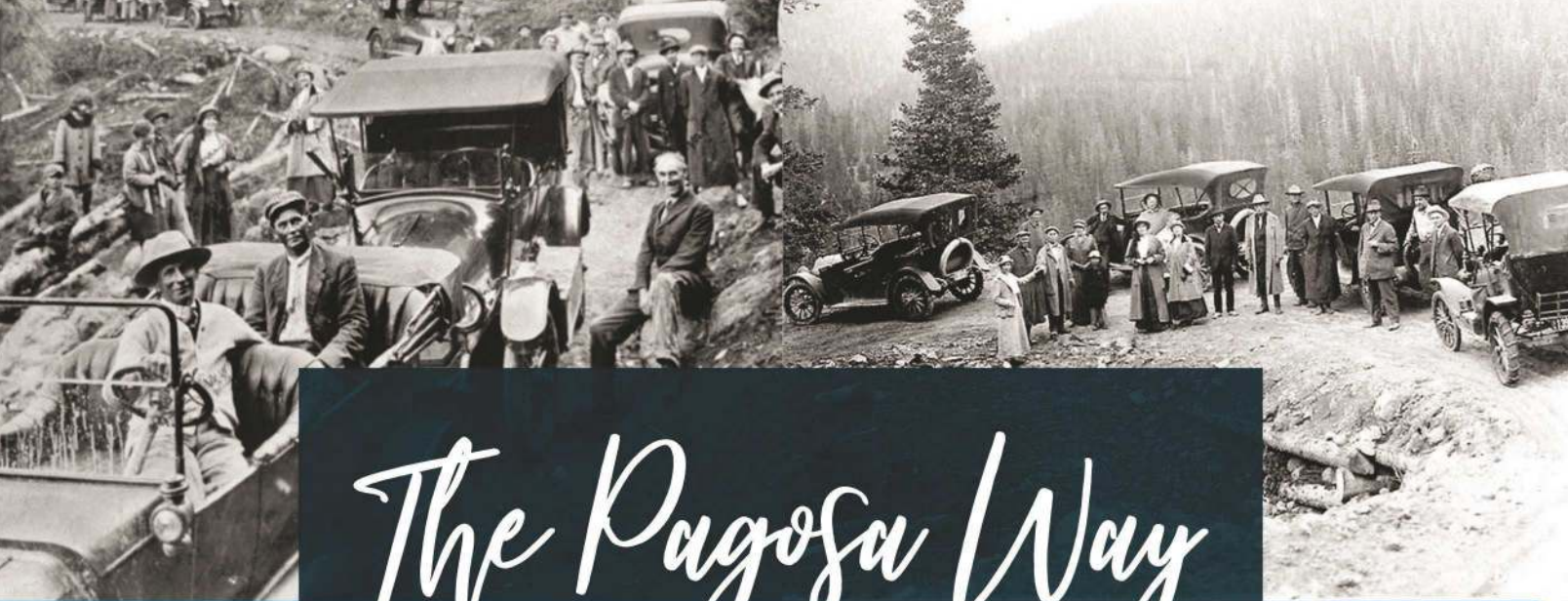


PAGOSA SPRINGS OFFICIAL VISITOR GUIDE™



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

FREE • WINTER 2020-2021 • A PUBLICATION OF THE PAGOSA SPRINGS SUN



The Pagosa Way



Life Well Lived.

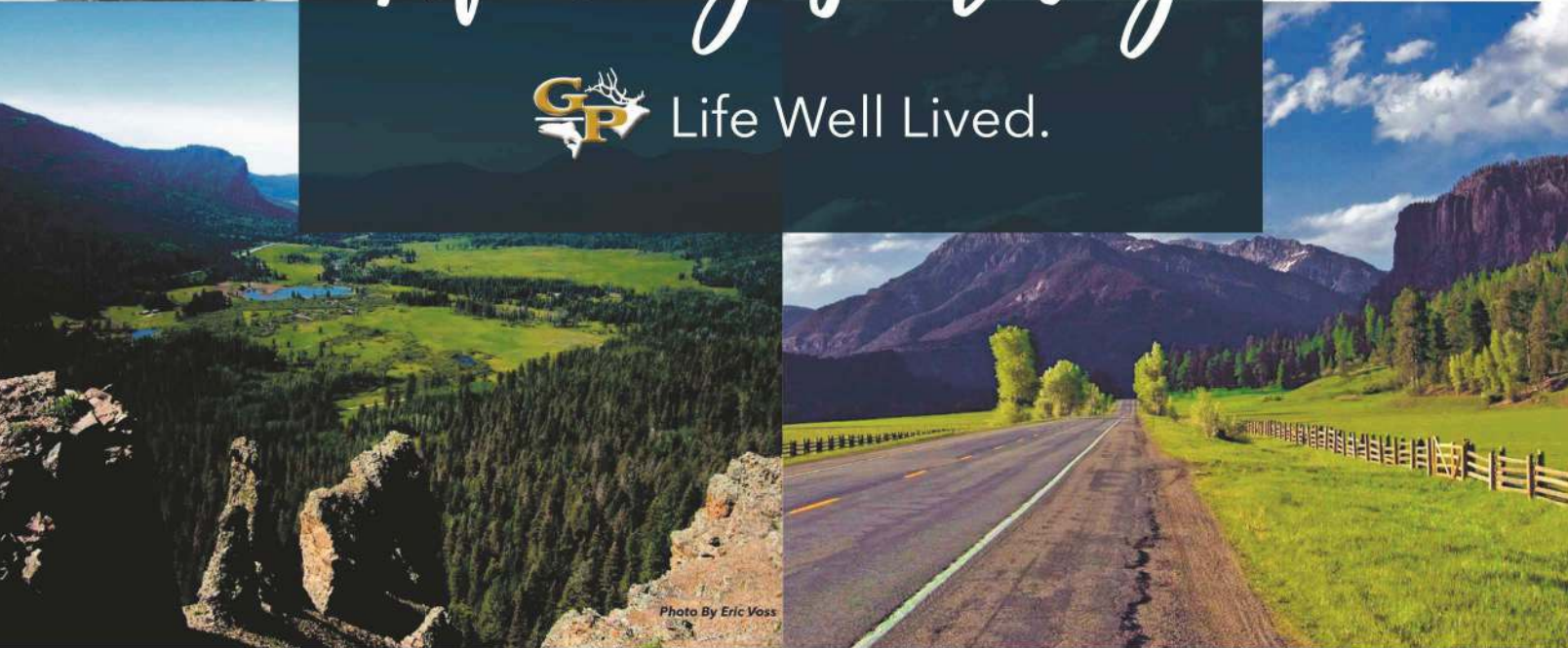


Photo By Eric Voss

104 Years Ago, The First
Vehicles Traveled The New
Wolf Creek Pass Highway.

Today, It Leads To The Jewel
Of The San Juan Mountains...

