SOUTH PARK

PARIS MILL

HERITAGE TOURISM SITE PLANNING


BUFFALO PEAKS RANCH


COMO ROUNDHOUSE


PARIS MILL


SALT WORKS RANCH


SANTA MARIA RANCH



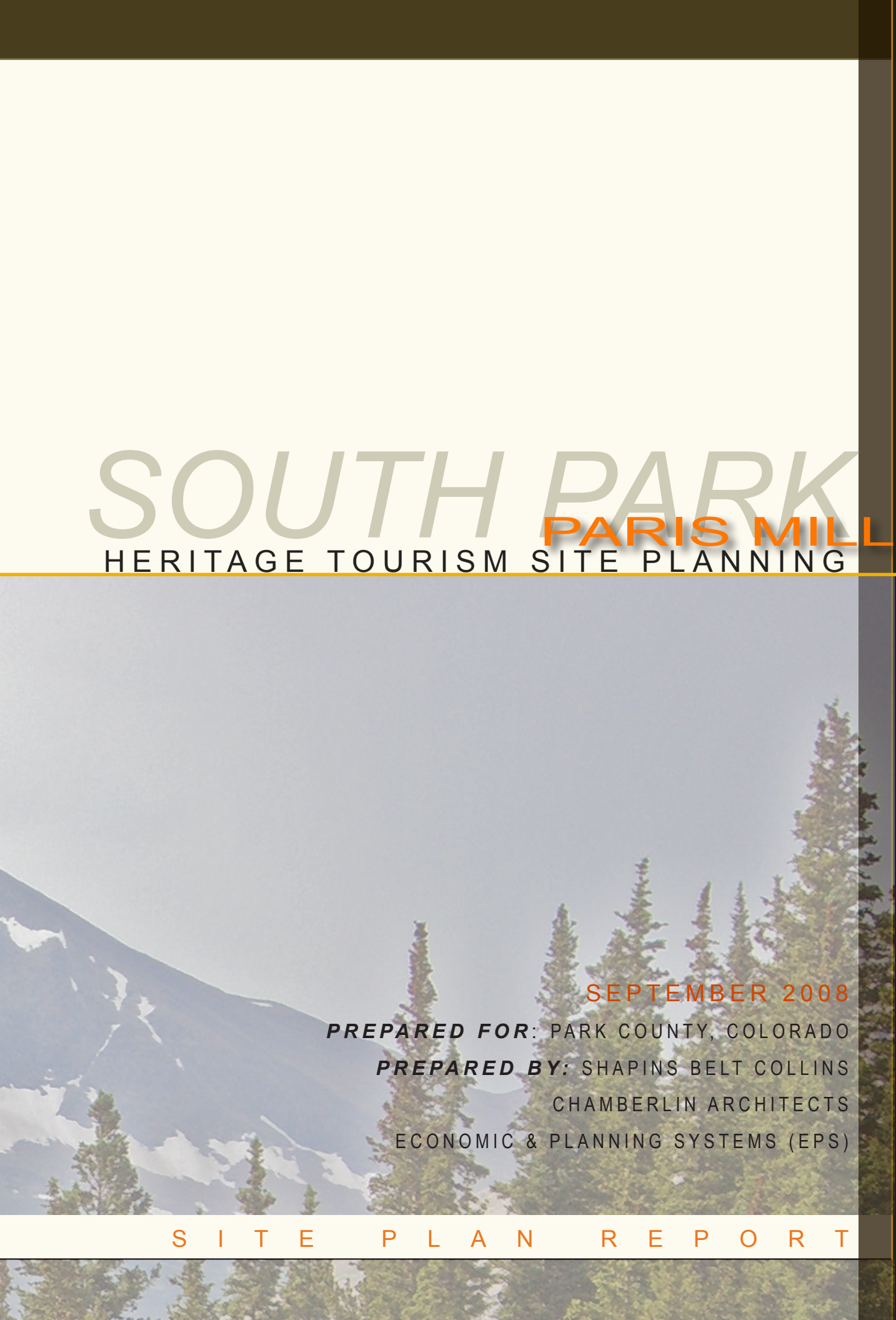
SITE PLAN REPORT

This project was made possible with funding from the Preserve America Grant Program, Colorado Historical Society' State Historical Fund, Colorado Tourism Office, and the Colorado Department of Local Affairs. This material is based upon work assisted by a grant from the Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of the Interior.

COVER PHOTO BY GARY NICHOLS



SOUTH PARK
PARIS MILL
HERITAGE TOURISM SITE PLANNING



SEPTEMBER 2008

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CHAMBERLIN ARCHITECTS

ECONOMIC & PLANNING SYSTEMS (EPS)

S I T E P L A N R E P O R T

HERITAGE RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT IN PARK COUNTY, COLORADO

Since 1994, Park County, Colorado and its partners have been laying the groundwork for a new, sustainable economy by protecting, restoring, interpreting and promoting its most valuable heritage sites and properties. The South Park Heritage Site Planning Project builds on these efforts by analyzing and proposing community and business development programs for five key heritage sites in South Park. These five sites include the Buffalo Peaks Ranch, Como Roundhouse, Paris Mill, Santa Maria Ranch and Salt Works Ranch. All five sites are rich in history and resources and lend themselves to adaptive reuse to accommodate heritage tourism and new business opportunities. This report summarizes the site plan and heritage development proposal for the Paris Mill.

