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# **San Juan County & Town of Silverton Animas River Preservation and Access Project**

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**Proposal for**

**Bonita Peak Mining District  
Natural Resource Damages Trust  
Fund (NRD Trust Fund)**

**Submitted by**

**SAN JUAN COUNTY, COLORADO**

**MAY 30, 2025**

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# San Juan County & Town of Silverton Animas River Preservation and Access Project

## 1.0 Executive Summary

Project Name:

*San Juan County & Town of Silverton Animas River Preservation and Access Project*

Project Description:

*The San Juan County & Town of Silverton Animas River Preservation and Access Project application presented by San Juan County is an ideal project for the Natural Resources Damages (NRD) funding due to (1) its exclusion from the Bonita Peak Mining District (BPMD) superfund sites, (2) the impacted natural resources along the river corridors, (3) the benefit of preservation and access for public benefit, and (4) the significant community buy-in and visioning for appropriate recreation access along the river corridors.*

*Since 2015, the Town of Silverton, San Juan County and many community members have dedicated countless hours of their time and expertise to manage the aftermath of the Gold King Mine release. This time and effort resulted in a reduction in staff, resources, and community capacity to pursue other community benefits, projects, and goals. The use of NRD funding for San Juan County and the public in general supports the commitment by the Trustees to support a rural, isolated community which has been significantly affected by legacy mining. The NRD funds present an opportunity to preserve the river corridor and increase recreational capacity by improving and securing access and preserving adjacent properties for both current and future citizens. The Silverton community has long asked for protection, restoration, and appropriate recreational use of the river corridors as demonstrated in the 2006 Animas River Corridor Plan, the 2019 Silverton Area Trails Plan, and the 2022 Silverton Compass Master Plan – this important project can now realize that community-driven effort through the support of the Trustees.*

Project Offeror:

*San Juan County, Colorado*

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Project Contact:

*William Tookey*

*bpmd@silverton.co.us*

*970-317-4665 - DIRECT*

*970-387-5766 - OFFICE*

Total Project Cost:

*\$300,000*

Amount of NRD Funding Requested:

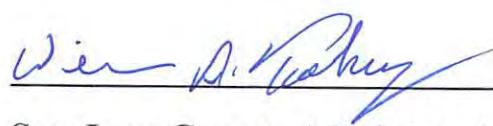
*\$150,000*

Matching Fund Sources, Type, Value and Status:

*San Juan County anticipates utilizing private and Colorado State Program funding sources in conjunction with county budget resources. Potential additional resources San Juan County has identified includes:*

- GOCO for additional trails, signage, and bridges
- Colorado RESTORE
- The Nature Conservancy
- Trout Unlimited
- Colorado Parks and Wildlife
- North American Wetlands Conservation Act
- Colorado Department of Local Affairs

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**San Juan County Administrator, William A. Tookey**

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**San Juan County Commissioner, Austin Lashley**

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## 2.0 Scope of Work

### a. Target Natural Resource(s):

*The natural resources areas targeted are those where legacy mining has had major impacts along and within the river corridors in San Juan County, Colorado. The goal is to secure access for recreation while preserving and protecting adjacent lands. Legacy mining has had direct impacts along the Animas River between Eureka and the Mineral Creek confluence as well as between Gladstone and Silverton along Cement Creek. The legacy activities have impacted the riverbanks, including channelization of the river, degradation of riparian wetlands, and loss of access to key recreational space due to degraded water quality and lack of physical access to the river corridor.*

- i. Describe how the proposal will restore, replace, or acquire the equivalent of injured natural resources and how the development, design, implementation, and restored site can be made available for public benefit.

*Our goal is to preserve riparian areas and provide access to the river corridors for recreational opportunities along the Animas River. This includes purchasing properties and easement rights along the corridor. The project will provide multiple benefits to include improving water quality by preserving adjacent properties along the corridors, limiting, and mitigating disturbances, and restoring those areas which have been directly impacted. Easements will allow for connecting walking trails which will incorporate interpretive signs to improve awareness of sensitive areas while enhancing public recreational opportunities for fishing, wading, kayaking, walking and general access.*

- ii. Provide a detailed description of the area (acreage, linear footage, etc.) of natural resources addressed by the proposal.

*San Juan County can only estimate which prospective areas it will be successful in securing for the public. At this time, the county anticipates it will be able to acquire, preserve, and/or restore 30-40 acres for the public along the corridor.*

iii. Provide a map of the area.



b. Objectives: Provide clear, measurable, realistic, time-phased objective(s) for the work proposed.

*See Operational Plan and Table 1 below.*

c. Operational Plan: Submit an operational plan that describes the proposal.

i. Describe in detail how the work will be implemented.

## Task 1. Project Management

*Conduct and initial inventory of properties ideal for acquisition or easement access along the river corridors.*

## Task 2. Project Site Assessment

*Review available properties and compare with project goals and alignment with the Compass Master Plan, the San Juan County Master*

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*Plan, and the purposes of Natural Resources Damages criteria. Once complete, prioritize projects based on a scoring assessment matrix.*

### Task 3. Project Purchasing

*Review prioritization, negotiate with landowners and secure easements or property.*

- ii. Describe with whom the Offeror will collaborate to accomplish the scope of work. Provide letters of support from those entities and any other letters of support as an appendix to the proposal.

*San Juan County will collaborate with private landowners, community volunteers, U.S. Federal Land Management Agencies, and the Town of Silverton to accomplish the proposed work.*

- iii. Describe the type and name(s) of donors and what they are contributing to the equivalent dollar amount of match if in-kind or actual dollar amount of cash.

*San Juan County anticipates the donors will include both private and public entities who are yet to be determined. San Juan County will either directly or indirectly provide at least fifty percent of the funding to secure the easements and property acquired for this project.*

- iv. Provide construction designs and drawings, if applicable, maps of proposed restoration location(s), and a schedule and or timeline for the completion of major project components. For proposals that require engineering design, prior to construction, final design documents must be submitted with the appropriate professional engineering stamp or certification of design documents. Following construction, as-built survey documents will be required. The submittals shall be provided in electronic \*.pdf format.