Pagosa Springs.

In August, 1916, an article in the *Creede Candle* detailed the dedication of the new Wolf Creek Pass Highway. Over 200 vehicles traversed the new highway to celebrate its completion.

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Contents

Welcome	4	Multi-Use Winter Trails	36
Frequently Asked Questions.....	6	Back-Country Skiing & Snowshoeing Trails	37
• Where is Pagosa Springs?		Avalanche Awareness	38
• Who can I contact for info?		Recreation Map	40
• What is it like at altitude?		Why so much snow?.....	41
• What is the weather like?		Rest Your Head	42
• Is there a medical facility?		Enhance your vacation experience with the Pagosa Springs Visitor Center and Visit Pagosa Springs	
• Important phone numbers		Flavor of Pagosa.....	44
Pagosa Springs	8	Eating out: Creative solutions allow for safe dining	
Calendar of Events.....	10	Retail Therapy	50
Wolf Creek Ski Area Events.....	11	Exploring the local character through shopping	
The Basics	12	Real Estate & Home Guide.....	56
Marijuana Laws.....	14	A four-season experience: New mural celebrates the best of Pagosa	
WinterFest	15	Getting Here from There.....	63
Family Fun.....	16	• Stevens Field Airport	
Something for Everyone.....	18	• Fixed Base Operator	
Downtown/Reservoir Hill Map.....	20	• Durango-LaPlata Airport	
Rest & Relaxation	22	• Mileage from Pagosa	
World's Deepest Hot Spring.....	24		
Play Outside	26		
Wolf Creek Ski Area			
Wolf Creek Ski Area Map	30		
Snowmobiling.....	32		
Cross-country Skiing.....	34		
Groomed Nordic Skiing Trails.....	36		



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Ross Cunningham



Todd Starr



When a Texas Corporation purchased a ranch in the valley, the first thing they did was try to close off access. A group of local neighbors retained Cunningham Swaim and the road is now public. **UPDATE:** The Texas Corporation's request for immediate relief from the Colorado Court of Appeals was denied as our clients continue to win on every level.



When the neighbor's dog came over and bit our client on the hand, she came to us just hoping to get her \$1,200.00 medical bill paid. Three months later she cashed a check for over \$50,000.00.



When the pharmacy received a notice of investigation from the Colorado Department of Regulatory Affairs, they turned to us for guidance. Despite some challenging facts, our lawyers who specialize in government affairs were able to quickly solve the problem.



CUNNINGHAM SWAIM

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Denver, Colorado • 1801 Broadway, Suite 1400 • (303) 309-8167
Dallas, Texas • 7557 Rambler Road, Suite 400 • (214) 646-1495
Pasadena, California • 2 N. Lake Avenue, Suite 500 • (626) 765-3000

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.

And while COVID-19 has changed the world we live in, including in Pagosa Country, the heart of Pagosa Country hasn’t changed. Some events have been canceled this year and some amenities may not be open, but 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.

Our local business community — lodging establishments, outdoor recreation equipment sales and rental outlets, clothing stores, restaurants and more — 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. 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.

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.



EXPERIENCE the BEAUTY of MUSHING!



Photo: Dustin English



Join our team of Alaskan Malamutes for a sled ride through the San Juan wilderness!

Connect with nature and experience the power of true working dogs while you enjoy this ancient method of winter travel.

- * Customized 2-hour educational dogsled experience
- * Hang out afterward and enjoy refreshments, campfire, dog snuggles, and scenery
- * Photography included
- * Large families and groups welcome
- * Round-trip transportation from town included
- * Be hands on and help mush the team, or just sit back and enjoy the ride!
- * Ages 3 & up

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Sled Dogs



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SanJuanSledDogs.com

  **sanjuansleddogs**

Peter@sanjuansleddogs.com

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 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.

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: 20.97 inches/year

Annual Snowfall: 104 inches/year

Average Monthly Temperatures:

Month	High	Low	Month	High	Low
Jan.	37°F	1.4°F	Jul.	83°F	45.2°F
Feb.	43°F	7°F	Aug.	80°F	44.6°F
Mar.	49°F	15.9°F	Sep.	74°F	36.6°F
Apr.	59°F	23.9°F	Oct.	64°F	26.3°F
May	68°F	30.2°F	Nov.	50°F	15.4°F
Jun.	78°F	36.3°F	Dec.	40°F	5°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 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

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INPATIENT | 24/7 EMERGENCY ROOM | EMS/AMBULANCE



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, a movie theater, 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 complex and follow the paved path to the right.

The Springs Resort & Spa offers an outdoor pool and a variety of outdoor geothermal hot tubs located next to the San Juan River, featuring water temperatures to suit every need and taste, as well as a spacious bathhouse with locker rooms and showers. The resort is a popular place to 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. Across the street, the Healing Waters Resort and Spa on the corner of San Juan Street and Hot Springs Boulevard also offers an outdoor swimming pool along with indoor mineral baths fed by a geothermal well that taps into the Pagosa Springs aquifer. Another good option for soaking is The Overlook Mineral Springs Spa located in the heart of the downtown historic district, which offers Victorian-style mineral baths and a rooftop pool with mountain views.

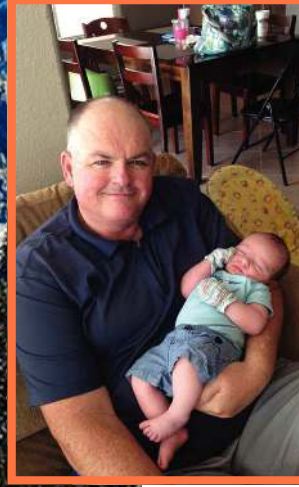
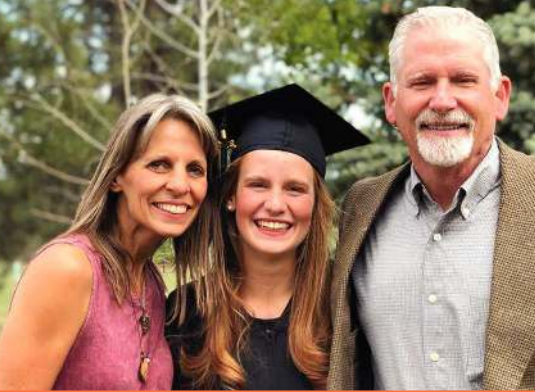
Outdoor activities

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.



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Calendar of Events

Weekly

Second Tuesday of every month
Ruby's Book Club
2-3 p.m.