Situated high in the mountains ringing South Park, the Paris Mill is a striking landmark that warrants both interpretation and preservation. The analysis and site plan for the Paris Mill focused on approaches for remediating the site and structure so that they are safe for public use, stabilizing the Mill, and developing interpretive facilities and visitor amenities. The analysis centered on the Mill and its immediate surroundings, although potential uses for the adjoining land such as a campground were considered as viable future uses. The Paris Mill site plan is intended to guide the future development and design of the property. Over time, the Paris Mill and the other four historic sites featured in this project will serve Park County as tourism generators that will attract heritage travelers to South Park.

PLANNING CONTEXT

Park County has been designated as a Preserve America Community by the White House for 1) protecting and celebrating their local heritage, 2) using their historic assets for economic development, and 3) encouraging people to experience local historic resources through education and heritage tourism.

On July 25, 2007 Colorado's U.S. Senators Ken Salazar and Wayne Allard announced that the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources passed S. 444 to create the South Park National Heritage Area. Once the bill is signed into law, Park County will be eligible for $10 million in federal funding to help preserve, promote and utilize its unique heritage resources for community development purposes. The Park County Board of County Commissioners unequivocally supports legislation to create the South Park National Heritage Area. Established in 1994, the Park County Heritage Program has become one of the most successful heritage programs in the Rocky Mountain region, with more than one hundred active partners and $17 million in project accomplishments. According to the late Commissioner, Louis "Doc" McKay, "We are extremely pleased that our bipartisan National Heritage Area bill is moving forward in the Senate."

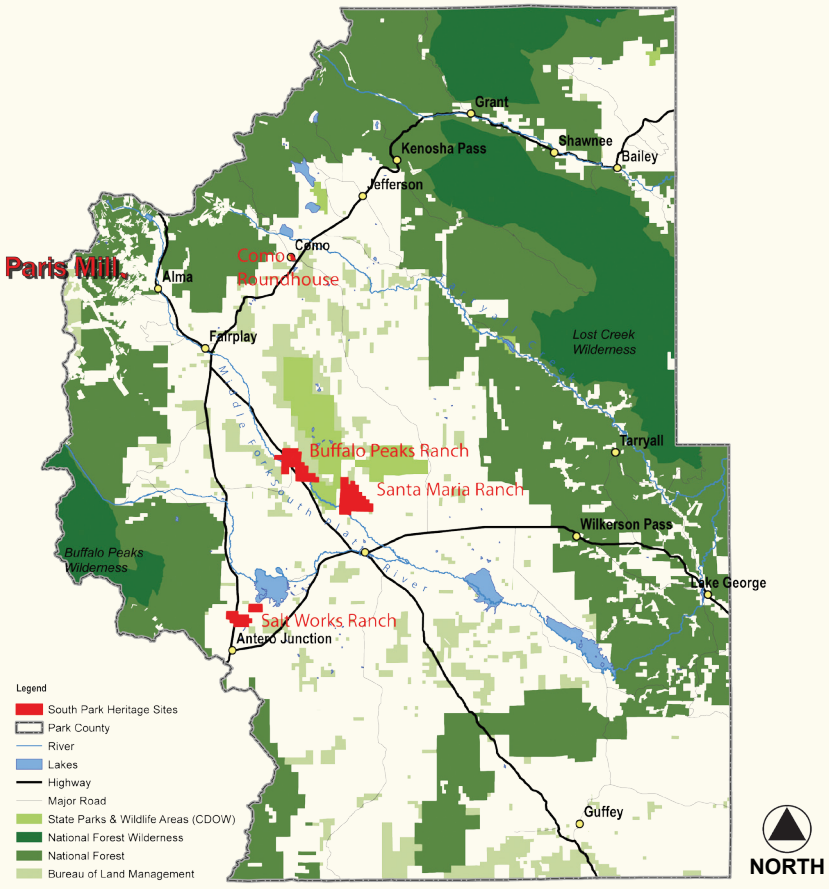
South Park is a compelling heritage tourism destination. The area is close to Colorado's Front Range, which represents a large potential visitor base. By offering new infrastructure such as lodging and dining facilities and serving as destinations for fishing, group retreats, workshops, regional artists, and public entertainment, the five sites featured in this report can bolster business development in Park County and provide a foundation for the proposed South Park National Heritage Area.

FRAMING AND PROMOTING THE STORY OF SOUTH PARK

Research conducted during the analysis phase of this project indicates that heritage areas are most successful when they creatively interpret resources and share compelling stories of the land, culture and history. This report addresses the interpretive potential of Paris Mill and outlines how the site's history, inhabitants and development tie into the broader stories of South Park and the western United States.

The overarching interpretive themes identified in the South Park National Heritage Area feasibility study conducted in March 2006 were used to organize the interpretive planning for the Paris Mill and other featured sites. The themes are 1) Natural Resources: We've Got Altitude; 2) Prehistory: An Ancient Hunting Ground; 3) Settlement History: Panning for Prosperity; and 4) Cultural Traditions: Pioneering Characters. Under this interpretive framework, the resources and stories of the five heritage sites proved to be complementary. Each of the sites reveals a distinct aspect of South Park's heritage, and collectively they can be interpreted to build a greater understanding and appreciation of the Park's resources.

Promotion of the South Park story is a key step in enticing heritage travelers to visit the region. Paris Mill may be physically linked to other heritage attractions in South Park through auto-tour brochures, websites, wayside exhibits, and other interpretive media. Cross-marketing the sites and interpreting the mill's story within the larger South Park context will help move visitors to different sites and spur repeat visits to the region.