*The proposal is prospective and therefore there are no designs or drawings associated with the project at this time. The proposed task list and timeline are presented in Table 1.*

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**Table 1-SJC Access Project Task and Timeline**

Tasks	NRD Fund Request	Match (Requested)	Total Project Costs	Start Date	Completion Date
1 - Project Management	\$10,000		\$10,000		
2 - Project Site Assessment		\$10,000	\$10,000	December 2025	31-May 2029
3 - Project Purchasing	\$ 140,000	\$140,000	\$280,000	Beginning June 2026	31-May 2029
<b>Budget Totals</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>	<b>\$300,000</b>		

v. Describe the operation, maintenance and monitoring (OMM) requirements and the entity(ies) accepting those responsibilities for the duration of the project and a minimum of 10 years thereafter, if applicable. Describe the plans or methods and schedule for how the project will be monitored to evaluate whether it successfully achieves the restoration objectives. Describe the 6 and 12-month warranty inspections which are required following substantial completion of the proposed project. Detail the funding source, cost, and entity responsible for conducting the long-term operation, maintenance and monitoring. This shall include an Annual Report documenting the OMM.

*San Juan County will assume the responsibility during and in perpetuity for preserving and maintaining the properties and easements secured as a part of this project. The SJC Road and Bridge will be responsible for maintenance and monitoring of these sites. The plan is to incorporate the properties and easements into the SJC property inventory and where applicable into the appropriate maintenance schedules.*

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- vi. Permits/Approvals/Certifications: Describe all permits, licenses, approvals, professional engineer's stamps of engineering design, and as-built documents that will be required to complete the project and describe the current status/progress towards obtaining these permits/approvals.

*Not applicable.*

- vii. Project Schedule: Provide a timeline that identifies project phases, milestones, midpoint, and pre-final inspections.

*The project schedule is dependent upon property owner participation. The timeline for acquiring property will be within the time allotted by the granting entity. (See also Table 1).*

- viii. Monthly Invoice and Status Report: Describe which activities in the operational plan will be tracked, how they will be counted, and how they will be reported on the monthly invoice.

*Monthly invoicing is not applicable for the proposed activities submitted for review. San Juan County will provide quarterly status reports and invoices for management and assessment activities. Reporting and acquisition reimbursement will be submitted post-purchase or lease with the required documentation submitted within 90 days after recording of all proper and necessary documents with the San Juan County Clerk's Office.*

- ix. Project Documentation and Deliverables: Provide a list of documentation and deliverables that will be supplied for the proposed project and throughout the duration of the project, including the OMM phase.

*Project Management and Project Site Assessment Documents will be provided upon completion. Project purchasing documentation and deliverables will be presented as recorded access agreements or in the form of a deed after proper recordings with the San Juan County Clerk.*

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### **3.0 Budget Spreadsheet**

*See Table 1.*

### **4.0 Public Communications Strategy**

*Input on environmental preservation, recreation and access was provided during the Silverton Compass Master Plan process in 2022 and during the AHEAD processes. Multiple vision sessions and priority sessions with the community indicated support to fund and carry out these activities. This is an initiative the community has expressed interest in during community processes spanning two decades. NRD support will provide an excellent opportunity to both restore important ecological damages that the community cares about and provide appropriate recreational use the community has prioritized. The Silverton community has long asked for protection, restoration, and appropriate recreational use of the river corridors as demonstrated in the San Juan County Master Plan, the 2006 Animas River Corridor Plan, the 2019 Silverton Area Trails Plan, and the 2022 Silverton Compass Master Plan*

*San Juan County will provide multiple opportunities through public meetings and info sessions for public input and information sharing as the project progresses.*

### **5.0 Relationship to Ranking Criteria**

a. Likelihood of Success: The level of expected return of natural resources and natural resource services. Proposed project restoration goals should be clear and measurable. The proposal should describe the capability of individuals or organizations expected to implement the project, and their ability to correct any problems that arise during the course of the proposed project. The project must also be technically feasible and procedurally sound.

*San Juan County's goal is to preserve riparian areas and provide access to the river corridors for recreational opportunities along the Animas River. This includes purchasing properties and access rights along the corridors. This will have a multi beneficial impact of improving water quality through securing*

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*adjacent properties along the corridors and restoring those which are directly impacted. The effort will allow the corridors to be accessed by recreational users, which will include connecting walking trails and interpretive signs to improve awareness and public recreational opportunities including fishing, wading, kayaking, walking and general access.*

b. Multiple Natural Resource Benefits: The extent to which a proposed project benefits more than one natural resource or natural resource service.

Project Utilizes Multiple Approaches: Considers how many restoration approaches are utilized by the project – i.e. restoration, rehabilitation, replacement, and acquisition.

*The project primarily benefits the watershed community by providing replacement and acquisition of properties and access rights that will be available for current and future citizens and visitors in the region.*

d. Long-term Project Benefits: The expected sustainability and duration of benefits from the proposed project. Long-term benefits are the objective. Proposed projects are expected to provide long-term sustainable benefits.

*Project success will provide permanent protection and preservation of river corridor properties along with permanent recreational access to the public.*

e. Project Alignment with Regional Planning: Proposals should be aligned with existing land and resource management plans such that they can be incorporated into a holistic land and natural resource management plan.

*The project is in alignment with all land and natural resource management plans which overlay the land acquisition areas proposed.*

f. Protection of Implemented Project: Considers the opportunities to protect the implemented project and the resulting benefits over time. Project proposals involving fee title acquisition of property for open space should identify the fee title owner and include a commitment to grant a conservation easement or other mechanism allowing the Trustees to ensure that the acquisition provides continued

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natural resource benefits. If a conservation easement is proposed, the project proponent must identify the easement holder and provide a draft of the conservation easement prior to closing on the easement. Project proposals that afford long-term protection will be given preference.

*To be determined.*

g. Project Benefit versus Expected Cost: Considers the time it takes for benefits to be provided to the target ecosystem or public, versus the expected costs of the project.

*Securing easements and properties adjacent to the river corridors will have immediate public benefits in the form of providing public access and the preservation of riparian areas within the watershed for current and future generations.*

h. Non-NRDs Match:

*SJC is offering a \$150,000 match, which is 50% of the complete project.*

i. Multiple Partners:

*The partners are prospective, and San Juan County can only speculate as to which landowners will participate in either selling their property or providing access by easement in perpetuity.*

j. Monitoring: Considers the ability to monitor and evaluate the success of the project and to correct any problems that arise during the course of the project.

