



**To:** Honorable Mayor Clark and Ridgway Town Council  
**From:** Preston Neill, Town Manager  
**Date:** November 7, 2023  
**RE: Town Manager’s Report**

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**INTRODUCTION**

This monthly report serves as an update to the Town Council on key projects, activities, and community issues.

**2023 MAIN STREET MANAGERS SUMMIT**

Tera Wick, Community Initiatives Facilitator, represented Ridgway at the Main Street Managers Summit on October 23-25. At the meeting, Ridgway was elected by the other Colorado Main Street communities as Main Street of the year!



**RIDGWAY ATHLETIC PARK MASTER PLANNING MEETING TO BE HELD ON NOVEMBER 13<sup>TH</sup>**

The Town of Ridgway and DHM Design will hold a third and final public meeting for the Ridgway Athletic Park master planning process on Monday, November 13th at 5:30 p.m. at Ridgway Town Hall, located at 201 N. Railroad St.

The purpose of the meeting is for members of the public and various stakeholder groups to view and provide feedback on the preferred park layout concept that has been developed by DHM Design. DHM Design was selected by the Town, after a competitive solicitation process, to provide a plan, process, and approach for the public engagement and master planning for the Ridgway Athletic Park.

For more information, please contact Preston Neill, Town Manager, at [pneill@town.ridgway.co.us](mailto:pneill@town.ridgway.co.us) or 970- 626-5308, ext. 212.

**BASE MONTHLY CHARGES FOR WEEKLY CURBSIDE TRASH AND RECYCLING SERVICES TO INCREASE**

On October 11, 2023, the Ridgway Town Council approved a two-year extension to the professional services agreement between the Town of Ridgway and





Bruin Waste Management (Bruin). Bruin will continue to provide regular refuse and recycling collection for residences within the Town.

With the approval came a 5% increase to the base monthly charges for weekly curbside trash and recycling services. Bruin has seen a substantial jump in landfill fees since the initial agreement was put in place in 2018, which was the motivation for the Town Council to evaluate an increase to the base monthly charges. The new base rates are as follows:

- Waste: Multiple Residential Units utilizing a common 1 cubic yard animal-resistant dumpster—\$37.20
- Waste: Multiple Residential Units utilizing a common 2 cubic yard animal-resistant dumpster—\$64.00
- Waste: Multiple residential Units utilizing a common 3 cubic yard animal-resistant dumpster—\$95.13
- Waste: Each Single-Family Residential Unit – animal-resistant poly cart(s) up to 64 gallons—\$16.96
- Recycling: Each Single-Family Residential Unit – 18-gallon recycle bin, weekly service—\$10.10

Residents will see these new rates apply when they receive their water bill for the month of October. For more information, please contact Preston Neill, Town Manager, at [pneill@town.ridgway.co.us](mailto:pneill@town.ridgway.co.us) or 970- 626-5308, ext. 212.

### **PLANNED POWER OUTAGE ALERT**

From Alex Shelley, SMPA Communications Executive:

San Miguel Power Association (SMPA) needs to replace critical equipment in the Dallas Creek substation. This work will require power in the Town of Ridgway to be turned off, overnight, from 10:00 p.m., November 15<sup>th</sup>, to 2:00 a.m., November 16<sup>th</sup>. The replacement equipment will help improve safety and power reliability in the area.

Please make whatever arrangements are necessary to be ready for this overnight outage. If you have questions or concerns, please call 970-626-5549 or visit [www.smpa.com](http://www.smpa.com).

**When:** Wednesday, November 15, 2023

Between 10:00 p.m. and 2:00 a.m., November 16<sup>th</sup> (approximately 4 hours)

**Area Affected:** All circuits out of the Dallas Creek feeder that serves Ridgway.



**Purpose:** To repair transfer bus switches and replace surge arrestors to ensure reliable service in the area.

**RE-BUILDING TO BEGIN ON RED MOUNTAIN ELECTRICAL RELIABILITY AND BROADBAND IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

From Alex Shelley, SMPA Communications Executive:

Dear Community Stakeholder:

To continue to serve as backup power source for consumers in the communities of Ridgway and Ouray, the transmission power line that traverses the beautiful and treacherous Red Mountain Pass along US 550, needs to be re-built. Originally constructed in 1928, the Red Mountain line has been maintained, repaired, and upgraded many times, but has reached its functional end-of-life according to San Miguel Power Association (SMPA) Chief Operating Officer, Jeremy Fox. “While the re-build will be costly,” states Fox, “a new line, engineered with current technologies and design practices will be safer and easier to maintain in the difficult mountain terrain.”