Ruby Sisson Memorial Library
The library hosts an engaging book discussion about a fiction or nonfiction title via Zoom.
(970) 264-2209, pagosalibrary.org

Thursdays, Oct. 1-Nov. 5
Lifelong Learning Lecture Series
5-6:30 p.m.
Ruby Sisson Memorial Library
Variety of topics via Zoom.
(970) 264-2209, pagosalibrary.org

October

Oct. 22
Quarterly Coffee Talk
9 a.m., Facebook Live
riseaboveviolence.org

Oct. 24
Halloween Carnival
Noon-2 p.m.
Yamaguchi Park
(970) 264-4152

Oct. 30
Adult Halloween Movie Night (21+)
(Drive-in fundraiser)
8 p.m.
7 Parelli Way parking lot
(970) 317-2151, pagosapeakopenschool.org

Oct. 31
Kid Halloween Movie Night
(Drive-In fundraiser)
7 p.m.
7 Parelli Way parking lot
(970) 317-2151,
www.pagosapeakopenschool.org

Annual Pumpkin Decorating Contest
Ruby M. Sisson Memorial Library
Carve, paint or decorate a pumpkin and enter the contest. Send an email with a photo of your completed pumpkin to ruby@pagosalibrary.org before 3 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 30. Prizes will be awarded.
(970) 264-2209, www.pagosalibrary.org

December

Dec. 3
Festival of Trees
Noon-6 p.m. Public viewing and voting
Ross Aragon Community Center
(970) 264-4152

Dec. 4
Festival of Trees
5:30 p.m.
Ross Aragon Community Center
(970) 264-4152

Dec. 12
Learn to Cross-Country Ski Clinic
Skate ski and classic cross-country ski lessons
Registration 9:30 a.m., clinic 10 a.m.
Cloman Nordic Park
PagosaNordic.com

January

Jan. 8
Moonrise Ski Social
Sunset
Cloman Nordic Park
PagosaNordic.com

Jan. 9
Pagosa Nordic Season Opener Race and Southwest Nordic Race Series (SWNRS) opening freestyle event
Freestyle ski: Competitive 20k (SWNRS race), Citizens 5k, Youth 3k
Classic ski: Citizens 5k, Youth 3k, KidK race
9 a.m.-noon
Cloman Nordic Park
PagosaNordic.com

Jan. 10
Learn to Cross-Country Ski Clinic
Skate ski and classic cross-country ski lessons
Registration 9:30 a.m., clinic 10 a.m.
Cloman Nordic Park
PagosaNordic.com

Jan. 23
WinterFest Learn to Cross-Country Ski Clinic
Skate ski and classic cross-country ski lessons
Registration 9:30 a.m., clinic 10 a.m.
Cloman Nordic Park
PagosaNordic.com

Jan. 24
WinterFest Red Ryder BB Gun Biathlon
16k competitive, 4k citizens, 2k youth, KidK
Super fun race for all ages and abilities.
9:30 a.m. start
Yamaguchi Park
PagosaNordic.com

Jan. 22-24
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, admin@pagosachamber.com

February

Month of February
Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month
Events throughout the month to promote awareness. Led by Youth Rise.
riseaboveviolence.org

Feb. 5
Moonrise Cross-Country Ski Social Sunset
Cloman Nordic Park
PagosaNordic.com

Feb. 6
Learn to Cross-Country Ski Clinic
Skate ski and classic cross-country ski lessons
Registration 9:30 a.m., clinic 10 a.m.
Cloman Nordic Park
PagosaNordic.com

Feb. 7
DUST2 Fat Bike Race
9 a.m.
Wolf Creek Pass, FS Road 725
Registration and check-in 8:15-8:45 a.m.
Fun for all ages and abilities.
(970) 398-1168, www.dustx2.com

April

Month of April
Sexual Assault Awareness Month
Events all month.
riseaboveviolence.org

April 28
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

Be sure to check
The Pagosa Springs SUN
and PREVIEW for
up-to-date information.
An events calendar can be
found at PagosaSUN.com.



SAMUEL BRICKER/WOLF CREEK SKI AREA

Wolf Creek Ski Area Events

Nov. 9	Ms. Monday	Feb. 7.....	Super Bowl Fun Race
Nov. 11	Local Appreciation Day	Feb. 7.....	Local Appreciation Day
Nov. 18	Local Appreciation Day	Feb. 9.....	Forever Young Clinic
Nov. 21	Cosmic Mountaineering Race	Feb. 14.....	Valentine's Day Race
Nov. 24	Tuesday Turns	Feb. 17.....	Local Appreciation Day
Nov. 30	Local Appreciation Day	Feb. 21.....	Fun Race
Dec. 1-4.....	Local Appreciation Day	Feb. 23.....	Tuesday Turns
Dec. 1	Tuesday Turns	Feb. 28.....	College Day
Dec. 7-9.....	Local Appreciation Day	Feb. 28.....	Fun Race
Dec. 7	Ms. Monday	March 2.....	Forever Young Clinic
Dec. 12	Fun Race	March 3.....	Local Appreciation Day
Dec. 24 and 25.....	Santa Visits Wolf Creek	March 6.....	Jane and Pitch Tribute Day
Jan. 3	Fun Race	March 6.....	Local Appreciation Day
Jan. 9	Camp Robbers	March 6.....	Camp Robbers
Jan. 10	Fun Race	March 6.....	Fun Race
Jan. 12	Forever Young Clinic	March 13.....	Spring Fling Fun Race
Jan. 13	United Way Day	March 20.....	St. Patrick's Day Fun Race
Jan. 17	Martin Luther King Jr. Race	March 21.....	College Day
Jan. 19	Tuesday Turns	March 22.....	Ms. Monday
Jan. 20	Local Appreciation Day	March 27.....	Fun Race
Jan. 23	Wolf Creek Giant Slalom	March 28.....	Local Appreciation Day
Jan. 24	Local Appreciation Day	March 30.....	Tuesday Turns
Jan. 24	Camp Robbers	March 31.....	Local Appreciation Day
Jan. 30	Camp Robbers	April 3	Wolf Creek Super G Race
Jan. 31	College Day	April 3	College Day
Jan. 31	Fun Race	April 4	Local Appreciation Day
Feb. 1.....	Ms. Monday	April 4	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

2010 Census — 12,084
2018 Estimate — 13,765

Newspaper

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

Housing and Income

Median value of housing — \$274,000
Households — 5,553
Persons per household — 2.24
Per capita money income — \$29,344
Median household income — \$48,016
Persons in poverty — 11.7 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
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
Three county commissioners elected for alternating four-year terms.

Tourism and Business Development

Pagosa Springs Community Development Corp.
(970) 264-2360
pagosaspringscdc.org
Pagosa Springs Area Chamber of Commerce
(970) 264-2360
pagosachamber.com
Pagosa Springs Area Tourism Board
(866) 438-4917
visitpagosasprings.com

Related Web Site Links and Info

Pagosa Springs Area Association of Realtors
(970) 731-4015, pagosaspringsrealtors.com
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
Ruby M. Sisson Memorial Library
(970) 264-2209, pagosalibrary.org
Stevens Field Airport
(970) 731-3060, www.stevensfield.com
AWOS frequency 127.175, (970) 731-0365
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
New Mexico Road Report
(800) 432-4269, nmroads.com



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970.264.4420

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970.247.2420

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK

TheGreenHouseColorado.com

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.