*San Juan County owns and manages approximately two hundred acres of property within its borders has an extensive background in monitoring property and evaluating the efficacy of projects implemented within its jurisdiction. The land secured, either directly or in the form of an easement, will be annotated in the SJC Assets documentation and the SJC staff will monitor and maintain all property.*

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k. Disproportionately Impacted Community: Some communities in Colorado have an increased risk of exposure to human health and environmental harm. Many of these communities are home to people of color and low-income families. Points will be awarded to projects within these communities as identified on CDPHE's online Enviroscreen tool. See <https://cdphe.colorado.gov/enviroscreen>

*San Juan County is not recognized in the Disproportionately Impacted Communities system.*

## Appendices

a. Description of the Offeror's Organization: (Suggested limit: one page)

Describe prior experience with projects of similar scope and complexity. Describe previous experience with regard to each proposed project category or collaboration with organizations that have expertise in those areas. Provide evidence that the Offeror possesses the necessary financial, material, equipment, facility, and personnel resources and expertise or the ability to obtain them. Provide evidence that the organization meets the eligibility requirements of Section II.C.I.

*See Appendix A.*

b. Offeror agencies, organizations, and individuals must meet the following standards of responsibility:

i. Statement of Capability: The Offeror selected must be responsible for project costs, including personnel, fringe benefits, supplies, operating expenses, travel, equipment, and capital items. The Offeror must provide the necessary financial, material, equipment, facility, personnel resources, and expertise to meet all contractual requirements and provide all services requested herein. Offeror must provide evidence that it possesses the necessary resources; or must present acceptable plans to subcontract for them; or must document commitment from, or an explicit arrangement with, a satisfactory source to provide them.

*See Appendix A.*

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ii. Qualifications: The Offeror must present a resume indicating experience with analogous projects and or the capacity to perform the scope of work. The resume shall include the project description and objectives, the contracting entity, the cost of the project, the schedule for implementation, cost overruns and technical difficulties encountered. In addition, the Offeror shall indicate its experience with developing funding sources for matching with the NRD funds.

*See Appendix A.*

d. Application/Assurances: If applicable, provide proof of organizational status. If the Offeror claims non-profit tax-exempt status under section 501 (c)(3) of the IRS code, then the Offeror shall submit proof of status.

*Not applicable.*

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## APPENDICES

Appendix A: SJC Memo Establishing Credentials and Qualifications

Appendix B: Letters of Support (Project is included in the BPMD NRD Local Stakeholders Group)

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## APPENDIX A



# SAN JUAN COUNTY COLORADO

1557 GREENE STREET  
P.O. BOX 466  
SILVERTON, COLORADO 81433  
PHONE 970-387-5766 [admin@sanjuancolorado.us](mailto:admin@sanjuancolorado.us)

May 28, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

San Juan County is local government that has been in existence for nearly 150 years.

The staff is experienced and qualified to manage this project.

William Tookey is the County Administrator and has more than 45 years of local government experience and has been in his current position for 22 years. He has managed and successfully completed numerous projects using state and federal grants.

Anthony Edwards is the County Communications Liaison with direct contact with EPA, BLM, Forest Service, and CDPHE Environmental Remediation Programs. He has been in this position for 7 years. He has successfully completed projects that required the coordination of local, state and federal agencies.

Ladonna Jaramillo has been the County Clerk for 14 years. She previously served as the Deputy County Clerk for 20 years. She has the financial expertise necessary to make sure that all invoices are paid in a timely manner and properly tracked.

San Juan County has the financial abilities to be responsible for project costs.

Most recently completed project:

#### San Juan County Courthouse Restoration

State Historic Fund	\$198,990
DOLA Impact Fund	\$157,868
Underfunded Courthouse Grant 1	\$401,500
Underfunded Courthouse Grant 2	<u>\$ 66,325</u>
Total	\$824,663

#### Anvil Mountain Affordable Housing Apartment Construction

Citizens State Bank	\$1,200,000
DOLA Grant	\$ 315,720
DOH Grant	\$ 304,430
San Juan County	\$ 100,000
Town of Silverton	<u>\$ 100,000</u>
Total	\$2,020,150

These projects demonstrate San Juan County's ability to find multiple funding sources, track the various funding sources, administer the grants and complete the project.

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## APPENDIX B



ACCOUNTABILITY · INTEGRITY · RESPECT

Board of County Commissioners,  
Marsha Porter-Norton, Chair  
Matt Salka, Vice Chair  
Clyde Church, Commissioner

1101 East 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave  
Durango, CO 81301  
(970)382-6219

May 27, 2025

Mark Rudolph  
Bonita Peak Mining District NRD Project Manager  
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment  
Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division  
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South  
Denver, CO 80246-1530

Re: Support for Bonita Peak Mining District Natural Resource Damages Trust Fund Local Workgroup Project  
Proposal

Dear Mr. Rudolph:

On August 5, 2015, approximately three million gallons of acid mine drainage (also referred to as the Gold King Mine spill) was accidentally released into Cement Creek in San Juan County, Colorado, contaminating the Animas, San Juan and Colorado Rivers as it traveled through Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and the Southern Ute, Ute Mountain Ute and Navajo reservations.

The ensuing environmental, economic and cultural impacts on downstream communities, businesses and state, tribal and local governments were significant. The establishment of the Bonita Peak Mining District Natural Resource Damages Trust Fund (NRD Trust Fund) is an important element of the wide-ranging response to the incident and the historic mining activity that has contaminated soil, groundwater and surface water with heavy metals.

The local workgroup that convened to identify and propose projects for NRD Trust Fund dollars has established a list of endeavors that focus on habitat restoration, ecosystem preservation, and community access for recreational use. The work group has reviewed the proposed projects to ensure they comply with the criteria provided, provide long-term benefits to both the environment and the community, and represent a community-supported, watershed-wide effort.

We offer strong support for funding the five projects the workgroup proposes for NRD Trust Fund dollars, as follows:

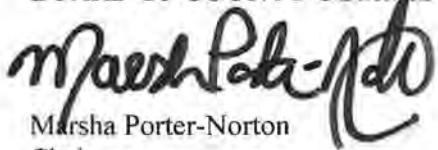
- Upper Animas Stream and Wetland Restoration for Mill, Mineral, Placer and South Mineral creeks
- The Animas River Corridor Project, restoring damaged resources affected by legacy mining and expanding recreational access
- Durango Fish Hatchery Packed Columns Water Treatment Project to rebuild the water treatment system at the Colorado Parks and Wildlife state fish hatchery

- Animas River Bank Stabilization Project to restore up to 3.7 miles of bank restoration and stabilization on the north end of the City of Durango.
- San Juan County & Town of Silverton Animas River Preservation and Access Project to preserve riparian areas and provide access to the river corridors for recreational opportunities.

