

## Grand County Colorado Tourism Board Press Kit

### About Grand County Colorado (Visit Grand County)

Grand County Colorado is located

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### Location:

Grand County is located 67 miles west of Denver on U.S. Highway 40. Known for its extensive outdoor recreation opportunities and authentic western experience, the county is home to many of Colorado's dude and guest ranches, a major hot springs resort, and the most extensive network of mountain biking trails in the country.

### Communities:

- At the east end of the county at the western base of Berthoud Pass, the **Winter Park and Fraser Valley** area was originally settled in the 1880s by ranchers and lumbermen were drawn by the lush timber and wide-open meadows. Some 50 years later, with rail access from Denver greatly improved with the completion of the Moffat Tunnel, skiers began discovering the quality of our snow and the speed of our slopes. Today, Winter Park Resort is "Colorado's Favorite," with over 3,000 acres of prime trails, terrain parks, and backcountry-style skiing. During the summer, mountain bikers are drawn to the area's 45 miles of single- and double-track. The towns of Winter Park and Fraser cater to the ski and bike visitors with a wide variety of restaurants, shops, and lodgings.
- Conveniently located at the intersection of Highways 34 and 40, **Granby** is literally the commercial and tourist crossroads of Grand County. Originally founded to service the newly built railroad, the town has long served as a commercial and service area for local farmers and ranchers. Today, the town's central location makes it an excellent base for exploring the surrounding area, which includes the lakes and forestlands of the Arapaho National Recreation Area and National Forest. The town is home to many services and retail businesses, including a supermarket, medical clinic, drug store, movie theater, hunting/sporting goods, laundromat, train station, library, banks, schools, motels, and restaurants. Granby is also known as the "Dude Ranch Capital of the USA" for its concentration of dude and guest ranches featuring everything from rugged lodges to posh resort-style accommodations.
- The hot springs that line the narrow canyon along this stretch of the Colorado River have been attracting visitors to the area since long before the first permanent settlements. Today, the town of **Hot Sulphur Springs** is the county seat and still boasts a resort and spa offering a swimming pool, 22 mineral indoor and outdoor hot pools, and private baths. The Grand County Museum is located here and provides a detailed look at the early history of the area through photos, artifacts, and historic buildings from throughout the area. The nearby waters of the Colorado, including the stretch through the town's Pioneer Park, offer easy access to some of the finest fly-fishing in the state.

- The town of **Grand Lake** owes its very existence to the rugged beauty of the Rocky Mountains. Surrounded by snow-capped peaks, uninhabited wilderness, alpine creeks, and crystal lakes, Grand Lake has been a family tourism destination since the 1880s. With the creation of Rocky Mountain National Park in 1915, the village became the gateway to 265,000 acres of rugged, unequaled, scenic beauty. Today, Grand Lake is home to a lively community of artists, musicians, and outdoor enthusiasts ready to help you enjoy the wealth of year-round activities, from boating to cross-country skiing. Nearly every month the town is host to a festival or concert of some sort, and the many restaurants and lodgings ensure that your stay will be as memorable as the entertainment.
- Settled two hundred years ago by hardy pioneers, the town of **Kremmling** is still proud of its western heritage. Visitors drawn by the sweeping vistas, magnificent mountains, and abundant recreational opportunities will find Kremmling's stores, services, and lodgings to be just as outstanding. Old West adventures abound here, from hunting and fishing on the trophy waters of the Colorado River to rounding up cattle on one of the area's dude ranches. Summer visitors will find fantastic boating and mountain biking, as well as motorsports events including ATV rodeo, rock crawls, and 4x4 tournaments. Winter activities include excellent Nordic skiing and snowshoeing, and unique events such as dog sled races and ice fishing contests.

## Story Ideas

### **Cowboys and Horses and Cows, Oh My!**

With four dude and guest ranches spread throughout a geographic area roughly the size of Delaware, Grand County lays claim to the title of "Colorado's Dude Ranch Capital." The ranches offer all-inclusive packages that include lodging, meals, and great horseback riding, as well as other activities such as tennis, golf, swimming, hayrides, river rafting, overnight pack trips, and cookouts. Each establishment also takes its own unique approach to the authentic Western experience, from down-and-dirty cattle drives to square dance dinners, and rustic cabins to elegant lodges. Each of Grand County's dude ranches have their own personality and specialized activities that reflect the owners and their backgrounds; all of them offer a memorable family vacation experience.

### **Water, Water Everywhere**

Grand County is home to wide-open spaces, stunning mountain scenery and authentic old-west towns. It's also home to Colorado's largest natural lake, headwaters for the Colorado River, 1,000 miles of streams, 1,000 acres of high-mountain lakes and 11,000 acres of reservoirs. Visitors to Grand County – summer or winter – will likely find themselves participating in some activity near or on the water.