PARIS MILL





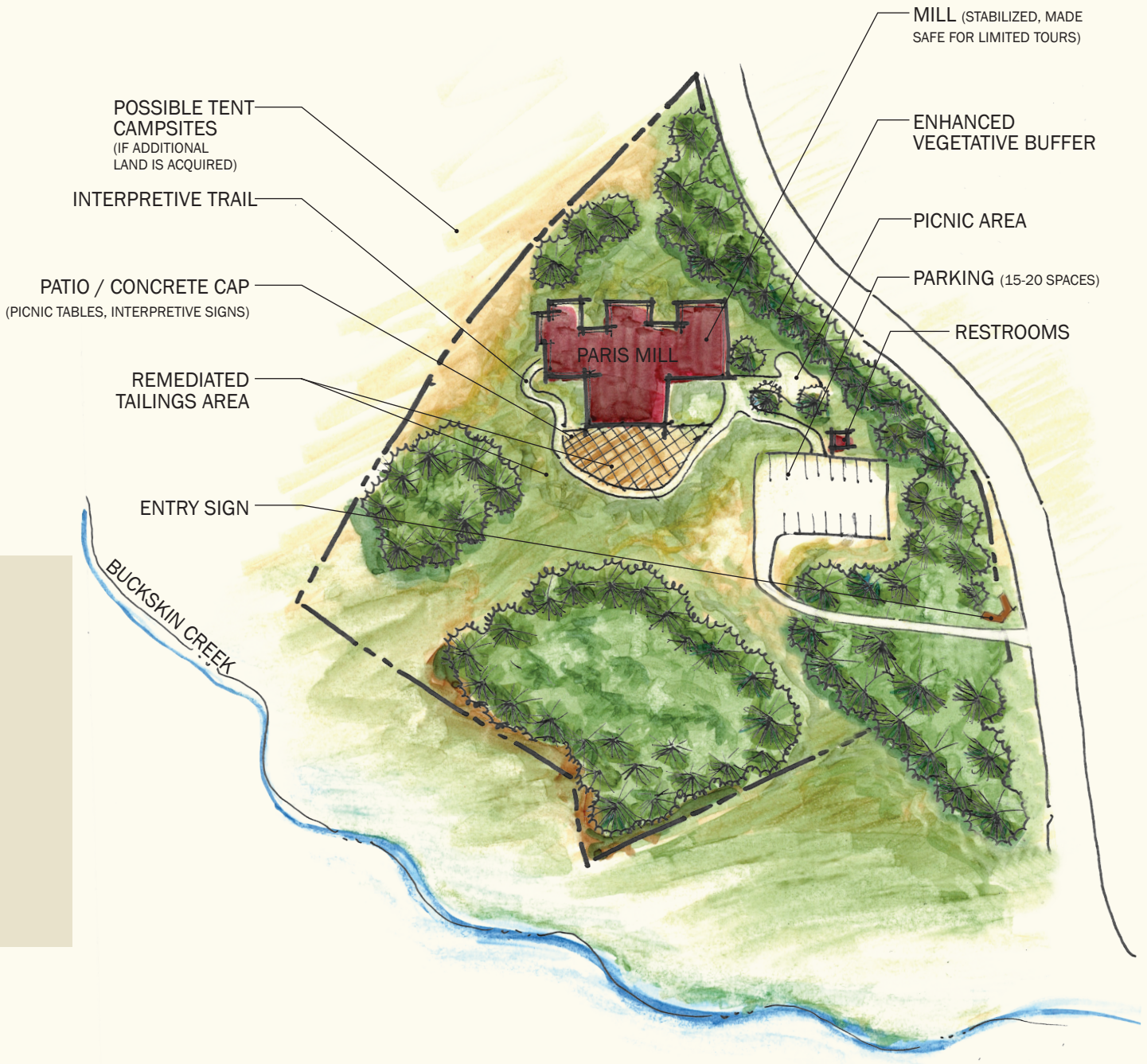


SITE PLAN REPORT



CONCEPTUAL SITE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

SOUTH PARK

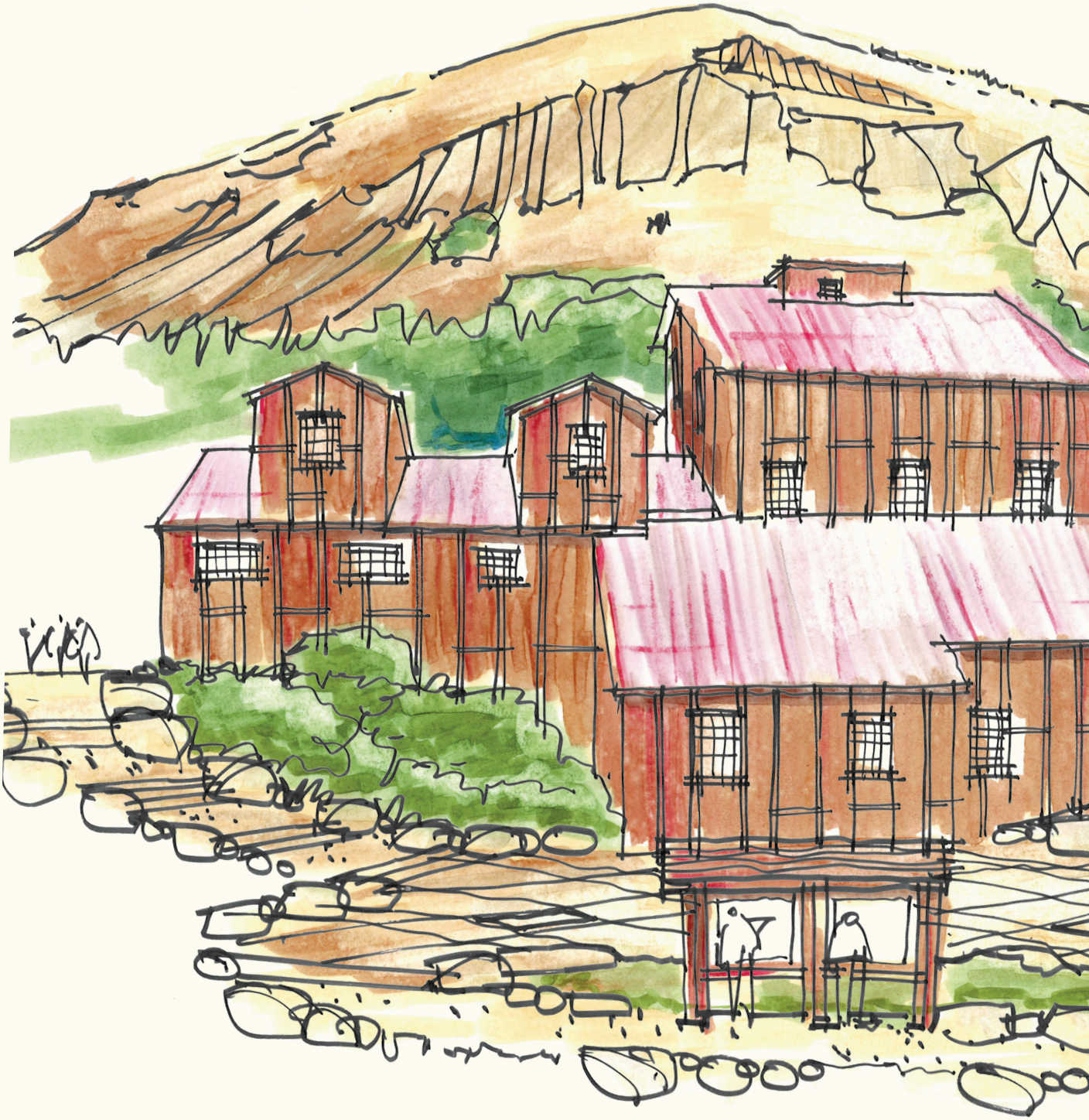