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.

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Cover Photo:
Samuel Bricker
Wolf Creek Ski Area



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 2021 is set for Jan. 22-24, giving the locals a little “umph” from the winter season. 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 multi-colored balloons. Bring your camera, dress warmly and capture the splendor as the balloons mass ascend on Jan. 23 and 24. 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, where home-made 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 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 — socially distanced, of course!

For the athletically inclined, there are several activities to participate in over the weekend. The DUST 2 group will host the annual Fat Tire Bike Race in Yamaguchi Park on Saturday morning. Enjoy a warm crepe as you cheer on the cyclists as they brave the cold and complete their laps in the snow or participate in this 8km, 16km, or KidK course. The Pagosa Nordic Club will host on Sunday, Jan. 26, the Red Ryder BB Gun Biathlon which begins at 9 a.m. This event offers participants a cross-country course to fit your skill level. There will be a 16km competitive, 4km citizens-youth and kid course. Each skier shoots at targets, with BB guns provided, three times between $\frac{1}{4}$ ski distances. Since WinterFest activities are dependent upon the whims of Mother Nature, the locations of the Nordic events are not yet determined.

An exciting addition to the WinterFest schedule returns for its second year, action-packed skijoring. This rapid-paced event will take place in the downtown area on Hot Springs Boulevard 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.PagosaSUN.com for up-to-date information closer to event time.

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



GEORGE HUNYADI

Family Fun

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. But, like everywhere else, Colorado and local coronavirus regulations continue to change to allow for as much normal activity as possible while also keeping the community healthy. As such, not everything may be available during your 2020-21 visit — but, hey, that makes for a great excuse to come back again.

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. 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://wolf-creekski.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.

Most winters, 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. The rink announced over the summer it would be unable to open this winter.

For those with an aversion to the white stuff and cold air, Pa-

gosa 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), call the library at (970) 264-2208 or visit 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. Check The PREVIEW section of The Pagosa Springs SUN (www.pagosasun.com) or call (970) 264-4152 for a full calendar of events featured during the week or for more information.

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.

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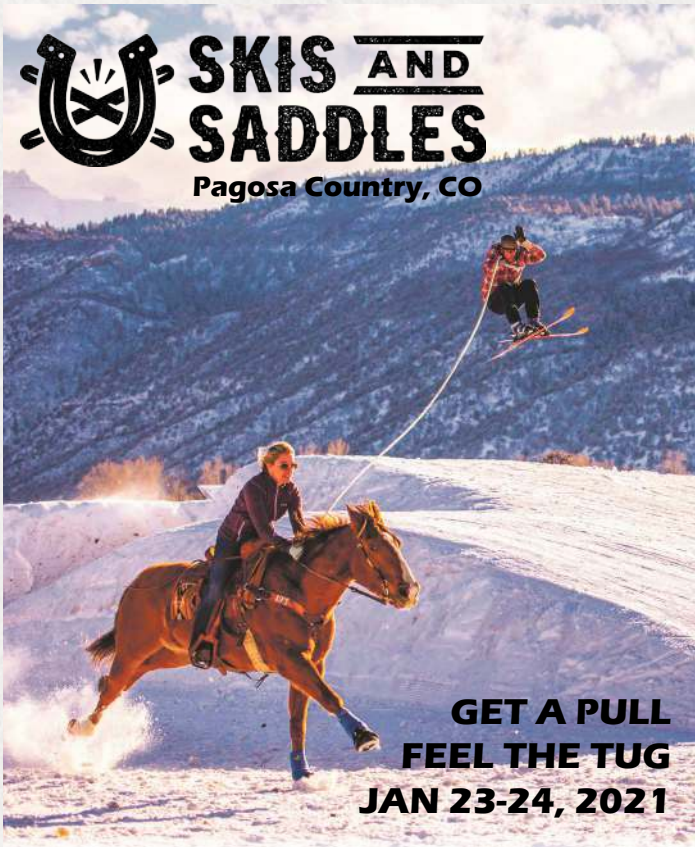
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PAGOSA NORDIC CLUB

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.

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.

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).

Most winters, 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. The rink announced over the summer it would not be open this winter.

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. 4, with the public viewing set for Dec. 3.

As the winter season progresses, the community welcomes visitors for WinterFest, which is set for Jan. 22-24.

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.

When planning to watch, take part in or visit something specific in Pagosa Country this year, be sure to check in first to ensure COVID-19 concerns or local conditions haven't led to events being canceled or postponed.

While Pagosa Springs continues to provide a variety of activities available even in strange times like these, the community does it even more so in normal times.

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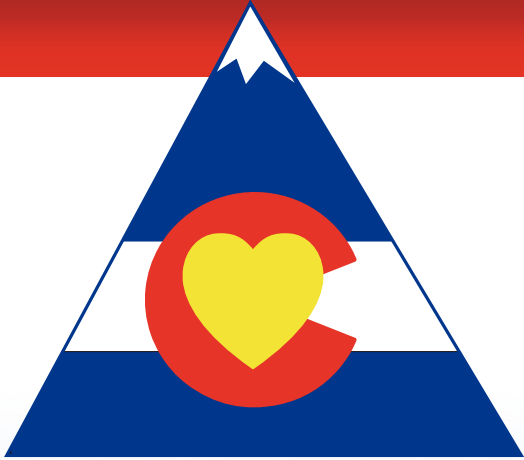
PAGOSA SPRINGS COLORADO

Downtown Recreation Map

TH Trail Head	Restroom	Popular Fishing Area	Hot Springs Facility
P 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

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PAGOSA
Urgent Care

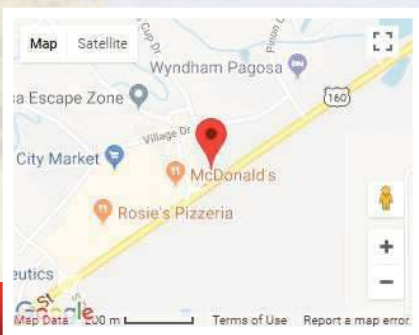
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Rest & Relaxation



MICHAEL PIERCE PHOTOGRAPHY

Each of Pagosa's three 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 three 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 (such as masks) 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 six individual tubs, as well as an eight-person 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 with facial and massage services and 23 soaking pools (the most in Colorado) on the banks of the San Juan River. For relaxation purposes, five pools are designated as "adults only." However, there are 18 soaking pools and a freshwater Jacuzzi for the entire family to enjoy.

A variety of therapeutic pools have temperatures ranging from 83 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.