### **Rail Buff Heaven**

Tucked into a hillside near the base area of Winter Park is a little-recognized piece of Colorado history; the western portal of the Moffat Tunnel, which at about 10,000 feet represents the highest part of the United States' passenger rail system. Built between 1923-27 and considered an engineering landmark at the time, the tunnel shortened the Denver-Grand Junction rail route by about 175 miles. This 6.2-mile-long rail and water transfer tunnel is the second-longest in the country and is a favorite destination for rail buffs. A related piece of history, the Moffat Road, climbs up the valley above the timberline and over Corona Pass along the right-of-way used by the railroad before the tunnel was built. The road is listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its

role as a stage road and railroad. Today, automobiles can drive as far as the top of the pass, and the trail is a favorite with hikers and bikers.

### **Add Some Distance to Your Tee Shot**

Little known fact: The effect of gravity diminishes as you gain altitude. And at 8000 feet above sea level, where Grand County sits, this can add up to a whopping 15% increase in the distance of your golf shots. Of course, that's not the only reason to golf Grand County? With four world-class courses (Grand Lake, Pole Creek, Grand Elk, and Granby Ranch), Grand County is on the way to becoming a mountain golf paradise.

### **The Quite Side of Rocky Mountain National Park**

The charming village of Grand Lake at the west entrance to the park is the perfect launching point for exploring the rugged, less-crowded western destinations within the park. From here, Trail Ridge Road, the highest, continuous paved highway in the United States, meanders north and east through pine forests and alpine tundra, past craggy peaks and crystal lakes. Many of the Park's 355 miles of hiking trails start on the western side – from an easy 0.5-mile stroll across the Colorado River to Never Summer Ranch, to a 10-mile day hike to Lulu City and the Grand Ditch, to more rigorous multi-day backcountry treks across the Continental Divide.

### **A Destination For All Seasons**

Year after year, Colorado's Grand County proves itself as the perfect year-round vacation and getaway destination. Its sights, activities, amenities, and location make it the perfect place to explore all the Rockies have to offer. To illustrate our wealth of activities, the Grand County Colorado Tourism Board suggests two 4-day itineraries designed for every visitor.

### **Go Fish**

The Colorado Wildlife Commission has designated only 168 miles of streams in the entire state as "Gold Medal" trout streams – and 20 miles of those are in Grand County. The stretch of the upper Colorado River between the Fraser River (near Granby) to the confluence with Troublesome Creek (near Kremmling) offers some of the finest brown and rainbow fishing in the West. Add to that the boating and fishing opportunities in the Tri-Lakes (Lake Granby, Shadow Mountain Lake, and Grand Lake), Wolford Lake, and Williams Fork Reservoir areas, and it's easy to see how Grand County has become a year-round fisherman's paradise.

### **Headwaters of the Colorado River**

Once called the Grand River (home to the county's name), begins in the snow-covered peaks of Rocky Mountain National Park, through sparkling stretches of world-class trout habitat, to the white waters of the Gore Canyon, Grand County's Colorado River is a river of many personalities. The 80-mile Colorado Headwaters Scenic Byway begins on Highway 34 in Grand Lake and follows the Colorado River through the towns of Hot Sulphur Springs and Kremmling before ending with a spectacular view of the scenic Gore Canyon. Along the way, enjoy views of the Never Summer Range, vast cattle ranches, and whitewater rafters.

### **Mountain Wedding Dreams**

For couples who've wondered what it would be like to get married in a postcard, [Grand County, Colo.](#) has the answer. Crisp colors, stunning landscapes, breathtaking views and unique settings are characteristic of "I dos" in Grand County.

**Welcome to the Wide-Open Spaces** – More than 70% of the country's area is held in the public trust as public open lands. Protected lands include Rocky Mountain National Park, Arapaho National Forest and Recreation Area, Medicine Bow/Routt National Forest, and the Vasquez Peak, Byers Peak, Never Summer, and Indian Peaks Wilderness Areas. With so much public open space, most of the local lakes, rivers, forests, and mountains remain accessible and relatively uncrowded for hiking, biking, fishing, boating or just simply soaking up the view.

**Winter Sports and More** - skiing, snowboarding, and cross-country skiing Winter Park and Mary Jane Resorts have been among the country's top spots for Rocky Mountain powder and backcountry skiing for more than 60 years. With nearly 400 inches of snow annually, Winter Park Resort has the most consistent snow for a Colorado ski resort year after year. Granby Ranch in the Granby area caters to families, with ski-in/ski-out condominiums, gentle terrain, and one central base lodge.

For cross-country skiing and snowshoeing, Devil's Thumb Ranch Resort in Grand County has been named the No. 1 cross-country ski resort in the county. Other options include the YMCA of the Rockies/Snow Mountain Ranch and Grand Lake Touring Center, C Lazy U Ranch, and Latigo Ranch. Hundreds more miles of back-country trails exist in the area's public lands.