIC.



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Image of Larry Fisher, founder of Ski and Bow Rack, front-flipping off of the Wolf Creek Pass Snowshed.

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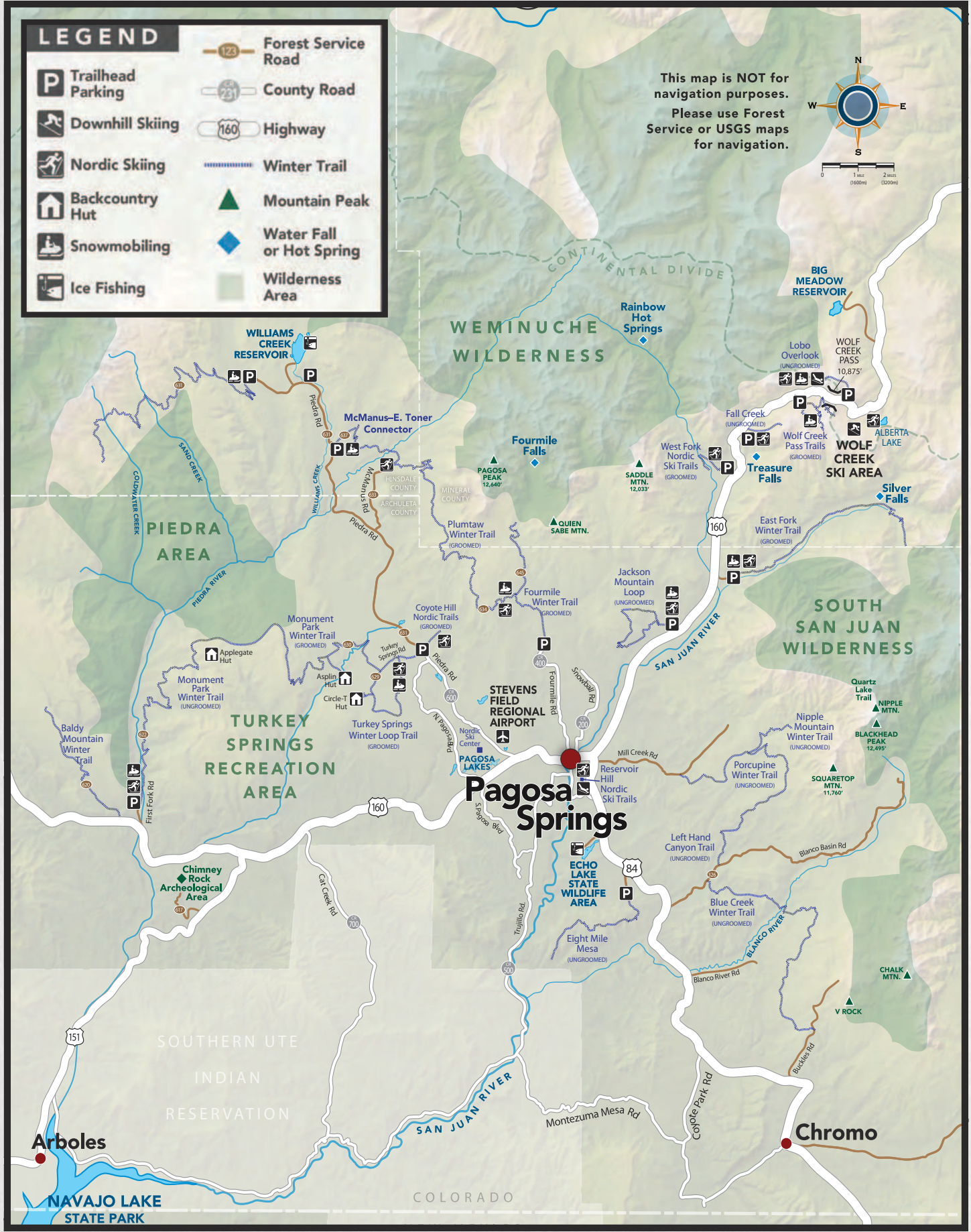
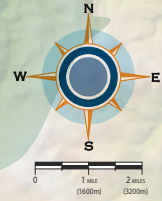


# LEGEND

- Trailhead Parking
- Downhill Skiing
- Nordic Skiing
- Backcountry Hut
- Snowmobiling
- Ice Fishing

- Forest Service Road
- County Road
- Highway
- Winter Trail
- Mountain Peak
- Water Fall or Hot Spring
- Wilderness Area

This map is NOT for navigation purposes. Please use Forest Service or USGS maps for navigation.







# Why So Much Snow?

MICHAEL PIERCE PHOTOGRAPHY

The locals aren't exaggerating— Pagosa Country really does have some of the best natural snow in Colorado, and the most of it!