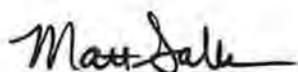
Taken together, these projects address habitat restoration, ecosystem preservation and community recreational in the Upper Animas River watershed, spanning two counties from the headwaters to the southernmost reaches of Southwest Colorado. The collective impact of these projects will serve to improve and restore critical resources affected by historic mining activities, culminating in the Gold King Mine Spill in 2015. We offer our full support for these projects and encourage an award of NRD Trust Fund resources for their completion.

Sincerely,

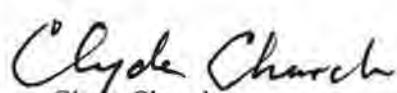
LA PLATA COUNTY  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



Marsha Porter-Norton  
Chair



Matt Salka  
Vice Chair



Clyde Church  
Commissioner



## THE SOUTHWESTERN WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Developing and Conserving the Waters in the  
SAN JUAN AND DOLORES RIVERS AND THEIR TRIBUTARIES  
West Building – 841 East Second Avenue  
DURANGO, COLORADO 81301  
(970) 247-1302

05-08-2025

Mark Rudolph

Bonita Peak Mining District NRD Project Manager  
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment  
Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division  
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South  
[mark.rudolph@state.co.us](mailto:mark.rudolph@state.co.us)

Re: Bonita Peak Mining District NRD Solicitation for Project Proposals – Letter of Support

Dear Mark Rudolph,

I am expressing my strong support for the projects submitted by the local workgroup for funding to support mining reclamation projects in the Animas River Basin in Colorado through the Bonita Peak Mining District Natural Resources Damage Funds (NRD).

At the Southwestern Water Conservation District, I have been participating in their meetings and following their collaborative efforts throughout the region. I am deeply impressed by the NRD workgroup participants' commitment to environmental stewardship and their dedication to support these mining mitigation and reclamation projects.

Established by legislative action in 1941, the Southwestern Water Conservation District (SWCD) was created to protect, conserve, and manage the waters of the San Juan and Dolores River Basins. The collaborative and far-reaching nature of these projects reflects SWCD's ongoing mission to support regional water users and safeguard the water resources of the San Juan River Basin.

We are excited by the opportunities these settlement funds are providing southwestern Colorado, they will provide significant opportunity for the Animas Watershed. Thank you for considering this worthy proposal.

Sincerely,

*Monika Rock*

Monika Rock

Programs Coordinator



**Town of Silverton**

1360 Greene Street  
P.O. Box 250  
Silverton, CO 81433  
Phone: 970-387-5522  
Email: [townadministrator@silverton.co.us](mailto:townadministrator@silverton.co.us)

May 12, 2025

**To the Trustees of the Natural Resources Damages Fund:**

On behalf of the Town of Silverton, I write to express our full support for the suite of regional projects proposed by the **Natural Resources Damages (NRD) Regional Work Group** in response to the legacy mining impacts associated with the Bonita Peak Mining District Superfund Site.

These projects are the product of a broad and sustained collaboration between counties, municipalities, non-profits, landowners, and conservation groups across the region. They reflect years of coordinated planning, relationship-building, and community engagement, with a shared goal of addressing the long-term damages to our watershed and enhancing the Animas River Corridor for ecological, recreational, and public benefit.

As a community at the epicenter of historical mining activity, the Town of Silverton has seen firsthand the impacts to our natural resources and our quality of life. The regional projects advanced by the NRD Work Group not only address critical restoration needs, but also support enhanced access, conservation, and recreation for both residents and visitors. These projects embody the spirit of environmental stewardship, partnership, and local commitment, and we believe they represent highly appropriate and effective uses of NRD funding.

The Town of Silverton supports the regional partnerships behind these efforts and strongly encourages the Trustees to fund the proposed projects. We are grateful for the opportunity to participate in this process and look forward to continued collaboration in restoring and revitalizing our shared watershed.

Sincerely,  
Dayna Kranker  
Mayor  
Town of Silverton, Colorado



Chris Chambers – Southwest Colorado Project Manager  
205 Weston Drive Durango, CO 81301  
[chris.chambers@tu.org](mailto:chris.chambers@tu.org) – (828) 361-7814

April 16, 2025

Mark Rudolph  
BPMD NRD Project Manager  
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Hazardous  
Materials and Waste Management Division  
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South  
Denver, CO 80246-1530

Dear Mr. Rudolph,

I am writing to express Trout Unlimited's (TU) support for the Bonita Peak Mining District Natural Resource Damages Trust Fund stakeholder group's project proposals. The stakeholder's group has met monthly since the Solicitation for Project Proposals was received in March 2024. The meetings have resulted in a community-supported, watershed-wide list of projects intended to address recent and historic hazardous substance releases from the Bonita Peak Mining District. The proposed projects will restore the natural resources injured from the legacy of mining-related impacts in the upper Animas watershed.

As one of the leading cold-water conservation organizations, TU strives to protect, restore, reconnect, and sustain our nation's waterways. Since TU was founded in 1959, on-the-ground restoration of streams, watersheds, and fisheries has been our hallmark. TU has completed over 30 reclamation and restoration projects across Colorado since 2012 that focus on water quality improvement, non-point source contamination reduction, stream restoration, and revegetation of degraded landscapes.

TU respectfully requests the approval of this proposal to amplify this community effort and restore the natural and cultural heritage of Southwest Colorado's Animas River Basin. In addition, it is worth noting that the stakeholder's group has support from national and local non-profits that will help ensure a collaborative approach to projects. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide any additional information.

Best Regards,

*Chris Chambers*

May 14, 2025

Mark Rudolph  
Bonita Peak Mining District NRD Project Manager  
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment  
Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division  
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South  
mark.rudolph@state.co.us

Re: Bonita Peak Mining District NRD Solicitation for Project Proposals  
Letter of Support

Dear Mark Rudolph,

On behalf of the Animas Watershed Partnership (AWP), I am expressing my strong support for the projects submitted by the local workgroup for funding to support mining reclamation projects in the Animas River Basin in Colorado through the Bonita Peak Mining District Natural Resources Damage Funds (NRD).

