

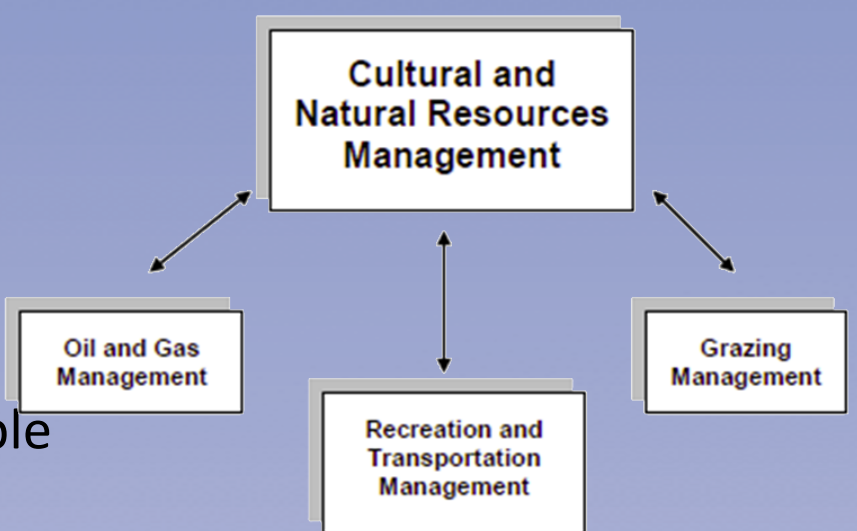
# Improving Transportation Serving Ancient Pueblo Archaeological National Monuments in Southwest Colorado

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Unit: Chimney Rock National Monument/  
Canyon of the Ancients National Monument

**What is the Transportation Scholars Program?**  
The Public Lands and National Park Foundations' Transportation Scholars programs provide parks and public lands with transportation professionals for six to 12 months who assist in transportation planning and implementation to help parks and public lands reduce traffic, congestion and pollution while improving visitor experiences. These programs are designed to place individuals with substantial knowledge and expertise in transportation planning and related areas. *See footer for a list of sponsors.*

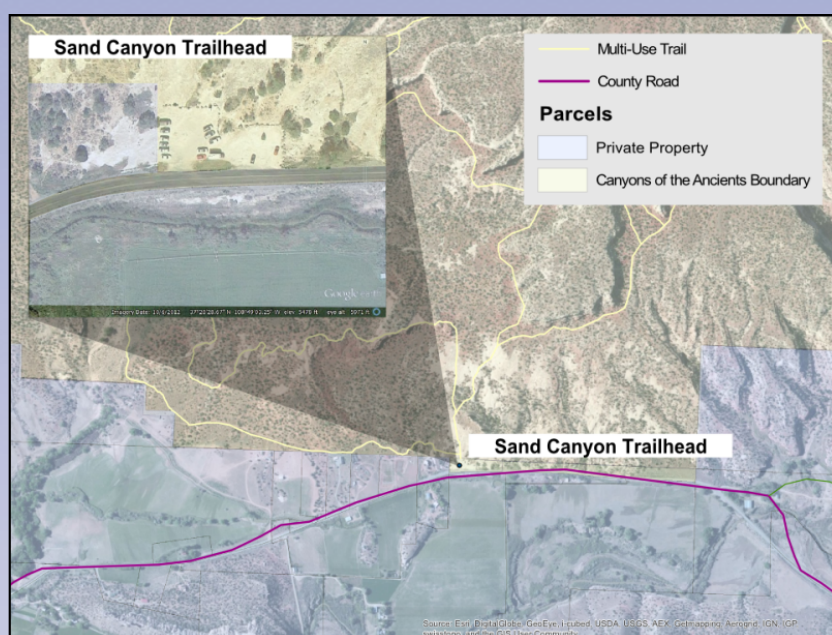
## Canyon of the Ancients National Monument

- Established to protect nationally and internationally significant cultural and natural resources on a landscape scale
- Encompassing area 275 square miles
- Highest known density of archaeological sites in the United States dating from Ancient Pueblo people
- To protect resources, transportation has been used to direct visitation to certain locations