Guests of the resort receive exclusive 24-hour soaking privileges, though the resort is open to the public during set hours.



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World's Deepest Hot Spring

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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 — its magic.

Play Outside

Ski the Wolf

At more than 80 years old, Wolf Creek Ski Area is time-tested.

Wolf Creek Ski Area is known for having the most natural snow in Colorado. By Easter Sunday of 2019, the ski area had a year-to-date total of almost 500 inches.

The ski area also focuses on guest experience and guest satisfaction, and this year is no different.

To help formulate its reopening plan, which as of the date of writing this guide was still in the process of being approved by state and local public health agencies, Wolf Creek Ski Area sent out a survey over the summer to solicit feedback on what people would be willing to do to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 and still be able to ski this season.

According to Wolf Creek President and CEO Davey Pitcher, about 4,200 responses were received.

A letter sent to season pass holders and guests in late summer outlines some provisions of its draft reopening plan, with that plan focusing on safety

by decreasing daily capacity; implementing social distancing in the parking lots; requiring face coverings when picking up lift tickets, in the rental area and on lifts; installing safety features such as a sneeze guard in the rental area; and more.

Too, the letter outlines anticipated health screenings for Wolf Pups, increased cleaning measures for areas like restrooms and limited seating in restaurants.

“By showing empathy and being respectful of the greater responsibility that the local, state, and federal government has in managing this pandemic, we as skiers and snowboarders can pursue the activity that means so much to us,” the letter states.

For more on what to expect during your time on the slopes, visit www.wolfcreekski.com.

Wolf Creek is known for having an exceptional variety of terrain, abundant snowfall and plenty of powder days.



SAMUEL BRICKER COURTESY OF WOLF CREEK SKI AREA



Wolf Creek Ski Area

ROSANNE PITCHER

Wolf Creek has 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 at no cost, like paved parking and shuttle services.

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

The recent years of construction started with the Treasure Stoke, which debuted in the 2013-2014 season. The previous Ctec Triple 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 induction 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 in order to reduce dead trees from the ski area.

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

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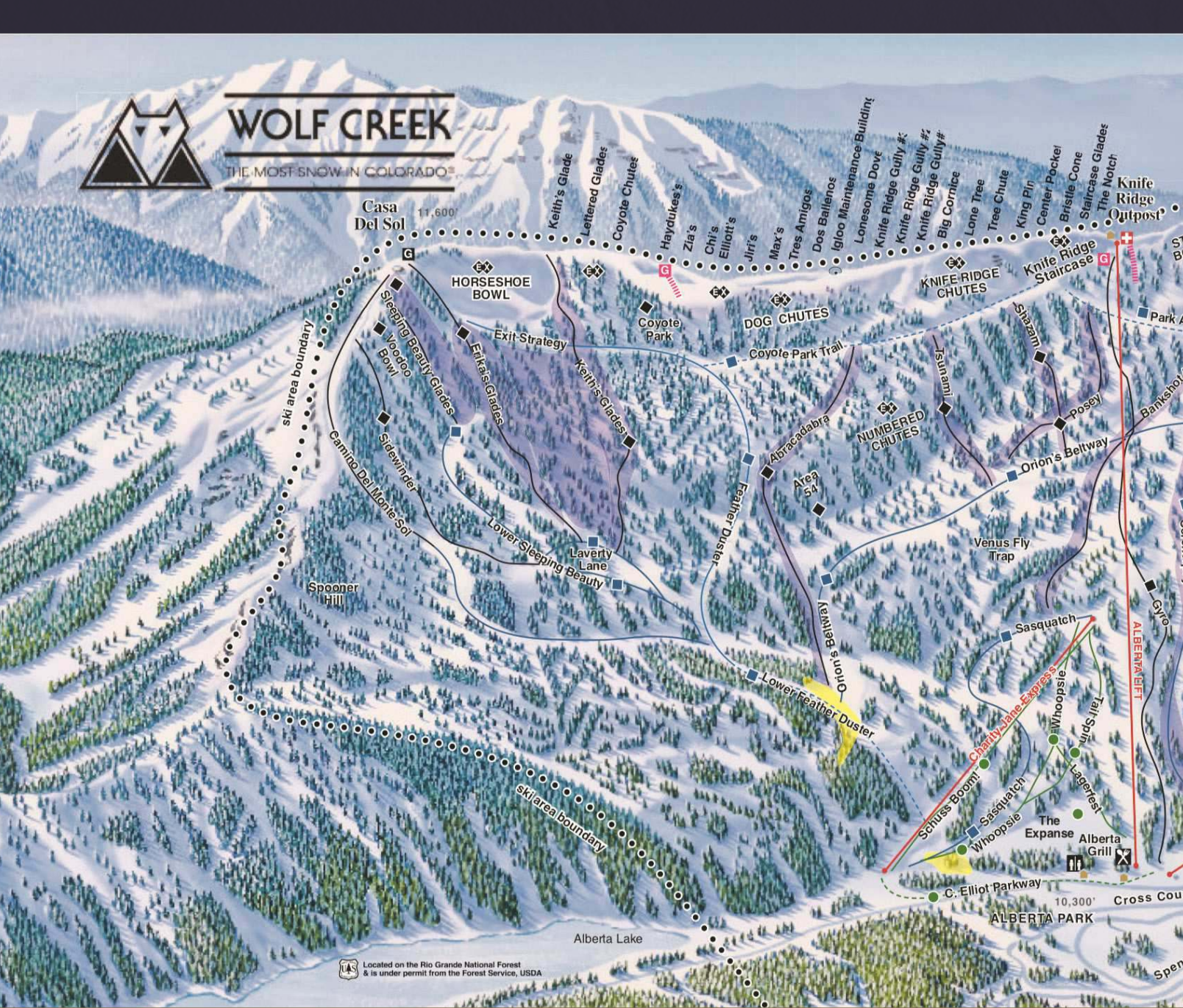
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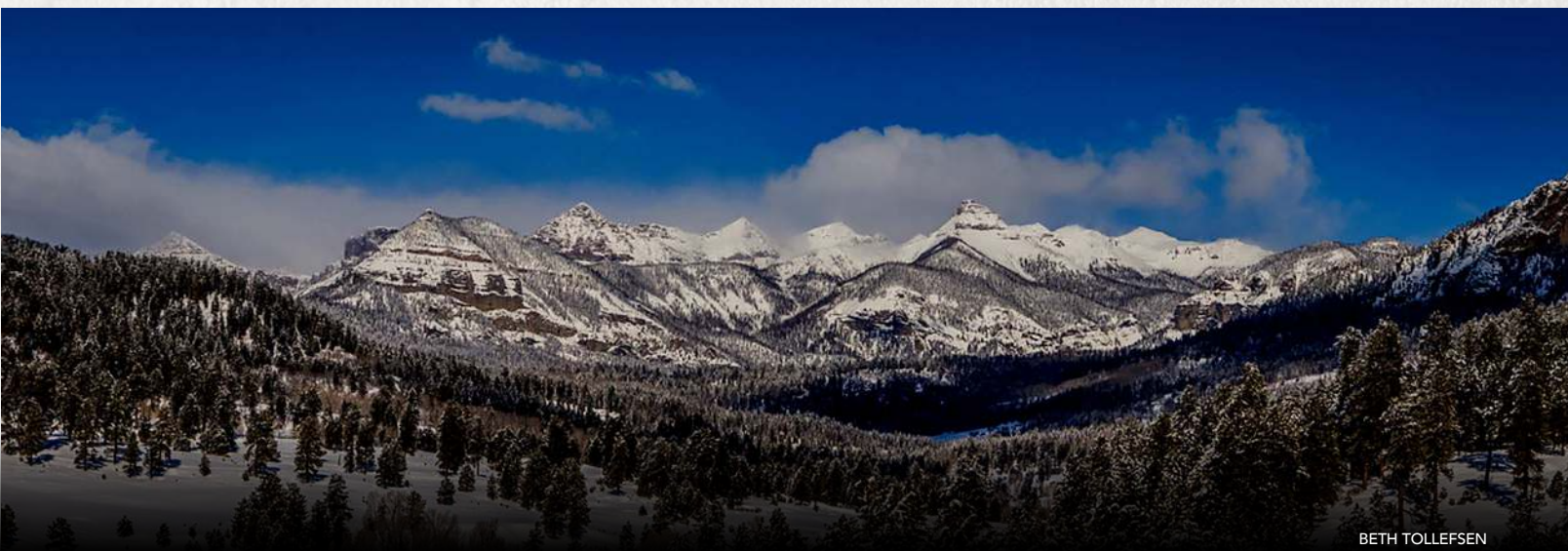
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- Tickets
- Snowboard Rentals