AWP's mission is *to protect and improve the quality of water resources to benefit the Animas River, now and into the future.* As a participation of the NRD workgroup, AWP is deeply impressed by the NRD workgroup participants' commitment to environmental stewardship and their dedication to support these mining mitigation and reclamation projects.

While we are supportive of all proposed projects, the Animas Valley River Bank Stabilization project is of critical importance to AWP and furthering our mission. This project will reduce the loss of conservation easement-protected agricultural land and wildlife habitat to erosion, improve the ecological health of the Animas River and its water quality, and make this stretch of river more resilient to flood events. These impacts will benefit the general public, not just the landowners whose properties are selected for stabilization work under this proposal. By establishing gentler bank slopes, installing wetland bench buffer zones, installing log and rock structures to direct forces towards the channel center, and restoring impacted areas with native plantings, the proposed project presents a comprehensive solution to the high sediment loads and increased rates of erosion resulting from upstream mining activities.

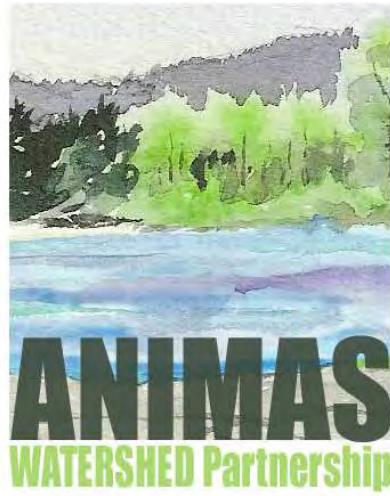
San Juan Resource Conservation and Development Council is the fiscal agent for AWP and is applying on behalf of AWP for this project. The project's improvements to an injured resource, as outlined in their grant application, demonstrate a thorough understanding of the challenges involved and a commitment to implementing effective and sustainable solutions.

These settlement funds provide a significant opportunity for our watershed, as they will support restoration projects for water resources impacted by mining activities. We are excited by the opportunities these settlement funds are providing southwestern Colorado. Thank you for considering this worthy proposal.

Sincerely,



Carrie Padgett  
Animas Watershed Partnership Chair



# Supplemental Memorandum

**To:** San Juan County Natural Resource Damages (NRD) Review Committee

**From:** Anthony D. Edwards on behalf of San Juan County and the Town of Silverton

**Re:** *Animas River Preservation and Access Project*

**Date:** October 31, 2025

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## **Confidentiality and Property Identification**

### **Statement of Need for Confidentiality**

San Juan County respectfully requests that specific parcel identification and transactional details related to this proposal remain confidential during the review and award process. The County is actively engaged in sensitive real estate discussions with private landowners regarding riparian parcels along the Upper Animas River corridor. Premature disclosure of specific parcel information could:

- Jeopardize ongoing negotiations by influencing market pricing,
- Create competing purchase interest from private parties; and
- Undermine the County's ability to secure fair and cost-effective acquisitions on behalf of the public.

The County intends to proceed under standard real estate due diligence protocols applicable to public conservation acquisitions. Once grant funding is confirmed and negotiations reach maturity, the County will fully document and disclose final acquisitions in compliance with all state and federal transparency requirements.

### **Need for Flexibility in Parcel Selection**

The Animas River corridor near Silverton contains a limited number of privately held parcels with riparian, floodplain, or restoration value. Because some of these parcels are actively listed for sale, it is possible that individual properties referenced during proposal development may be sold to third parties prior to grant award.

To ensure the NRD program's objectives are not disrupted by market timing, San Juan County requests administrative flexibility to substitute or adjust parcel selections within the same functional and geographic scope — specifically, riparian properties within the upper Animas River watershed possessing comparable ecological or public benefit potential.

This approach ensures continuity of purpose and efficient application of funds while maintaining the integrity of the project's environmental and public-access goals.

**Project Title:**

San Juan County and Town of Silverton Animas River Preservation and Access Project

**Project Proponent:**

San Juan County, Colorado

**Overview:**

This memorandum provides responses and clarifications to NRD Trustee questions regarding the proposed Animas River Preservation and Access Project. The project involves potential acquisition and restoration of two riparian parcels in the Upper Animas watershed:

1. **Animas River Frontage Property** – 302' of river frontage on both sides of the Animas River near the Town of Silverton, accessible via the D&SNG Railroad crossing.
2. **Arrastra Creek Property** – a historic mining tract approximately two miles north of Silverton, intersected by Arrastra Creek and the Animas River.

Both parcels offer significant ecological and public stewardship potential through managed access, restoration, and preservation of natural habitat and historic features.

**Question 1:**

*Public landownership/easements only increase habitat services if the properties would otherwise be degraded (or if the existing landowner refuses to allow riparian restoration).*

- a. **Can you provide more information specifying how this project will improve habitat services?**

**Response:**

The proposed project target parcels are within the Upper Animas River corridor that exhibit habitat degradation linked to historic mining, bank instability, and unmanaged recreational impacts. Acquisition would enable active restoration and long-term protection of these riparian systems.

- **Animas River Frontage Parcel:** Currently, the property includes cleared floodplain and riparian ground. Planned improvements include native riparian revegetation, streambank stabilization, and erosion control using bioengineering methods such

as willow staking and coir logs. Targeted public access will prevent informal vehicle use and reduce trampling near the riverbank. This property is complementary to and will serve as a component of the Animas River Corridor Project submitted by the Town of Silverton. This parcel is directly tied to the *Animas River Corridor Revitalization Plan (2006)* and the *Silverton Compass Master Plan (2022)*, both of which prioritize riparian restoration, floodplain connectivity, and compatible recreational access. The Animas River Parcel occupies a strategic position along the river where recent conservation purchases by a private conservationists have secured adjacent and overlapping mining claims.

Because these lands adjoin the proposed parcel, this acquisition would extend and unify conservation management on both sides of the river, creating a continuous protected corridor that enhances fish habitat, floodplain stability, and public access. It strengthens the ecological and recreational connectivity envisioned under the *Animas River Corridor Plan* and advances the *Compass Master Plan* goals for protecting and securing the “Environment and Natural Assets.”