## Sand Canyon Parking

- Rough undeveloped sandstone parking area located on ancient battleground needs to be improved or relocated
- One of few convenient public access points for monument
- Overflow parking during spring and fall season presents a safety hazard



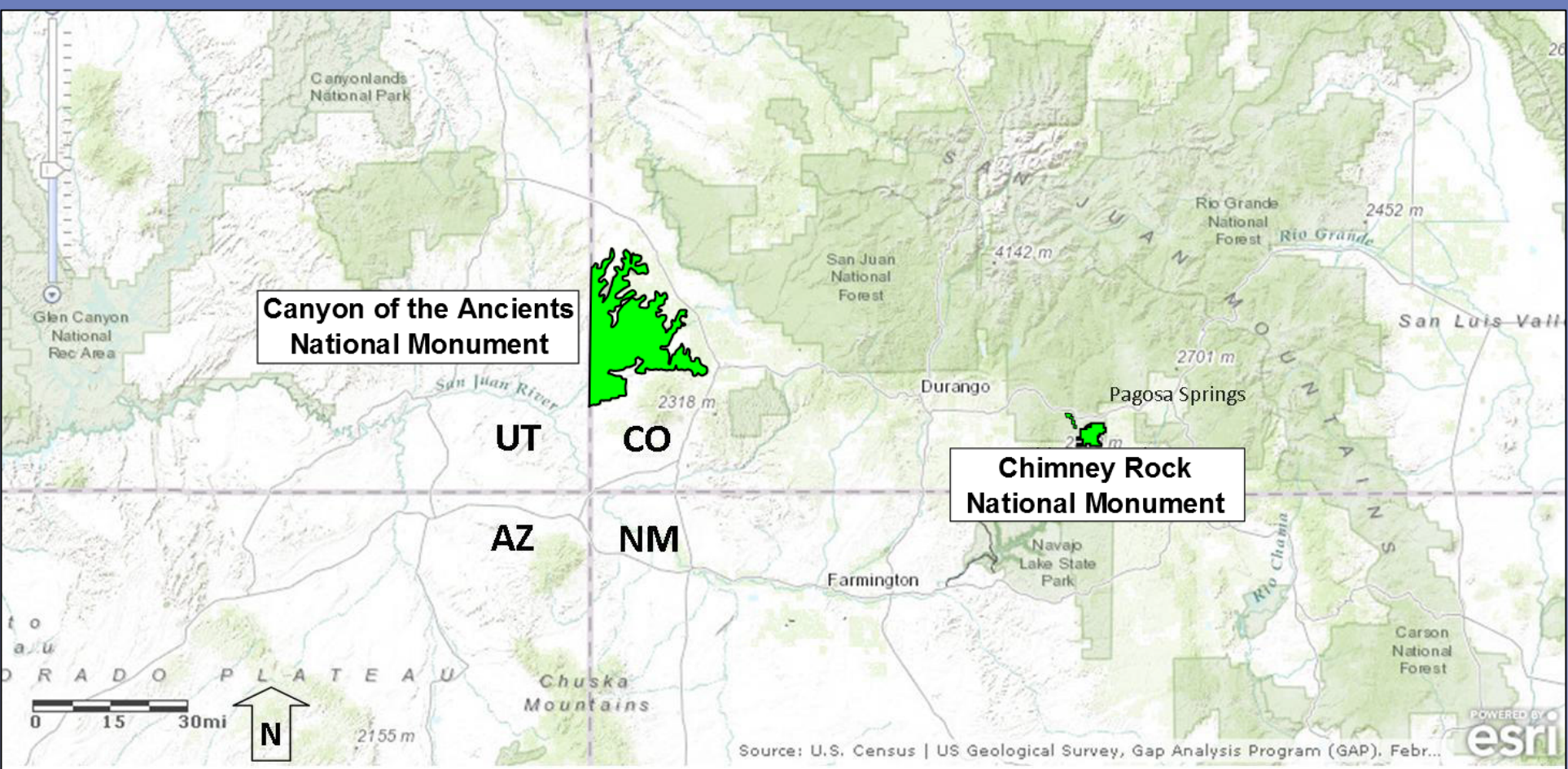
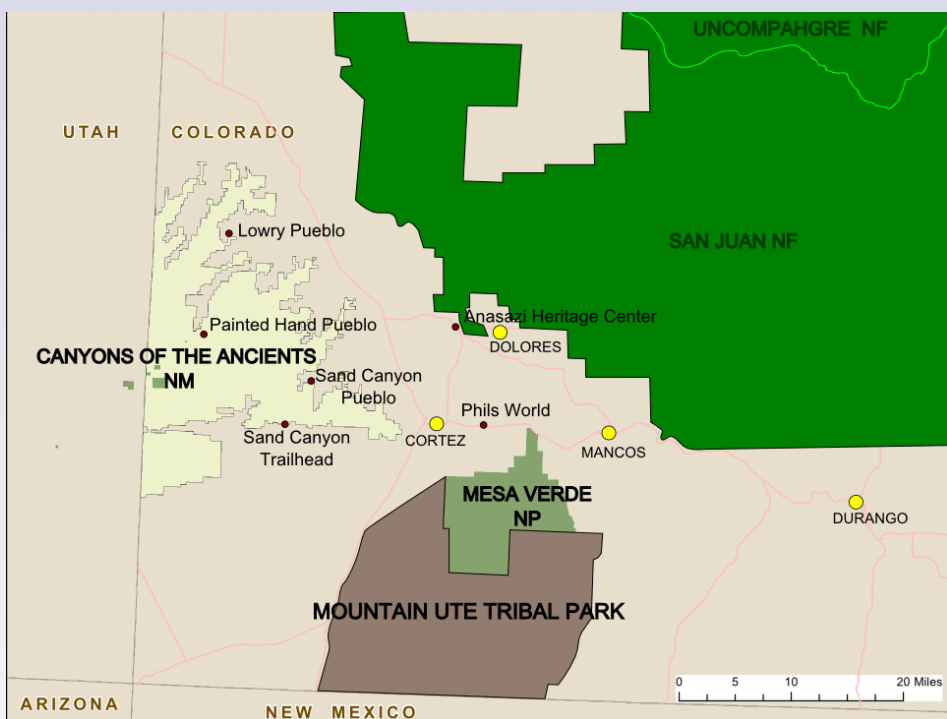
Parcel Map – Sand Canyon