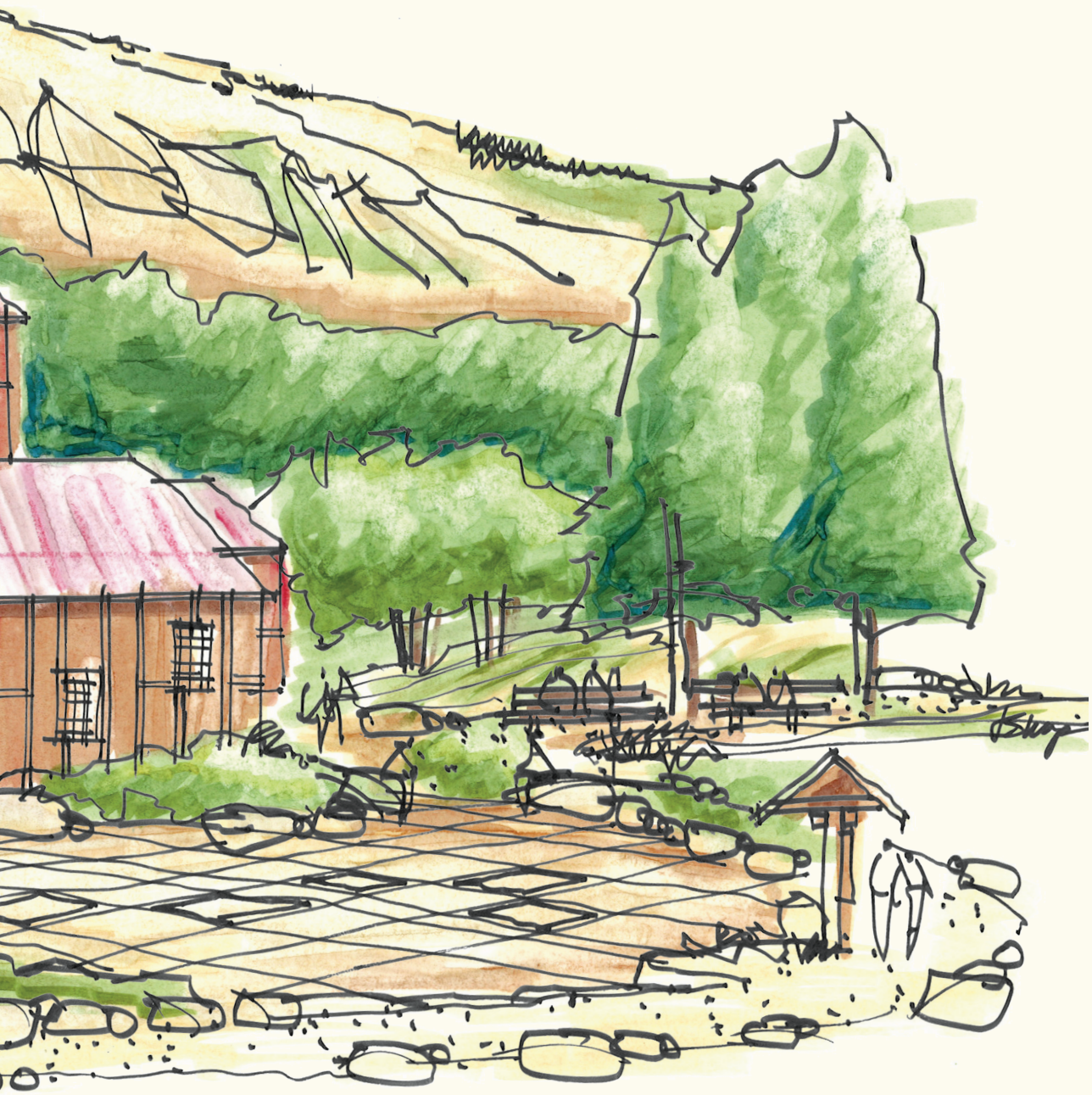


VISION

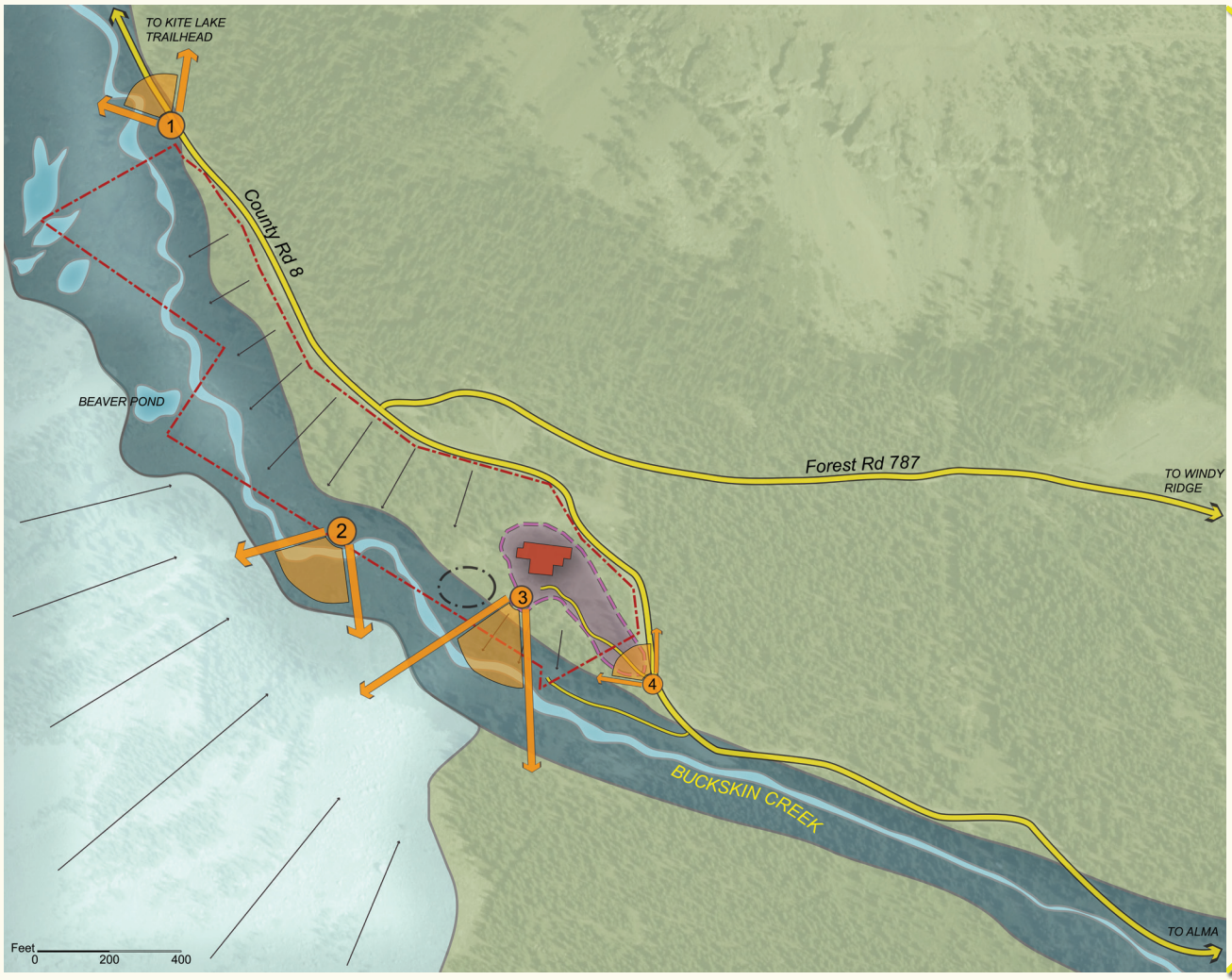
Preserve the mill and educate visitors and locals on the history of mining in the mountains surrounding South Park. Develop the mill site into a heritage tourism destination that offers opportunities for outdoor recreation as well as historical interpretation.

THE PARIS MILL SITE WILL PROVIDE INTERPRETIVE AND PICNIC FACILITIES FOR VISITORS.