This parcel also functions as an anchor for future public use and interpretation within the Animas River Corridor. By linking to adjacent restored properties, it supports multi-benefit NRD objectives—habitat enhancement, community engagement, and protection of high-value riparian resources.

In summary, acquisition of the Animas River Parcel not only preserves a key segment of the river but integrates with the expanding Animas River Corridor system under both public and private stewardship, enhancing connectivity and long-term restoration outcomes across the Silverton valley floor.

- **Arrastra Creek/Animas River Confluence Parcel:** Historically disturbed by mining operations, this property includes both creek and river confluences where legacy mineral leaching persists. The County will coordinate with the EPA monitoring program to align restoration priorities with ongoing water-quality data collection. Over time, this parcel will serve as a demonstration site for ecological rehabilitation, with revegetation, sediment management, and wetland enhancement forming the foundation for improved habitat function.

The Arrastra Parcel plays a complementary but distinct role from the Animas River Parcel. It falls within the *Silverton Area Trails Plan (2019)* and would serve as an extension and enhancement to the *Animas River Corridor Plan*. The property serves as a fishing and non-motorized boating access site that helps distribute recreational

use and minimize impacts to more sensitive restoration zones along the main Animas River.

This parcel connects directly to Trail Plan Project #9 (“Arrastra -Eureka Loop”) and links with the non-motorized network extending north along the Animas. Its design as a low-impact access site supports the *Compass Master Plan* objectives under “Responsible Land Use, Growth, and Development” by concentrating recreation at a managed, sustainable location and avoiding redundant trailheads or uncontrolled access points. Acquisition of the Arrastra Parcel therefore advances multiple coordinated planning documents. It implements the *Silverton Trails Plan (2019)* by formalizing a designated access node. It supports the *Animas Trails Plan* by enhancing corridor connectivity and improving safety for anglers and paddlers.

It complements NRD-funded restoration elsewhere by channeling use to an appropriate site, protecting sensitive habitats in downstream and upstream reaches.

This parcel also contributes to the larger vision of the *Silverton Trails Plan* by extending the Animas River Corridor northward while safeguarding riparian habitat integrity. It serves as a key component of both the Silverton Trails Plan and the Animas Trails system, representing a critical link between restoration, recreation, and long-term watershed stewardship.

Together, the Animas River Parcel and Arrastra Parcel align directly with the *Natural Resource Damages Program* criteria by producing tangible, lasting benefits across restoration, recreation, and community engagement. Each property fulfills a specific role within San Juan County’s adopted plans:

- The Animas River Parcel consolidates restoration and conservation along the primary river corridor.
- The Arrastra Parcel extends managed access and trail connectivity which is a goal set forth in the *2019 Silverton Trails Plan*.

Both advance the shared vision of the *Compass Master Plan (2022)* and the *Animas River Corridor Plan (2006)*—integrating habitat restoration with equitable public access and resilient watershed management.

**b. Does the County plan to implement riparian restoration projects on acquired parcels?**

**Response:**

Yes. San Juan County intends to coordinate riparian restoration projects on both parcels through a phased ecological improvement strategy:

- **Phase I – Assessment:** Baseline ecological mapping, including vegetation inventory and hydrologic assessment in coordination with EPA data at the Arrastra site and floodplain delineations for the Town-side parcel.
- **Phase II – Stabilization and Revegetation:** Application of natural bank stabilization, soil stabilization, and planting of native sedge, willow, and alder species to restore riparian function.
- **Phase III – Monitoring and Maintenance:** Long-term monitoring of vegetation survival and bank stability through County staff and volunteers coordinated via the San Juan County Planning Department.

These steps will ensure that the newly acquired lands contribute directly to the County's watershed resilience and long-term ecological recovery objectives.

**c. Does the County plan to create new access sites?**

**Response:**

No. The project manages and secures limited and managed access points where consistent with habitat protection and safety restrictions.

- **Animas River Parcel:** The County plans to secure a low-impact, day-use access site with interpretive signage and portable infrastructure. Any improvements will be removable or seasonal in nature (e.g., picnic areas, walkways, temporary kiosks). Access will emphasize education about riparian ecosystems, floodplain management, and the importance of nonpermanent, sustainable recreation design.
- **Arrastra Creek Parcel:** Access improvements will serve **research, monitoring, and restoration personnel**. Occasional guided public tours or educational field visits may be scheduled to highlight the property's mining history, ecological recovery process, and water-quality monitoring role. In addition, a limited area in the site will serve as an access point to the Animas for both fishing and whitewater activities.

This controlled access framework balances public engagement with the project's ecological and safety objectives.

**Question 2:**

*Can you provide an estimate of how much private land along the river is available for purchase?*

**Response:**

Preliminary review of San Juan County Assessor's GIS and Town of Silverton Planning maps identifies approximately 12 to 15 privately owned parcels adjacent to the Animas River between Howardville and Silverton. These parcels vary in size and accessibility. Of these, an estimated four to six parcels (approximately 20–25 acres) are suitable for conservation acquisition due to riparian adjacency, owner willingness, and environmental significance.

The two parcels currently being evaluated—the Animas River Frontage Property and the Arrastra Creek Property—represent the highest-value opportunities for immediate conservation investment because they combine ecological, educational, and historical restoration potential.

**Question 3:**

*Have you applied for or secured any additional matching funds that are not discussed in the proposal?*

**Response:**

No. However, San Juan County is actively coordinating and planning to pursue complementary funding sources to extend the impact of NRD resources. These include:

- **Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) Watershed Restoration Grant**  
**Program:** Application through complimentary project proposed underway to support riparian planting and streambank stabilization.
- **Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) Planning Grant:** Intended for development of interpretive and public access planning for the Animas River parcel.
- **EPA Region 8 Coordination:** Integration with the June 2024 Arrastra Creek water-monitoring initiative to align restoration measures with active federal research.
- **Local Contributions:** In-kind participation and logistical support from the Town of Silverton, San Juan County Planning Department, and local volunteer organizations for site preparation and monitoring.

Collectively, these prospective sources in conjunction with Town of Silverton and San Juan County commitments ensure fiscal leverage and program continuity beyond the NRD funding cycle.

## **Summary Statement**

In summary, both the Animas River Parcel and the Arrastra Creek Parcel directly advance the Natural Resource Damages (NRD) Trustee criteria by providing measurable, long-term ecological and public benefits within the Animas watershed. Each project aligns with the Trustees' objectives to restore, replace, and enhance injured natural resources and the services they provide.

