

# MOUNTAIN

# Guide

**FREE**

SERVING BUENA VISTA, LEADVILLE, SALIDA  
FAIRPLAY, PONCHA SPRINGS, COTOPAXI, HOWARD  
NATHROP, CRESTONE, SAGUACHE, MOFFAT

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

LIFESTYLE | CLASSIFIEDS | EVENTS

SALIDA, COLORADO — WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 18, 2021 • VOLUME 40, NUMBER 11

# Record-breaking year

## Memorial Day visitor use survey results are in

by Douglas P. Marsh  
Times reporter

The results of the Friends of Fourmile's 13th annual Memorial Day weekend visitor use survey are in. The report shows that camping and recreational usage were record-breaking this year.

"Almost all key parameters of use showed significant increases over 2020 and continue the upward trends observed since 2009," the report said.

2020 was itself a record-setting year across five of seven different metrics, while 2021 broke records across all metrics save mountain bikers, which were observed in greater numbers in 2020.

Campsites in the area have been observed and measured since 2009, and their numbers have grown gradually.

Motorized vehicles and recreational camping vehicles and trailers, on the other hand, have rapidly increased in presence over the holiday.

"Total number of street vehicles increased 26 percent, overnight campers up 30 percent and combined ATVs and UTVs up a remarkable 86 percent," the report stated.

Friends of Fourmile volunteer Alan Robinson was the survey manager. During a driving tour of the northernmost part of the recreation area, he talked through some

of the results and their implications.

"This whole area has been managed largely because of a travel management plan that the citizens helped to create back in 2003," he said.

"The Forest Service and the (Bureau of Land Management) called us together as citizens to help them decide on how to manage this area," he said, describing oversight of the 100,000-acre Forest Service/BLM expanse.

Robinson said he thinks increased ATV and UTV usage are taking an extra-heavy toll on the roads as he drove a particularly dimpled section of CR 375 south of Turtle Rock primitive campground.

"The UTVs, the big wide ones, are going faster, they're stronger, they've got these really rugged tires — they're really powerful. They are having a direct impact on road issues," he said.

Chaffee County Road and Bridge Superintendent Mark Stacy confirmed this observation.

"CR 375 is a minimal maintenance road. Due to the large amount of ATV (and) UTV use on this road it becomes very difficult to keep in proper repair," he said via email.

Stacy did not immediately respond when asked when last and how often this stretch of road was main-



Photo by Douglas P. Marsh

Friends of Fourmile volunteer Alan Robinson stands at a buck-and-rail fence near a cutout made for walk-in camping and off-trail hiking.

tained by the county.

Robinson most often pointed out places where vehicles and trailers had created large, barren patches.

He said he has watched such sites expand over the years and stray farther and farther from designated road-

ways. Campers also create their own roadways, called spur roads.

He and other volunteers have been working to contain vehicle traffic off the designated roadways and trails with buck-and-rail fencing. Many of these fences have

gaps cut in for people to walk through and pitch dispersed campsites if so desired.

At Turtle Rock he described the emergence of a designated campsite, which is still in development.

"So here's the BLM's camp- See DESIGNATED, back page

**We've Moved!**  
**1101 Poplar, Leadville**



Open Daily 9am-9pm  
719.293.2221

**\$10**  
Grams  
*Select*  
CONCENTRATES

**\$10**  
100mg  
EDIBLES

**\$59**  
Ounces  
VARIETY  
of STRAINS



FloydsFineCannabis.com

While supplies last. Tax not included. Keep marijuana out of the reach of children. Do not operate a vehicle or machine under the influence of marijuana.