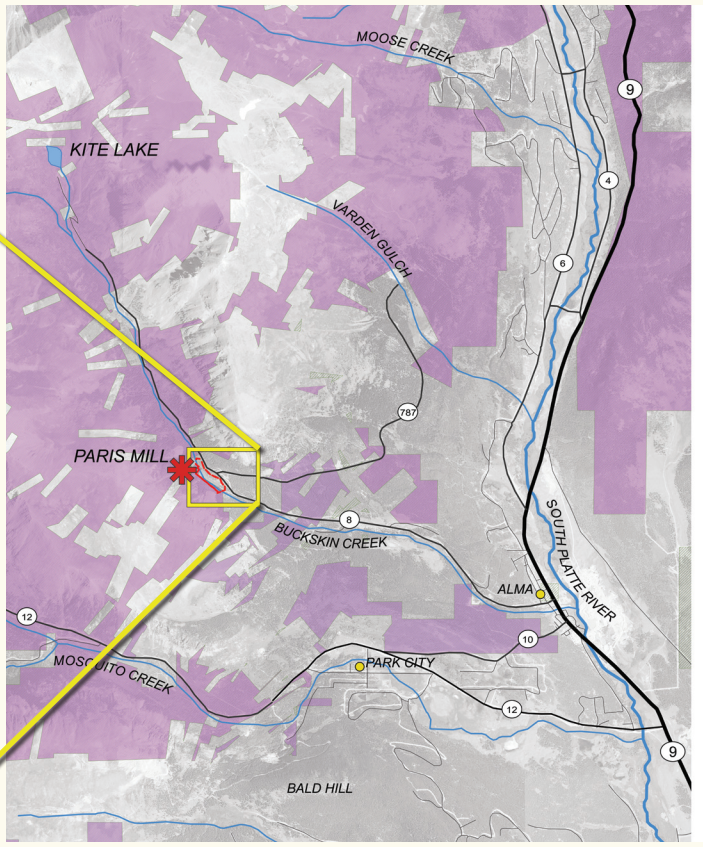


SITE CONTEXT AND ANALYSIS



- Wetland/Riparian Corridor
- Spruce-fir Forest, Bristlecone Woodland, Aspen
- Mixed Tundra
- Disturbed Area
- Paris Mill
- 1 Expansive Mountain Views along Road Corridor
- 2 Expansive Mountain Views
- 3 View to Mine Site on Mountain Side
- 4 View to Mill
- Roadway
- Paris Mill Site Boundary
- Steep Slopes
- Bench

NORTH



Area Enlarged
National Forest
BLM
River
Primary Highway
State Route/County Road
Paris Mill Boundary
Site Headquarters



SITE PLAN REPORT



HERITAGE TOURISM SITE PLANNING
PARIS MILL

SITE OVERVIEW

The 16-acre Paris Mill site is located about three miles west of Alma along County Road 8 at approximately 11,000 feet. The site contains the extant 1894 Paris Mill and associated ore processing equipment. During its prime, the mill was an important site for stamping and crushing gold ore that came from the nearby Hungry Five and Paris Mines. Today, the structure is abandoned and deteriorating, though many of the original stamps and machinery remain intact.

The Paris Mill property is currently owned by the Chiwawa Mining Company. Chiwawa owns about 900 additional acres in the valley that are currently being marketed for residential development. Park County has worked diligently with Chiwawa to secure a conservation easement on portions of the property thereby limiting development to three small building envelopes. Colorado Open Lands administers the conservation easement and Park County continues to negotiate with the mining company concerning purchase of the mill.

While the private mill site remains closed to the public, Pike National Forest land adjacent to the site offers excellent recreational opportunities and currently experiences high use. The area is particularly attractive to hikers, climbers and backcountry skiers.

Natural resources on the mill site have been significantly altered and disturbed by mining activities. Several vertical feet of contaminated soil rests between the mill and Buckskin Creek. Remediation of this tailings area will be required to ensure that visitors are not exposed to toxic and hazardous materials. The site supports a subalpine forest dominated by Engelmann spruce, stands of bristlecone pine, aspen, and a subalpine willow carr. The most ecologically significant feature of the Paris Mill site is the mature willow community along the floodplain of Buckskin Creek. This riparian area provides habitat for a variety of species, including deer, elk and moose.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Following Chiwawa Mining Company's decision to only sell a small parcel with the mill site, Park County has elected to concentrate on stabilization of the mill, remediation of the mill and tailings area, and the development of day use facilities such as a picnic area and interpretive panels.

Stabilization of the deteriorating mill structure and remediation of the mill site are the first development priorities for Park County. Current plans for the mill involve repairing many of the structural problems, such as missing sections of exterior walls and the roof. Stabilization work will also include the installation of safety features such as guardrails and adequate lighting. Site remediation will require surface water run-on and run-off controls to minimize the amount of surface water infiltrating the tailings and/or waste rock. Site remediation can be incorporated into the site design in the form of re-vegetation, grading and a soil cap. Additionally, contaminated floors, walls and equipment inside the building also need to be remediated before it's opened to the public. Both stabilization and remediation are required to ensure long-term preservation of the structure and to make the site and building safe for public visitation.

The initial phase of development at the Paris Mill site will also include the design and construction of interpretive media and day-use amenities. At a minimum, exhibit panels that interpret South Park's mining heritage will be erected on the site. Amenities such as improved parking, picnic tables and restrooms (vault toilets) will also make the site visitor-ready and more inviting.