The Animas River Parcel consolidates habitat restoration and riparian stabilization within a reach already prioritized for investment under the *Animas River Corridor Plan* and subsequent community planning efforts. Its adjacent to conserved properties creates durable ecological connectivity and supports sustainable public access consistent with NRD restoration goals.

The Arrastra Creek Parcel, while distinct in purpose, complements these outcomes by providing managed access for fishing and non-motorized boating, thereby protecting sensitive downstream restoration zones. Its integration within the *Silverton Trails Plan* and *Compass Master Plan* ensures that recreation, education, and stewardship objectives are balanced with habitat protection.

Together, these acquisitions represent a coordinated, watershed-scale approach that meets or exceeds NRD criteria for:

- Ecological Restoration and Habitat Enhancement – improving riparian health, aquatic connectivity, and watershed resilience,
- Public Benefit and Access – expanding equitable, managed recreation opportunities consistent with community plans; and
- Long-Term Stewardship and Sustainability – ensuring that restoration investments remain protected through compatible land ownership and management commitments.

By integrating restoration, recreation, and resource protection within the same planning framework, these projects embody the Trustees' intent to achieve enduring, multi-benefit outcomes for the Animas River system and the communities it supports.

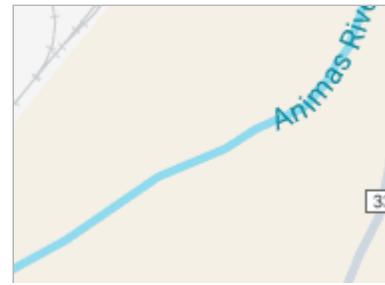
## PROPERTY ESSENTIALS



View of property

**MLS #** 827512  
**Status** Active  
**Asking Price** \$135,000  
**Address** Idaho CR 33  
**City** Silverton  
**County** San Juan  
**State** CO  
**Zip** 81433  
**Area** Silverton

**Class** LAND  
**Type** Mining Claim  
**Apx.Total Acres** 6.030  
**Price/Acre** \$22,388.06



## LISTING DETAILS

**Listing Agent 1** Steve Leisle - C: 970-749-0814  
**Listing Office 1** Silverton Realty, Inc. - O: 970-387-8808  
**Listing Agent License 1** ER40021612  
**Listing Office License 1** EC40037238  
**Board Name** Durango Area Assn of Realtors  
**Seller Licensed Y/N** No  
**Listing Agreement** Exclusive Right to Sell  
**Agency Relationship** Transaction Broker  
**Owner Name** Knox/Posta  
**Limited Service Y/N** No  
**Listing Date** 8/10/2025  
**Update Date** 8/13/2025  
**HotSheet Date** 8/13/2025  
**Price Date** 8/10/2025  
**Showing Service** ShowingTime  
**Update Date** 8/13/2025 1:38 AM

**Listing Agent 2** Anne-Britt Ostlund - C: 970-759-4886  
**Listing Office 2** Mountain Rose Realty LLC - O: 970-729-8005  
**Listing Agent License 2** ER40037299  
**Listing Office License 2** EC100040552  
**Original Price** \$135,000  
**REO/Lender Owned** No  
**Possible Short Sale** No  
**EM Deposit \$** 6000  
**EM Holder** Title Co  
**Preferred Title Comp.** Colorado Title & Closing Services, LLC  
**Possession** At Closing  
**Exchange/Trade Y/N** No  
**Listed in other Class Y/N** No  
**Sale/Rent** For Sale  
**Assoc. Doc. Count** 1  
**Picture Count** 12  
**Days On Market** 72  
**Cumulative DOM** 72  
**Listing Visibility Type** MLS Listing  
**Input Date** 8/10/2025 8:57 PM  
**Floor Plans Count** 0

## PROPERTY DETAILS

**Subdv Name** None  
**Legal/Lot Block** Idaho-2514  
**Lot Dimension** Irregular  
**Acres Source** Assessor  
**Price/Sqft** \$0.51

**Water Front** Yes  
**Modular/Mobile Allow** No  
**Income Producing** No  
**Elevation** 9318'  
**Horse Setup** No  
**Elem. School** Silverton K-5  
**Middle School** Silverton 6-8  
**High School** Silverton 9-12

## UTILITIES/RIGHTS

<b>Water Supplier</b>	None	<b>Sewer Tap Avail</b>	No
<b>Water Tap Avail</b>	No	<b>Sewer/Septic In</b>	No
<b>Water Tap Installed</b>	No	<b>Sewer Paid</b>	No
<b>Water Tap Paid</b>	No	<b>Sewer Supplier</b>	None
<b>Water Well</b>	No	<b>Gas Supplier</b>	Silverton LP Gas
<b>Mineral Rights</b>	Yes	<b>Electric Supplier</b>	None
<b>Water Rights/Irrig.</b>	No		

## PARCEL/TAX/HOA

<b>Parcel ID #</b>	48290000010028	<b>HOA Y/N</b>	No
<b>Realist ID</b>	48290000010028.000000	<b>Covenants Y/N</b>	NO
<b>Tax Year</b>	2024	<b>FIPS Code</b>	08111
<b>Total Taxes \$</b>	1,102		
<b>Special Assemnt Y/N</b>	No		

## MARKETING INFO

**Sign on Property Y/N** Yes

## FEATURES

<b>CURRENT PROPERTY USE</b> Other-see remarks Mountain Recreation	<b>LIVESTOCK ALLOWED</b> Horses	<b>WATERFRONT</b> River/Stream	<b>SHOWING INSTRUCTIONS</b> Call Listing Office
<b>LOT SIZE/ACREAGE</b>	<b>STREET DESCRIPTION/ACCESS</b> County	<b>VIEWS</b> Mountains	<b>TERMS</b> Cash

## FEATURES

5-10 Acres	City/Town	Valley	Conventional
<b>PROPERTY DESCRIPTION</b> Boundaries Surveyed	<b>TOPOGRAPHY</b> Level Sloped	Stream/River	<b>AVAILABLE FOR AUCTION</b> No

## DIRECTIONS

Directions 10th St, cross the rail road tracks and turn right, drive a few minutes. Property on left between the 2 signs.