Overflow Parking Sand Canyon

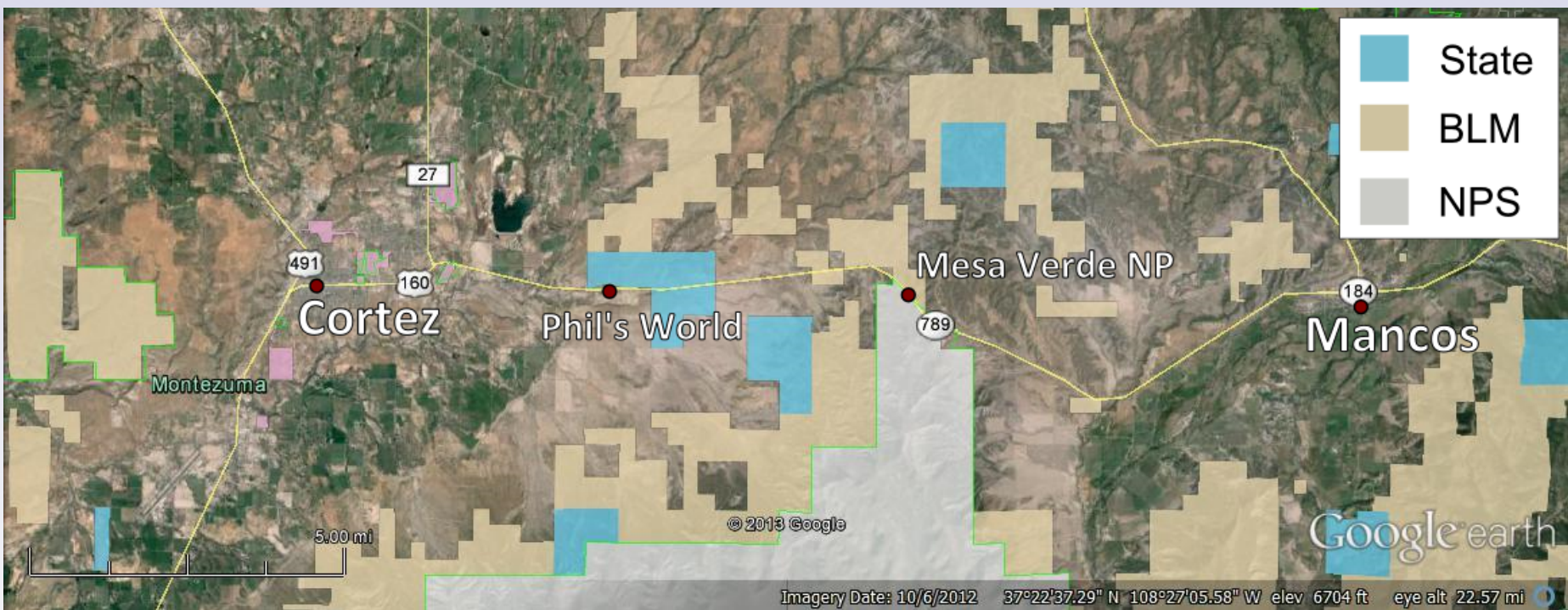
## Transit Feasibility

- Multitude of recreation destinations in SW Colorado
- Large distances make scheduled transit service cost prohibitive
- Possibly an opportunity to offer regional tour
- Good estimate of tour demand and cost of service necessary



## Multi-Use Trail/Path

- Desire to connect cities of Cortez and Mancos with 18 mile long multi-use trail or path
- Route would likely travel on a combination of private, Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), State of Colorado, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and/or National Park Service (NPS) land
- Phil's World on BLM and state land is 3 miles from Cortez and a popular destination with 29 miles of single track mountain bike/hiking trails
- Mesa Verde National Park is the most visited destination in the region with ~480,000 annual visitors
- Linking communities and destinations would provide a safer non-motorized transportation option



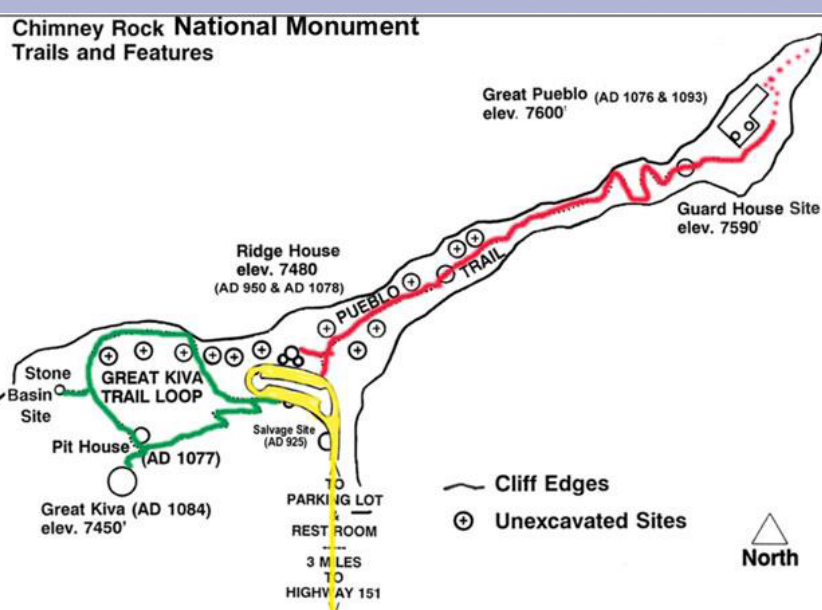
## Chimney Rock National Monument

- Located in southwest Colorado encompassing 7 mi<sup>2</sup>
- Contains archaeological ruins from Ancient Pueblo people (900-1150 AD)
- Area of cultural, spiritual, archaeoastronomical, historic, and scientific importance
- \$12 fee per person for tour led by Chimney Rock Interpretive Association (CRIA)