The Town of Alma has expressed interest in using the mill to meet some of its storage and emergency services needs. These uses are certainly compatible with the proposed Paris Mill development. For example, the stabilized mill could serve as an emergency base station to support search and rescue teams and/or as a town reserve and emergency storage facility.

Once the structure is stabilized and the day-use area is established, the development focus will shift to adaptive reuse of the mill itself. Park County would ultimately like to engage a private partner to operate a commercial enterprise at the Paris Mill. Potential private ventures could include educational programs, a mining museum, primitive cabins and/or a campground. This future phase of development will be contingent on the interest of private partners and the availability of grant funding to offset the extensive restoration costs.

FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS SUMMARY

Visitation Forecast

Restoration of Paris Mill will preserve an integral part of South Park's history and serve the growing heritage tourism industry. This site holds the potential to capture 5,000 to 10,000 visitors per year, based on a nine-month operating season. This visitation estimate is supported by a recent study of the economic impacts of nearby Mounts Democrat, Lincoln and Bross, which indicates that these peaks draw up to 10,000 visitors annually. Additionally, 2007 USFS visitor data indicate that 2,494 cars (about 7,000 people) visit Kite Lake annually. These visitors pass the Paris Mill site en route to the Kite Lake trailhead and campground. The steady stream of cars headed to the trailhead on summer weekends provides a captive market for the development of additional facilities that are currently lacking in the Buckskin Creek valley.

Economic Considerations

Capital costs associated with remediation, stabilization and interpretation of Paris Mill and the development of basic visitor amenities (e.g., restrooms, picnic area and signage) are estimated at $435,000. Over half of this amount will be required for hazardous materials remediation alone. In order for Park County to certify the Paris Mill site for public use, hazardous materials remediation will need to be completed. Based on the assumed scope of work and quantities, the cost to address contaminated soils surrounding the mill with a vegetative cover is estimated at $190,000. Another $50,000 will be required to remediate contaminated surfaces on the interior. The development of interpretive media, restrooms, picnic area and paths is estimated at $70,000, while stabilization of the structure will cost approximately $125,000.

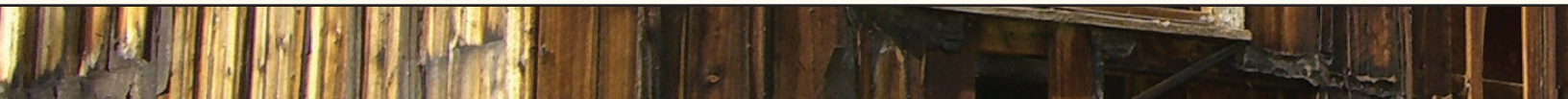
The Paris Mill and tailings area have been identified by the EPA as a Brownfields Program site (see http://epa.gov/brownfields). Therefore, it is highly probable that a program grant can be secured to cover most of the recommended remediation costs. Similarly, Park County, in cooperation with other partners, plans to secure grants to offset the costs associated with mill stabilization and interpretation.

As part of the financial feasibility analysis, additional revenue-generating ventures were considered for the property. Among the various adaptive uses considered for the Paris Mill site, development of a highly managed, primitive campground emerged as the most suitable, economically promising and cost-effective option. The campground is also an attractive future development option because it will require the least amount of environmental reclamation if campsites are sited and physically separated (fenced out) from the Paris Mill and tailings area. Campground development is considered Phase II of Paris Mill development and is contingent on how many acres will be acquired with the mill. The cost of developing a campground with thirty campsites, five rental cabins and six vault toilet facilities is approximately $705,000. If the Paris Mill campground draws similar visitor numbers to the nearby Kite Lake USFS campground, it is estimated that the campground and cabin rentals would generate over $94,000 in annual revenue. This revenue would cover mill maintenance and campground costs (estimated to be $81,500) and yield an annual net cash flow of approximately $13,000. Other potential future uses of the mill will require private partners to cover the intensive capital costs. For example, the estimated cost of completely restoring the mill ranges from $525,000 to $1 million for the mill to serve as a museum, and from $1.25 to $1.75 million for use as a guest lodge.

Analysis Conclusions

Until it is determined how many acres will be acquired at the Paris Mill site and if a private interest will ultimately own and manage the site, it is recommended that Park County limit its immediate plans to (1) stabilizing the Mill, (2) remediating hazardous materials to the extent necessary for public use, and (3) developing a small picnic area and interpretive exhibits. Identifying funding sources for immediate stabilization and eventual restoration of the mill structure should be the highest priority for this site. It is also important that the surrounding land be improved only for complementary uses such as a picnic area or campground to protect the property and mill from other incompatible uses.





SITE STORIES

Historic Significance

Once an important site for processing precious metals in Buckskin Gulch, Paris Mill is now abandoned. The mill was built in 1894 to process the gold and silver mined from the surrounding area. The mill is on the local register of historic places and is considered eligible for the national and state registers.

The Paris Mill is a large, multi level structure that was connected by aerial tramways to mines hundreds of feet above on Loveland Mountain and Mount Bross. These mines were the richest strikes in the Alma mining district, which produced gold, silver and lead ore for decades. Time and unstable metal values forced the mill to close in 1951, after more than 50 years of operation. The mill was activated again briefly during the 1970s by the Mount Bross Mining Company to reprocess old mine tailings but was soon abandoned.