## PROPERTY DESCRIPTION/REMARKS

**Prop. Description/Remarks** Animas River Frontage! 302' on both sides of the river just across the D&SNG Railroad tracks. This is a unique opportunity for creative minded buyers with the passion, perseverance patience to do something special. Buyers will need time and money to go through San Juan County Planning department with permitting required for any commercial or long term use. Camping is allowed for up to 20 days per year with no permitting. There are a couple acres of flat cleared land on the town side of the river. It's all in an Avalanche Path, no permanent structures would be allowed. Glamping or Campground a could be a possible use. On the south side of the River access is a seasonal historic 4 wheel drive road. Potential for a few campsites.

## ADDITIONAL PICTURES



East on town side of river



North



RV Area



View across corner



Animas River on property



East from Campsite



North from Campsite



Town



Camping



Private Road



County GIS

## DISCLAIMER

This information is deemed reliable, but not guaranteed.

## PROPERTY ESSENTIALS



**MLS #** 819813  
**Status** Active  
**Asking Price** \$254,900  
**Address** TBD CR 2 Animas River and Arrastra Creek  
**City** Silverton  
**County** San Juan  
**State** CO  
**Zip** 81433  
**Area** Silverton

**Class** LAND  
**Type** Mining Claim  
**Apx.Total Acres** 9.170  
**Price/Acre** \$27,797.16



## LISTING DETAILS

<b>Listing Agent 1</b>	Karen Srebacic-Sites - C: 970-903-1961	<b>Original Price</b>	\$254,900
<b>Listing Office 1</b>	Karen Srebacic-Sites, Independent Broker - O: 970-903-1961	<b>REO/Lender Owned</b>	No
<b>Listing Agent License 1</b>	II100075327	<b>Possible Short Sale</b>	No
<b>Listing Office License 1</b>	II100075327	<b>EM Deposit \$</b>	10,000
<b>Board Name</b>	Durango Area Assn of Realtors	<b>EM Holder</b>	Title Company
<b>Seller Licensed Y/N</b>	No	<b>Preferred Title Comp.</b>	Colorado Title & Closing Services, LLC
<b>Listing Agreement</b>	Exclusive Right to Sell	<b>Exchange/Trade Y/N</b>	No
<b>Agency Relationship</b>	Transaction Broker	<b>Listed in other Class Y/N</b>	No
<b>Owner Name</b>	Watts Rev Trust	<b>Sale/Rent</b>	For Sale
<b>Limited Service Y/N</b>	No	<b>Assoc. Doc. Count</b>	0
<b>Listing Date</b>	12/7/2024	<b>Picture Count</b>	12
<b>Expiration Date</b>	12/6/2025	<b>Days On Market</b>	318
<b>Input Date</b>	12/8/2024 10:58 AM	<b>Cumulative DOM</b>	829
<b>Update Date</b>	12/11/2024	<b>Listing Visibility Type</b>	MLS Listing
<b>Status Date</b>	12/11/2024	<b>Input Date</b>	12/8/2024 10:58 AM
<b>HotSheet Date</b>	12/11/2024	<b>Floor Plans Count</b>	0
<b>Price Date</b>	12/8/2024		
<b>Showing Service</b>	ShowingTime		
<b>Update Date</b>	12/11/2024 12:38 AM		

## PROPERTY DETAILS

<b>Subdv Name</b>	None	<b>Water Front</b>	No
<b>Legal/Lot Block</b>	Lowville MS5529 Maxwell MS 5530	<b>Modular/Mobile Allow</b>	No
<b>Price/Sqft</b>	\$0.64	<b>Income Producing</b>	No
		<b>Horse Setup</b>	No
		<b>Elem. School</b>	Silverton K-5
		<b>Middle School</b>	Silverton 6-8
		<b>High School</b>	Silverton 9-12

## UTILITIES/RIGHTS

<b>Water Supplier</b>	Other	<b>Sewer Tap Avail</b>	No
<b>Water Tap Avail</b>	No	<b>Sewer/Septic In</b>	No
<b>Water Tap Installed</b>	No	<b>Sewer Paid</b>	No
<b>Water Tap Paid</b>	No	<b>Sewer Supplier</b>	Other
<b>Water Well</b>	No	<b>Gas Supplier</b>	Silverton LP Gas
<b>Mineral Rights</b>	Yes	<b>Electric Supplier</b>	San Miguel Power Association
<b>Water Rights/Irrig.</b>	No		

## PARCEL/TAX/HOA

<b>Parcel ID #</b>	48290100010048	<b>HOA Y/N</b>	No
<b>Realist ID</b>	48290100010048.000000	<b>Covenants Y/N</b>	NO
<b>Tax Year</b>	2020	<b>FIPS Code</b>	08111
<b>Total Taxes \$</b>	756.00		
<b>Special Assemnt Y/N</b>	No		

## MARKETING INFO

<b>IDX Include</b>	Y	<b>Client Hit Count</b>	2
<b>Syndicate to Internet</b>	Yes	<b>Agent Hit Count</b>	57
<b>Public MLS Sites Y/N</b>	Yes	<b>VOW Include</b>	Yes
		<b>VOW Address</b>	Yes
		<b>VOW Comment</b>	Yes
		<b>VOW AVM</b>	Yes

## FEATURES

### CURRENT PROPERTY USE

Mountain Recreation

### POSSIBLE PROPERTY USE

Residential Single Family  
Mountain Recreation

### WATERFRONT

River/Stream

### VIEWS

Mountains

## DIRECTIONS

**Directions** Take Greene St to CR 2. Follow CR 2 until the pavement becomes gravel, take the right downhill turn. Grab the property outline. Sign on property shortly.

## PROPERTY DESCRIPTION/REMARKS

**Prop. Description/Remarks** Own a part of Silverton's mining history! This breathtaking San Juan County land is located just under two miles from town limits. Arrastra Creek and Animas River cross the property, offering a potential water source. There are plenty of options for building sites nestled within the trees and across the entire land. However, access is not easy or straightforward. The property features a huge tram tower, adding to its uniqueness. Please note that June 2024, the EPA will use this land as a test site for monitoring water and possible leaching minerals.

## CONFIRMED SHOW INSTRUCTIONS

**Confirmed Show Instructions** Call LB.

## ADDITIONAL PICTURES



## DISCLAIMER

This information is deemed reliable, but not guaranteed.