Native American Cultural Event - Chimney Rock

## Background



- 26 parking spaces at the summit access two trails where tours are offered
- Parking spaces at summit consistently fill up and visitors have no option but to park along side of road sometimes on top of archaeological sites
- To maintain access, Forest Service is looking into a shuttle system and improving facilities along the road

## Road Surface

- 3.0 miles of aggregate surface
- Prone to washboarding and shoving of aggregate material requiring biannual maintenance
- Traffic volume to summit will not warrant a paved surface from design standpoint but there may be other reasons for paving road surface (dust abatement, visitor experience, reduced maintenance, etc.)
- Recommended paving 0.5 miles to Visitor Center and leaving remaining 2.5 miles as aggregate surface due to cost, safety, and to differentiate between tour and non-tour areas for public



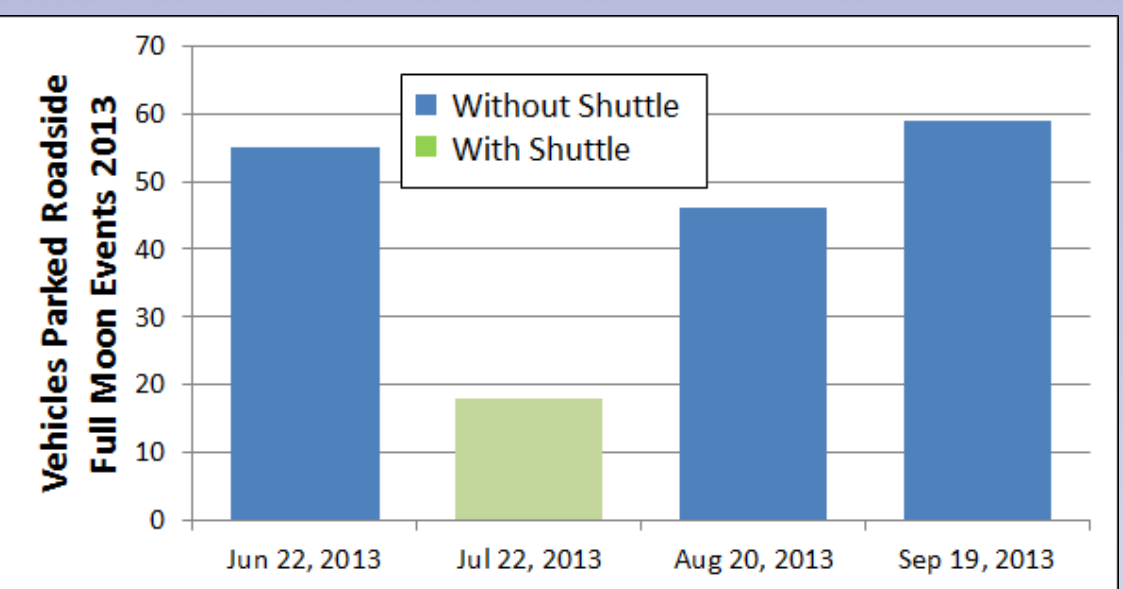
Road Surface - Chimney Rock

## Shuttle Evaluation/Pilot

- Shuttles piloted for two special events
  - Native American Cultural Gathering (July 20-21, 2013)
  - Full Moon (July 22, 2013)
- Lessons Learned from Pilot
  - Determined required vehicle equipment in advance (4WD, running board, intercom speaker, etc.)
  - Piloting system fostered buy-in from participating partners
  - Special event operations present unique challenges
  - Regular operations still need to be demonstrated to foster buy-in
- Effective in reducing the number of vehicles traveling to summit
- Reduced overflow parking along the side of road at summit



Visitors waiting for Shuttle Van Chimney Rock



Roadside Parking at Summit Chimney Rock

## Shuttle System Planning

- Three 12 passenger vans to be purchased using Transit in Parks grant
- Chimney Rock Interpretive Association (CRIA)
  - volunteers will operate shuttles
  - fund operating costs using existing tour donation
  - \$10,000 annual operating costs
- Details and agreement with CRIA for operations of shuttle is currently facing challenges
- May need to run pilot in 2014 with vans for greater buy-in from partners