Most of the original ore-processing equipment still resides in the mill. Three different stamps used for crushing and grinding ore are representative of several generations and methods of ore processing. Originally powered by a steam engine that drove a leather-belt drive shaft to run equipment throughout the mill, the mill was converted to a steam-electric operation in the early 20th century. Many of the old drive shafts, giant belt wheels, electric motors and motor mounts are still in place, although all of the valuable copper has been salvaged.

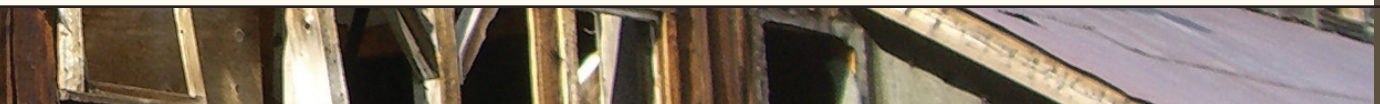
Interpretive Opportunities

Paris Mill is a captivating structure that invites exploration. The mill and surrounding land are ideally suited for interpreting South Park's mining history, as well as natural resources on and near the site. Ideas for the site that build on the four overarching interpretive themes of the South Park National Heritage Area are outlined below.

Natural Resources: We've Got Altitude

Located at 11,000 feet, Paris Mill is the highest of the five heritage sites analyzed in this project and is therefore the best suited for interpretation of the alpine environment and natural resources found in the Mosquito Range. High-country interpretive subjects could include the area's geology and





mineral deposits, three peaks exceeding 14,000-feet, and stands of ancient bristlecone pine trees. Buckskin Gulch and its associated subalpine willow car also warrant interpretation. The most ecologically significant feature of the Paris Mill site is its riparian community, dominated by short and tall willows, bog birch and twinberry. Additionally, beaver ponds on the property invite interpretation of wetland ecology and the role that beaver play in the development of such communities.

Prehistory: An Ancient Hunting Ground

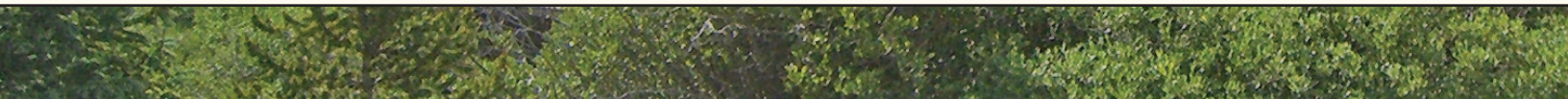
High-altitude hunting strategies of prehistoric peoples at and above timberline could be introduced at Paris Mill. The site also lends itself to interpretation of medicinal and edible plants used by Native Americans, trappers and miners.

Settlement History: Panning for Prosperity

Interpretation at the Paris Mill will focus on the gold and silver mining of the 19th and 20th centuries. The fortitude and hardships of the early prospectors and the thrill of striking the mother lode will pique the interest of many heritage travelers. Life in mining camps and towns (such as nearby Alma), milling techniques from the arrastra to stamp mills, the use of burros in mining, and boom and bust mining cycles, are all fodder for interpretation at Paris Mill. Additionally, the site lends itself to interpreting the role of mountain men as pathfinders for settlements and the resulting fur trade.

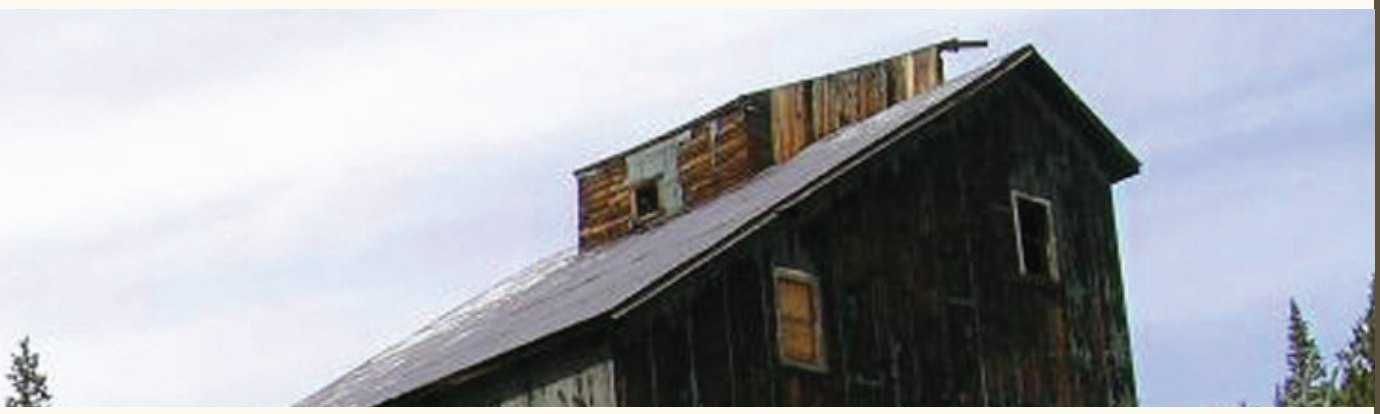






Cultural Traditions: Pioneering Characters

The independent spirit and perseverance required to survive let alone succeed in South Park's high altitude mining camps can be brought to life at the Paris Mill site. This interpretive theme could explore the fortunes and prosperity associated with mining in the mountains, as well as the lawlessness of 19th Century mining camps. Additionally, the cultural traditions of miners, such as their folklore and superstitions, would make for engaging interpretation.









PARIS MILL

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