If you don't believe the local lore, check the stats; nearly every winter, an average of 39 feet falls on the area's 12,000-foot alpine summits surrounding Wolf Creek Pass. One year, the total snowfall exceeded 75 feet.

There's no question; this is the reason powder hounds love Wolf Creek Ski Area. No other Colorado ski mountain can predictably offer as much untracked powder and packed powder as Wolf Creek.

Meteorologists attribute Wolf Creek's consistent snow accumulation to the ski area's location within the San Juan Mountains and to numerous high peaks around Pagosa Springs.

According to weather experts, as relatively warm, sub-tropical moisture from the Pacific pushes east over the southwestern deserts and eventually rises up to surmount the southern San Juan Mountains, it cools and further condenses, thus creating additional moisture. Because colder air holds less moisture, heavy winter precipitation falls in the form of light and powdery snow. The surrounding topography actually funnels this precipitation — referred to as “upslope weather” — to the ski area, thus producing some of the most and best snow anywhere in Colorado.

For winter sports enthusiasts, this means world-class skiing on the runs at Wolf Creek Ski Area, and outstanding cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and snowmobiling throughout Pagosa Country.

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# Rest Your Head

RANDI PIERCE

## Enhance your vacation experience with the Pagosa Springs Visitor Center and Visit Pagosa Springs

The Pagosa Springs Visitor Center and Visit Pagosa Springs app are here to help you get the most out of your Pagosa Springs vacation.

Both sources will help you find information on lodging, restaurants, area activities and all things Pagosa Springs.

Located along the banks of the San Juan River just across the Hot Springs Boulevard bridge in downtown Pagosa Springs, the Visitor Center features picnic tables along the river, free Wi-Fi, free area maps, a wealth of area information and a genuinely local perspective.

A team of fantastic staff and volunteers are available daily to assist you in making the most of your visit. The Visitor Center is open Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., though the days and hours may be subject to change depending on local conditions. For after-hours information, multiple brochures are available outside.

The Visit Pagosa Springs app, available free for smartphones, can also provide information 24/7 and can help you with your

vacation planning both before arriving and while you're here. Visit Pagosa Springs also has a social media presence on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

You'll also find different ways to explore the community.

There is a bike planter scavenger hunt year-round. Local businesses host flower planters that look like old bicycles. Follow the map in the app, keep track of the letters, unscramble the clue to complete the phrase, and spin the wheel for a chance at several awesome prizes.

For the adventurous youngsters, pick up a Kid's Activity Book from a volunteer, with free crayons. Children who complete the activity book during their stay can redeem it for a fun and unique Pagosa Bear.

Free, reusable water bottles are available at the Visitor Center to help you stay hydrated on your adventures.

You can reach the Visitor Center by calling (970) 585-1200 or (800) 252-2204. To learn more about Pagosa Springs, visit [www.visitpagosa-sasprings.com](http://www.visitpagosa-sasprings.com) or download the Visit Pagosa Springs app.





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# Flavor of Pagosa

## Kick back with dinner and live entertainment after a day of fun

Now that you've spent the day playing in the snow, staying warm in area geothermal pools, shopping or whatever else you've found to do and explore in Pagosa Country, are you looking for a nice bite to eat and some evening entertainment?

In addition to being host to a number of delightful eating establishments, the Pagosa Springs area is home to many talented performers, ranging from youth just polishing their chops to Grammy winners and award-winning actors, making it easy to plan a night out featuring dinner and live entertainment.

The variety of entertainment options make it easy to vary your experiences during your stay, allowing you to

have some nights where you combine a dinner followed by a show and others where your apres-ski time is spent kicking back at a bar or laid-back restaurant featuring live musicians, DJs or karaoke.

If you'd like to grab a quick bite before kicking back with some live entertainment, depending on when you plan your trip to Pagosa, you may be lucky enough to catch a show put on by one of Pagosa's theater groups (we have both an award-winning theater company and a decades-old community theater group who put on regular productions).

Or, you could be lucky enough to catch one of the Pagosa Springs Choral Society's annual Christmas concerts



or another local nonprofit holding a fundraiser that makes for a great night out with a live band or storied performer.

Too, several venues around town work to regularly feature local musical talent, dancing and more.

Perhaps you'll catch Tim Sullivan, an award-winning singer/songwriter who's played venues such as Carnegie Hall and with the likes of Vince Gill and Willie Nelson. Maybe you'll catch Bob Hemenger, a saxophonist and local teacher who has played with people like Victor Wooten and Darrell Scott.

Or, you could also catch any number of business owners, retirees and more who rank as local favorites.