Base Area Facilities

- 1 Ticket Office
- 2 Sports Center
- 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



BETH TOLLEFSEN



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.

- 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.

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.

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 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.

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SNOW SHOES

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 below 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 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 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 or by calling (970) 247-8187. More educational information, including a listing of available training, can be obtained at: www.avalanche.org and 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.

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 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

Twenty-three people were killed by avalanches in the U.S. in the winter of 2019-2020, including six 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. 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 and 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.

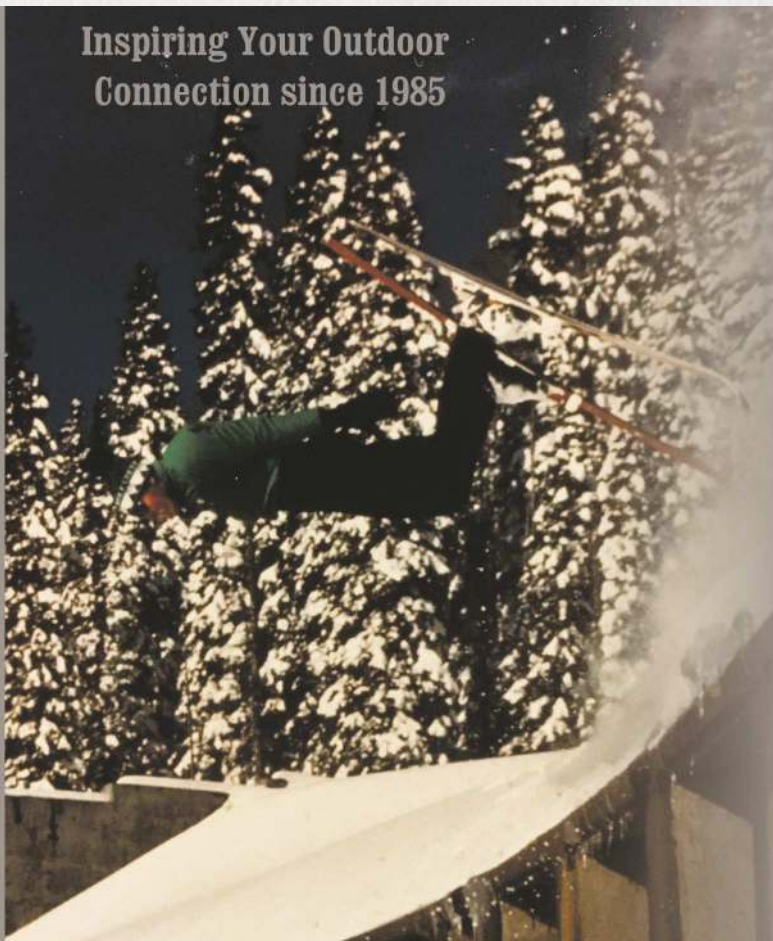


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Image of Larry Fisher, founder of Ski and Bow Rack, front-flipping off of the Wolf Creek Pass Snowshed.