The project is being conducted in several phases with the first phase having taken place in 2021 and 2022. SMPA worked closely with U.S. Forest Service (USFS) representatives, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), and stakeholders in neighboring communities, to conduct vegetation removal above US Highway 550. This served to mitigate fire risk in the area and it cleared the work zone for re-build operations.

At their September 2023 meeting, the SMPA Board of Directors approved a staff proposal to begin Phase 2, which is the re-construction of 4.5 miles of 44kV transmission line between the Idarado and Red Mountain electrical substations. The work will include the replacement of existing line / structures with new, environmentally-tailored structures that will also be fewer in number.

“This construction phased approach offers a number of benefits,” says Fox.

1. It respects the construction period, which is limited by weather, terrain and USFS environmental restrictions.
2. It spreads the upfront construction cost of the entire project over several years to minimize the impact to SMPA members.
3. It allows for the extended material lead times that have affected the industry since the global pandemic.
4. It allows SMPA to begin capitalizing the cost of the re-build by constructing the “easiest” section first.



5. It minimizes the impacts of temporary traffic stops on the connected communities of Ouray and Silverton.

Traffic stops over Hwy 550, proved to be a major concern for the connected communities of Ouray and Silverton, during the vegetation management phase. “Our communities spoke, and we listened,” said Fox. “We adjusted the work timelines and increased our outreach. Mostly, we just listened and tried to be responsive to the community concerns. We were glad to find that most of the stakeholders were supportive of the project. We have remained highly engaged and sensitive to the stakeholder feedback.”

Fortunately, the construction phases look to less demanding on the traveling public than that of the vegetation management phase. “When a helicopter needs to carry something over the highway, traffic needs to be stopped,” said Fox, “...however, these holds can be relatively quick and infrequent depending on the action.”

An additional benefit to the power reliability, is the expansion of fiber optic pathways over the new lines. As communities in the rural western slope look to improve internet access, more connections, and an expanded broadband network reliability is always a desirable end.

A contractor has been selected and SMPA aims to see work begin around June of 2024. Project updates can be accessed at the power association’s website, [www.smpa.com](http://www.smpa.com).

**HOME TRUST PARKSIDE DUPLEX**

The Home Trust of Ouray County broke ground on their Parkside Duplex Project on October 18<sup>th</sup>.



**GMUG SEEKS INPUT ON PROPOSED BLUE LAKES VISITOR USE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison (GMUG) National Forests’ Ouray Ranger District is seeking public comment on the draft Blue Lakes Visitor Use Management Plan Environmental Assessment (EA).

The primary purpose of the proposed plan is to provide comprehensive management of visitors and to reduce visitor impacts for 16,200 acres within the Mt. Sneffels Wilderness and surrounding areas, including Mt. Sneffels Peak, Yankee Boy Basin, Blaine Basin and the lower East Dallas area. The draft EA includes a limited permit system for overnight and day use for Blue Lakes trail, Lower



Blue Lake and Upper Blue Lake – both high alpine lakes that have seen a surge in popularity over the last decade. Other key features of the plan include components addressing visitor impacts to the area for camping and human waste disposal.

“The goal of this plan is to have people be able to enjoy their public lands and maintain the experience they came here for,” said GMUG Ouray District Ranger Dana Gardunio. “The proposed permit system and management tools are critical to enabling us to effectively manage, restore and protect this cherished area.”

The Ouray Ranger District is hosting an open house to discuss this proposal Nov. 6, 2023, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Ouray County Fairgrounds and Event Center, 22739 Hwy 550, Ridgway, Colorado. Members of the public and other interested parties are encouraged to attend to learn more about the proposal, speak to project specialists and get answers to questions.

More information about the proposal and how to submit a comment can be found on the [project website](#).

Comments must be received or postmarked no later than 45 days after the publishing of the legal notice in the Montrose Daily Press or Grand Junction Daily Sentinel, whichever publishes later. Comments are due by 12/3/2023 11:59:59 PM (Mountain Standard Time) and may be submitted via:

- Online: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=61979>
- Mail or hand delivery: Ouray Ranger District Attn: Dana Gardunio, 2505 South Townsend Ave., Montrose, CO 81401

For additional questions, please contact the Ouray Ranger District at (970) 240-5300.