Several of the area's restaurants and bars also seek to feature live entertainment several times a week, making dinner and entertainment a combination that's typically easy to find and enjoy, with a wide variety of musical genres featured to suit your tastes.

If you're more into letting loose by being the entertainment, watch for DJs to host karaoke nights and dance parties, and scope out restaurants and venues with a dance floor.

For more information on live entertainment happening during your stay, pick up a copy of The Pagosa Springs SUN, visit [www.PagosaSUN.com](http://www.PagosaSUN.com) or [www.visitpagosasprings.com](http://www.visitpagosasprings.com), ask a local for their suggestions, or just pop into a restaurant or bar — who knows what you might find.



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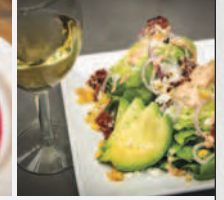
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# Retail Therapy

## Exploring the local character through shopping

Since long before it was incorporated as a town, Pagosa Springs, and the whole of Archuleta County, has experienced the booms and busts associated with numerous industries, including trading between Hispanics and Native American tribes, prospectors seeking gold, lumber mills and railroads. Over time, the flags of several nations have flown over the area, and multiple Native American tribes have inhabited the region.

But, through it all, Pagosa Springs stood firm, not falling to the same fate as many towns now listed as ghost towns.

Instead, Pagosa grew into a mountain town better known to many for its natural resources and wealth of public lands than its former industries.

Thanks to the varied history and natural beauty and resources in Pagosa Springs and Archuleta County, Pagosa — the county seat — now not only stands firm, but is

packed with character, much of which is reflected in the goods you'll find for sale throughout town.

Shopping in the Pagosa Springs area, though, can be a treat in and of itself.

From cabin decor to signs that embody your views on life, natural products of all sorts, on-trend apparel and quirky T-shirts, unique pajamas, western wear and goods that epitomize the western way of life, handmade jewelry with a southwestern flair, antiques, art and seasonal sporting goods, you'll find it and more in Pagosa Springs.

And where you find the goods might surprise you. For example, you'll find coffee shops and what you might think is a hardware store that carry things like home goods, clothes, toys and more.

And that's part of the fun: heading into a shop not knowing what might be around the next corner or what





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perfect gift you'll find for a loved one (or for yourself!). Even if you've been to a shop before, it's likely to be an adventure next time, too, since business owners like to keep things fresh and new. Or, in the case of antique stores, something you've never seen before or haven't seen in years.

And, in true small-town style, you won't often find the people working the stores (often the owners themselves) simply waiting at the register for you to bring them money. Instead, they're often striking up conversations, finding that shirt in just the right size for someone, or letting someone know that if they don't have what you want, where in town will. In short, they're usually going above and beyond to make the shopping experience the best it can be for their customers.

And while you're walking in between shops, you can admire and explore parts of Pagosa's past — like the former hotel that now houses shops and offices and the historic movie theater — just check for signs around the buildings indicating their historical significance.

Shopping in Pagosa, like much of our county's history and current character, is about exploration — seeing what's around the next corner.

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# Real Estate & Home Guide

## Owning property in Pagosa Springs may inspire you to think outside the box

Strong real estate sales across Pagosa Country have recently led to some unique and creative development projects proposed by property owners.

Those projects range from creating new business in the community to others helping to add to the inventory of much-needed workforce housing.

The Pagosa River Domes project includes 14 individual geodesic lodging domes to be constructed overlooking the San Juan River just east of town along U.S. 160.

The project was approved by the Pagosa Springs Town Council in July. One of the domes will be ADA accessible.

The project will also include a 1,500 square foot hospitality building equipped with a diner and also a railroad car for dining. Each dome will be approximately 426 square feet, built on wooden decks. Domes will have access to the Riverwalk trail when a trail extension is completed.

Exterior lighting for local projects is required to be night-sky compliant allowing for neighbors to be able to gaze at the stars free from light pollution. City dwellers are in awe of the breathtaking night sky views in Pagosa Country.

A first-of-its-kind project for Pagosa Country consisting of six duplexes or 12 container homes has been proposed

for Majestic Drive. Across the United States, container housing is gaining in popularity. There is even a series on HGTV featuring unique modern homes built from shipping containers.

Another popular HGTV show features tiny homes. This year, the Pagosa Springs Town Council approved plans for Legacy Village, a tiny home village off of Alpha Drive near Walmart. The proposed village includes 50 or less tiny home lots, community gardens, fire pits with seating, grill and seating areas, a hammock area, hiking trail, storage and laundry areas and a must-have for most locals will be a dog park.

New rental cabins have also received approval for 151 South 5th St. in downtown Pagosa Springs. A unique feature of this property will be geothermal-heated parking and sidewalks, which means no shoveling snow. This property will also connect to the existing downtown Riverwalk trail.