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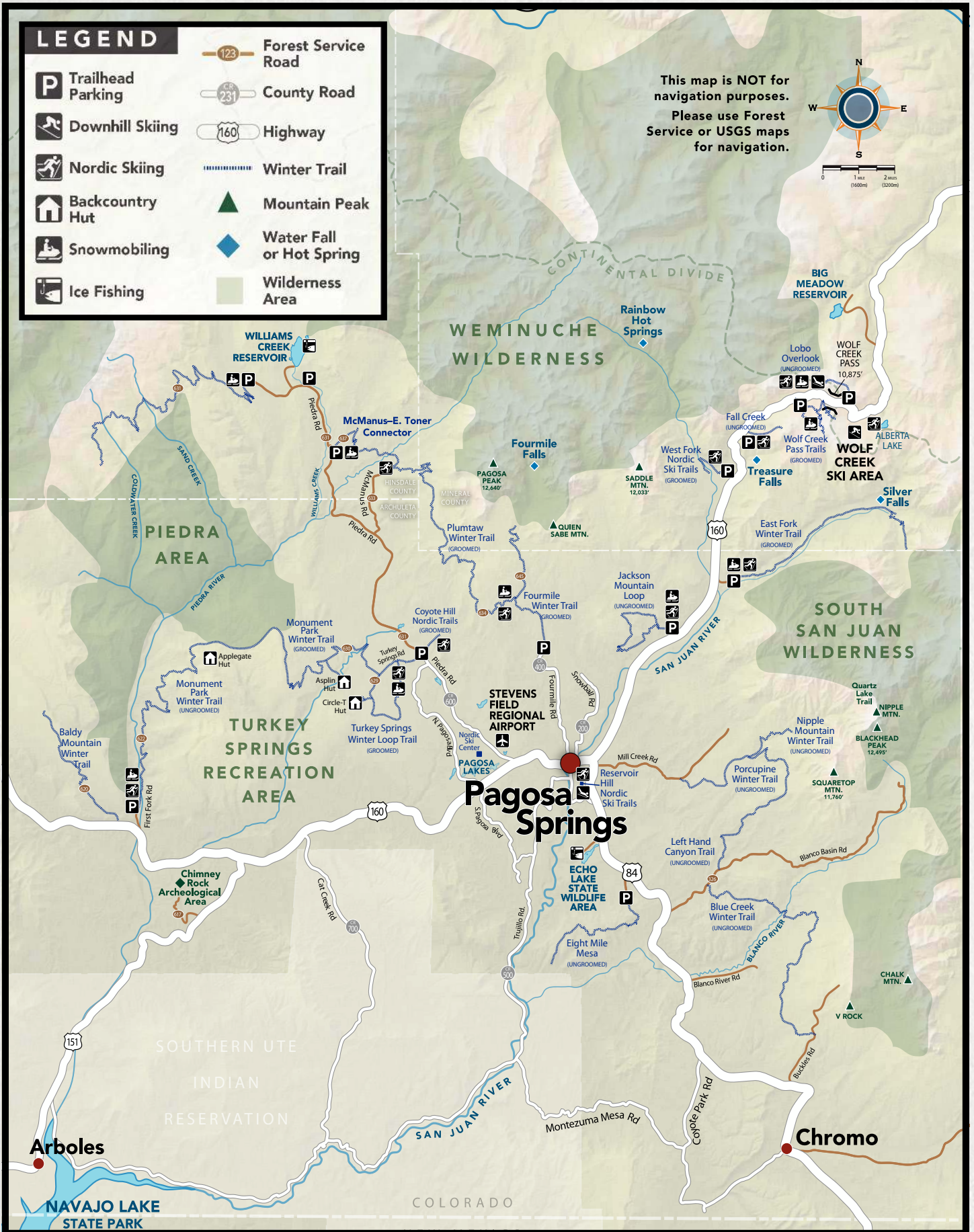
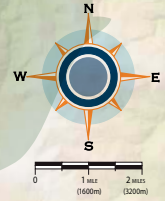
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- Water Fall or Hot Spring
- Wilderness Area

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, subtropical 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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RANDI PIERCE

Rest Your Head

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 3 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 or download the Visit Pagosa Springs app.



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Flavor of Pagosa

Eating out: Creative solutions allow for safe dining

By John Finefrock

Even in the time of COVID, Pagosa Springs has a plethora of great dining establishments that are taking extra special care of their patrons.

Restaurants around Pagosa Springs and Archuleta County have implemented strict measures to ensure that all diners and employees are safe, including temperature checks for employees, rigid social distancing measures and cleaning protocols, and disposable menus that are only used once, among other things.

“Restaurants in town are definitely gonna focus on creating a great guest experience while balancing public health needs,” said Jason Cox, co-owner of Riff Raff Brew-

ing Company, which has two locations downtown. “I think most of us are planning on finding the best compromise in doing all of that. We’ll be open for business. We plan to allow for people to have the most normalcy as possible. I think you’ll see some creative solutions this winter.”

According to Cox, most restaurants around Pagosa Springs, including his, may even modify some outdoor areas and put in heat lamps so those areas can be used for dining in the winter.

“Pagosa has experience with dealing with winter snow and winter weather, and I’m sure we’ll be able to accommodate all the guests safely,” said Tony Simmons, owner of Pagosa Brewing and Grill, located uptown.

In late summer, Simmons explained he planned to build some outdoor pergolas for the winter and equip them with heat lamps for diners and drinkers to enjoy their fare outside.

Simmons also touted the outdoor fire pit at Pagosa Brewing, saying that's just one tool the brew pub has for socially distancing patrons in the colder months.

The Town of Pagosa Springs has supported the unique needs of restaurant owners during COVID-19 by streamlining certain permit requirements.

"We understand the need for businesses to expand their physical footprint to accommodate the social distancing requirements," wrote Town Manager Andrea Phillips in an email. "We created a Temporary Outdoor Seating and Use Permit to provide a framework for businesses (restaurants, retail and others) to expand into adjacent public right of way and private areas. There is no fee for the permit and we are trying to be flexible in its application."

"I think it's gonna be a busy winter," said Bob Hart, owner of Mountain Pizza and Taproom, located on the east side of the downtown area. "We just seat people until we reach our required capacity, and then we will be taking online and to-go orders."

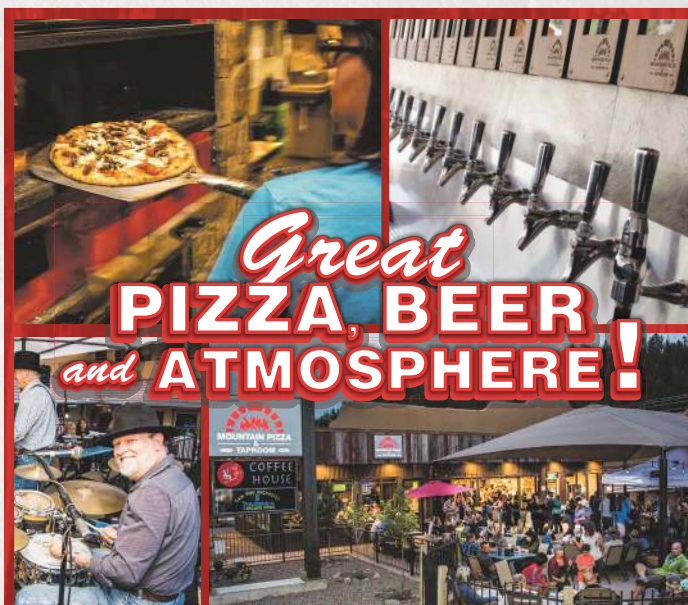
"From a local standpoint, we've had amazing support," said Cox, adding, "That includes seasonal regulars, so maybe second homeowners who come up here and have a relationship with us. ... The support has been really amazing here."

So, rest assured that your apres-adventure dining or drink outing doesn't have to be sacrificed in the name of health.

You may even find the changes provide a unique opportunity to enjoy your fare outside on a crisp, sunny day or in a snowy winter wonderland. And, as always, many restaurants offer food to go that can be enjoyed anywhere.

Local restaurants have worked to continuously fine-tune their operations to meet new regulations and customer needs, but, as we all know, things continue to change rapidly, making patience a key part of any enjoyable dining experience.

Enjoy your stay, enjoy your meal and, please, be patient and kind.