### **TECHNICAL SUPPORT FOR SERVICE LINE INVENTORY AND LEAD SERVICE LINE REPLACEMENT PLANNING**

The Town has signed up for free technical assistance and hands-on support with service line inventory (SLI) and lead service line replacement planning (LSLRP) process offered by CDPHE. The Water Quality Control Division has selected WSP in partnership with Sunrise Engineering to help public water systems with all aspects of the SLI and LSLRP. A kick-off meeting will be arranged soon where staff will learn more about the process and services offered.

All community and non-transient, non-community water systems must develop an SLI to identify the materials of service lines connected to the public water distribution system. If your system has found one or more lead and/or galvanized iron service lines or unknown service within your water system, you must submit an LSLRP to the division. Both documents must be submitted by October 16, 2024.



### **WATERSMART WATER AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY**

This funding opportunity is anticipated to open any day. It is expected to fund projects like: Hydropower, SCADAs, piping of canals, the installation of renewables such as solar for operations, and turf replacement. Staff is keeping a close eye on the release of the NOFO.

### **COMMUNITY INITIATIVES UPDATE**

From Tera Wick, Community Initiatives Facilitator:

#### **Decker Community Room**

- AV System: The AV Experts installed the Audio-Visual system in Space to Create November 1 and 2, as scheduled.
  
- Decker Community Room schedule of events
  - Nov 9-12: Ridgway Independent Film Festival
  - Nov 10-21 Still Life: RIFF Arts Exhibition
  - Nov 24-25-26 10 PM - 6 – PM – Ridgway Arts Group Holiday Sale
  - November 30th: Dark Sky seminar and screening of Defending the Dark. (Tentative)
  - December 1-2: 20th Annual Holiday Arts and Crafts Sale
  - December 5 – February 4: Ouray County Art Show

#### **Ridgway Independent Film Festival**

The Ridgway Independent Film Festival is starting tomorrow, November 9-12! The festival has enjoyed unprecedented levels of community support via donations, artist exhibitions, speakers, and volunteer energy!

- 2023 Donations: \$4,348
- Estimated volunteer hours: 1200 representing an in-kind donation value of \$37,800.

#### **Ignited by FUSE Funds**

As of November, FUSE has allocated \$4,000 of the \$5,000 budgeted for Ignited by FUSE funds to enhance cultural and economic vitality of Ridgway. October awards were:

- \$1000 to Ridgway Film Night starting in December and running through May, organized by Dylan Howell.
- \$1000 to support installing an awning on the building at 145 N Cora St. allocated to Weehawken Creative Arts.

#### **OEDIT Business Preservation Program**

Businesses are being recruited to apply via the Town to OEDIT's Business Retention program. The Community Business Preservation Program provides grants, as well as training and consultation support, to groups of geographically proximate and culturally similar businesses that are facing



displacement pressures and that hold cultural, social, or historical significance in Colorado. If funded, 2-6 businesses would receive between Grants of \$10,000 to \$50,000 per business plus training and consultation support tailored to each business' unique needs. Questions and letters of interest are due to Tera Wick by November 16, 2023, [twick@town.ridgway.co.us](mailto:twick@town.ridgway.co.us). Five to seven Colorado communities will be selected by OEDIT through a competitive application process. The application is due January 2024.

### **UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS**

- **Parks, Trails and Open Space Committee Meeting** – November 7, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. at Town Hall
- **Town Council Regular Meeting** – November 8, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. in-person at Town Hall and virtually via Zoom
- **Athletic Park Master Planning Meeting** – November 13, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. at Town Hall
- **Town Council Budget Workshop** – November 16, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. in-person at Town Hall and virtually via Zoom
- **FUSE Creative Main Street Committee Meeting** – November 21, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.
- **Planning Commission Meeting** – November 28, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. in-person at Town Hall and virtually via Zoom
- **Tri-Agency Dinner** – December 7, 2023 at the City of Ouray (time and location TBD)
- **Town of Ridgway Holiday Party** – December 9, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. at Bella Vino
- **Sustainability Advisory Board Meeting** – December 12, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. at Town Hall and virtually via Zoom
- **Town Council Regular Meeting** – December 13, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. in-person at Town Hall and virtually via Zoom

### **JOKE OF THE DAY**

What's brown and sticky?

A stick.