The Pagosa Springs Planning Commission gave the green light to a density bonus request for the Pagosa Inn and Suites Residential Apartment Conversion, which would allow for converting a lodging facility into 98 rental apartments if approved by town council.

Some people have purchased unique Pagosa Country





properties and added their own personal touches. One of the more popular homes listed on Airbnb is the Wonder Haus, which is a “passive solar home” with a star-gazing observation tower.

The Wonder Haus has been featured on the Netflix series “World’s Most Amazing Vacation Rentals” and prides itself on being “intentionally unconventional.”

The Gazette in Colorado Springs featured the vacation property and noted that “Conde Nast named it one of the best Airbnb stays in Colorado. The clothing retailer Anthropologie called about getting photos there for its fall catalog.”

The home’s designer and builder, Jim Milstein, informed The Pagosa Springs SUN, after the Gazette’s article was reprinted locally, that “Asterisk is the house’s true name. It is so called because its floor plan of six barrel vaults radiating from a common center resembles an asterisk.”

He also pointed The SUN to an NPR feature, which reads, “Listener Jim Milstein of Pagosa Springs, Colo., built a stone tower. When he strums the steel guard rails inside, the parts of the cylindrical structure vibrate, making the whole thing a musical instrument.”

Living in Pagosa Country’s picturesque mountain setting inspires many to think outside of the box and create new beginnings. Moving to the region might just inspire you to do the same.

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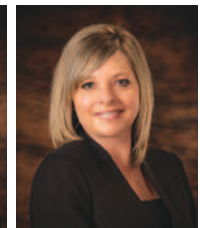
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The airport has seen a great deal of improvement over the years. In 2006, workers widened and resurfaced Runway 10/19 and built a new fixed-base operations building at midfield to provide fuel and services to local and visiting aircraft. In 2008, a new 3,000-foot parallel taxiway was constructed. In 2013, Archuleta County acquired additional snow removal equipment solely to be used at the airport. Alongside the other improvements, new hangars have appeared, an Automated Weather Observation System (AWOS) has been installed, and the airport identifier became KPSO.

In keeping with its commitment to Archuleta County and Stevens Field, the Federal Aviation Administration also completed and published a GPS instrument approach for pilot use during nighttime and low-visibility landings.

In 2015, nearly \$6 million was spent to extend the parallel taxiway and complete other associated projects, further increasing the efficiency of aircraft movement and safety.

Those improvements have not only increased safety, but have also helped solidify the airport's status as an economic driver for the community. According to an Economic Impact Study completed by the airport's advisory committee, for every dollar Archuleta County invests in the airport, the county receives a return of \$10.86.

The airport property also boasts a private, on-site maintenance shop in one of the hangars.

For more information on the airport, visit [www.archuletacounty.org](http://www.archuletacounty.org). For specific airport management questions or concerns, call the airport manager at (970) 731-3060.

The AWOS system is available on frequency 127.175, or by phone at (970) 731-0365.

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# PAGOSA'S BEST MASSAGE

From our Guestbook .. Our customers say it best....

wouldn't go anywhere else than this place!

So clean, cozy, beautiful ambience,  
love the roof top.

Claudia & Josh

Massage & Springs - nothing better!  
Thank you over & over for the hospitality & kindness. What a wonderful place you have here.  
Chuck & Kelly 9/4/17

"Hands down" THE BEST PLACE for RELAXING!!  
Ariana Tolfoya

Amazing in all ways! The view, the baths, the historic building and the tour -

of the springs  
Thank you!  
Amy Dennis  
Tucson

OMG! This place STINKS BUT its not your fault! I love this place and wish I can come here every day!  
The staff was Capitol-AMAZING!  
Thank ya'll so much and definately see ya'll soon!

Kat & Shane  
Austin TX! 2010

Teena is an absolute blessing! Magic hands, beautiful conversationalist, and she went above and beyond make our entire day fantastic! We will be giving a fantastic TripAdvisor rating and ill be back!  
Thanks again! ♥

Dustin & Tara Weldy  
Lewisburg, OH

Scott & Katie Parker  
Dallas, TX



This is our first time at this place & can't believe it took so long! so excited!!

Absolutely LOVED every aspect about this lovely place. ♥ Austin, TX Ari, Monica, Alecia

What a relaxing and tranquil place!  
MUCH better than your friends across the road!  
Great service and very clean. We will recommend you to NAVY!

Brooke & Trent  
Raege & Cait



Love love love  
Overlook Hot Springs!  
Will definitely be back!  
Paul & See  
Phoenix, AZ

I am a man of many words.... Perfect.

Andrea + Garrett

Recommended by  
**Sunset**  
Magazine!

# OVERLOOK

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