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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 perfect



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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 that's still in operation — 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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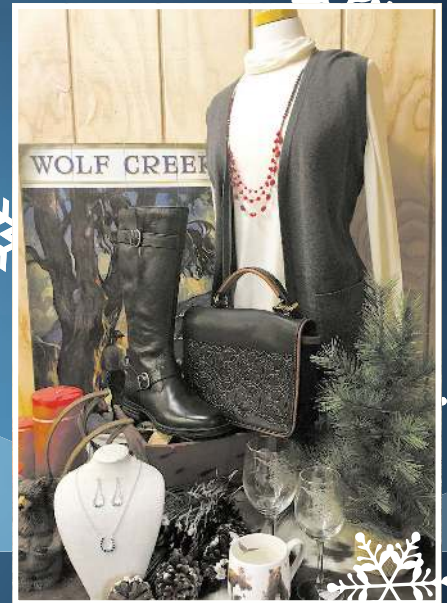
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RANDI PIERCE

Real Estate & Home Guide

A four-season experience: New mural celebrates the best of Pagosa

By Randi Pierce

While experiencing all four seasons in Pagosa Country in a short span of time is usually impossible, visitors to Pagosa Springs will soon be able to do just that thanks to a new art installation downtown.

During the summer of 2020, local artist Markus Hughes began transforming the blank wall of Goodman’s Department Store on the corner of U.S. 160 and 4th Street into something that showcases a bit of the best Pagosa Country has to offer.

“It shows the pride that we all, locals, have in our town. It shows the bright color and the warmth that the locals kind of hold and ... share with all tourists and locals alike. I just feel like it’s a good artistic example of how we all feel as locals,” Hughes said.

The mural was organized by the Pagosa Arts Initiative, which, according to its website, has a mission “To stimulate and promote the arts” and works to “help build a community where arts culture and creativity are valued and celebrated.”

“We bring art and community together,” the website states.

In the case of the mural, that meant working with local

government, businesses and the town’s historic preservation board to make sure the mural took into account Pagosa’s rich history while also being welcome and relevant for today’s visitors.

Through that process, and viewing proposals from artists, Hughes’ representation of Pagosa Country’s four distinct seasons won out.

“The seasons and the variants in the seasons and the uniqueness of each of the seasons is not only what brings people here, but also that’s what brings them back once they’re here,” Hughes said. “And the sheer amount of nature, the natural environment that we have. And again, the complete uniqueness of each of the seasons — it’s amazing. So that’s what I decided to focus on. Because it’s one of the things that really represents Pagosa and the southwest Colorado region.”

For spring, Hughes decided to focus on one of the first sights many visitors take in when they get to Pagosa Country — a waterfall.

“The waterfall I thought was a really good representation of the spring runoff and ... movement and water,” Hughes explained. “And so, being the first thing visible from East 160, I thought that would be a good thing to kind of focus on.”



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Hughes' summer panel is a view he sculpted himself to bring together some of the best parts of Pagosa Country summers: Pagosa Peak, a high mountain lake and wild-flowers.

The fall scene was based off the photo another local, Jacque Aragon, took from Apache Street showcasing not only the fall foliage, but also the San Juan River that meanders through downtown Pagosa Springs.

And the winter high alpine panel was, naturally, inspired by something locals and visitors thoroughly enjoy in the cold season — hitting the lifts to ski or snowboard.

Hughes also wanted the mural to be more than a pretty picture. He wanted it to be an interactive place where people of all ages could have a little fun.

To accomplish that, Hughes depicted the spring runoff flowing down onto the sidewalk, making for the perfect photo op with a tube or skipping across the rocks.

Hughes also worked with the town to be able to install a ski lift bench in front of the winter panel to not only give folks a place to sit for a spell, but to also have a little more fun taking photos with the skis and snowboard painted on the sidewalk.

"I just wanted to create more of an interactive feel with the mural instead of just something that was beautiful to look at," he said.

For more information on the Pagosa Arts Initiative, visit <https://www.pagosaartsinitiative.org/>.



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(970) 264-2100



RANDI PIERCE

Getting Here

Stevens Field Airport

Archuleta County's Stevens Field, located just 3 miles west of downtown Pagosa Springs, is one of the most scenic airports around.

In addition to beauty, the airport boasts a fully lit asphalt runway that is 100 feet wide and 8,100 feet long. That runway has aircraft weight capacities of 70,000 pounds for dual-wheel gear and 59,000 pounds for single-wheel gear. Flight safety at the high-altitude, general aviation airport is reinforced with a Precision Approach Path Indicator system.

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. 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.

Fixed-Base Operator

For aviation services or to visit Avjet Corporation, the fixed-base operator, travel 3 miles west of town, then approximately 1 mile northwest on Piedra Road (CR 600). Turn right (northeast) on Cloman Boulevard and proceed to 61 Aviation Court.

The FBO offers a number of amenities, including restrooms, telephone, shower fa-

cilities, a flight planning room, pilot snooze room, Internet, vending machines, concierge and catering services, coffee, a lounge area, heated hangar and more. Avjet also provides fuel, Avgas and Jet-A rated fuel.

For more information about these and other airport services, call Avjet at (970) 731-2127.

La Plata County Airport

The Durango-La Plata County Airport offers daily service with American Airlines and United Airlines. The airport offers a full range of services within the terminal to make your visit comfortable. The airport has short- and long-term parking, full rental car services and shuttle/taxis.

The airport is located 60 miles from Pagosa Springs at the intersection of Airport Road and County Road 309A, approximately 1 mile from County Road 309.

For more information about flights and ancillary services, visit www.flydurango.com.

Mileage from Pagosa

Durango, Colo.	61 miles
Cortez, Colo.	104 miles
Denver, Colo.	277 miles
Colorado Springs, Colo.	242 miles
Farmington, N.M.	101 miles
Santa Fe, N.M.	160 miles
Albuquerque, N.M.	212 miles
Phoenix, Ariz.	514 miles
Oklahoma City, Okla.	699 miles
Dallas, Texas	813 miles

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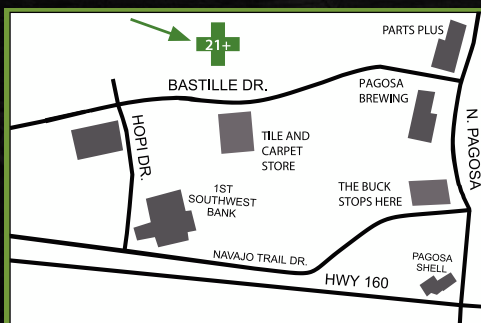


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of the Springs
Thank you!
Kemp & Dennis
Tucson

Teena is an absolute blessing! Magic hands, beautiful conversationalist, and she went above and beyond, make our entire day fantastic! We will be giving 5; fantastic TripAdvisor rating and ill be back!

Thanks again! ♡

Dustin & Tara Weldy
Lewisburg, OH

Scott & Katie Parker
Dallas, TX



OMG! This place STINKS BUT its Not your fault! I Love this place and wish I can come here every day! The staff was capital-AMAZING! Thank y'all so much and definately see y'all soon!

Kat + Shane
Austin TX! 2010

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

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Brooke & Trent
Ravens



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

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Andrea + Garrett

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