



GRAND COUNTY
COLORADO

Grand County Colorado Tourism Board
2025 ANNUAL REPORT



MISSION STATEMENT

We inspire a sustainable, year-round tourism economy in Grand County with an emphasis on strengthening the vitality of our communities, celebrating our local culture and traditions and respecting our environment and resources.

2024 Economic Snapshot

(Source: Dean Runyan Associates Tourism Economic Impact Report, 2024)

Tourism continues to play a vital role in Grand County's economy, supporting local businesses, creating jobs, and generating significant tax revenue that helps fund essential community services.

\$563.3 Million Total Visitor Travel Spending Visitor spending supports lodging, restaurants, retail, recreation, and transportation businesses across the county.	3,600 Jobs Tourism Supported Employment Tourism is one of the largest employment sectors in Grand County.
\$159.4 Million Tourism Earnings Visitor spending generates wages and income for thousands of local workers.	\$27.0M Local Taxes \$14.4M State Taxes Tax Revenue Generated Visitor spending contributes to critical funding for infrastructure, public safety, and community services.

Key Tourism Impact Highlights

- \$563.3 million in visitor spending
- 3,600 jobs supported by tourism
- \$159.4 million in tourism-related earnings
- \$27 million in local tax revenue
- \$14.4 million in state tax revenue

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Tourism Board Structure

Grand County Colorado Tourism Board is part of the Grand County Government with representatives appointed by the Grand County Colorado Board of County Commissioners.

Organization structure | 12-member volunteer Board of Directors

- Four members from the 3-Lakes District
- Four members from the Mainstem District
- Four members from the Fraser Valley District

Executive Director (Contractor)

Marketing (Contractor)

Public Relations (Contractor)

Social Media (Contractor)

The board operates through funds generated by the Lodging Tax of 2%, which the GCCTB receives 1% to market and promote Grand County. This tax is paid by visitors staying in lodging properties, excluding the "Town of Winter Park". Grand County taxpayers do not pay for tourism board expenditures.

Grand County Colorado Tourism Board Members

- Rebecca Bierden - Vicious Cycle Brewery
- Jeremy Belnap - C Lazy U Guest Ranch
- Heather Bishop - Wild About Birds
- Jennifer Brown - Mountain Gal Boutique (Secretary)
- Elizabeth Brumm - Devil's Thumb Ranch
- Beau Larson - WorldMark Granby
- Dakota Cordle - KW Real Estate
- Gretta Fosha - Drowsy Water Ranch
- Kristen Spronz - Snow Mountain Ranch (Vice President)
- Dave Huber - Granby Ranch
- Cheryl Spezia - Winter Park Resort
- Joanna Whitemarsh - Grand River Aviation (President)

Contractors

- Gaylene Ore - Executive Director
Paula Isakson- Administrative Assistance
- Advertising / Media - Madden Media
- Public Relations - Brouhaha Collective
- Social Media - Megan Dryden

Letter from the Executive Director

A Year of Progress, Partnership, and Purpose

2025 was a year of strong momentum for tourism in Grand County. From launching new marketing initiatives to expanding national media exposure and strengthening community partnerships, the Tourism Board made meaningful progress toward building a more balanced, sustainable, and year-round visitor economy.

Tourism remains a vital part of Grand County's economic foundation. According to the 2024 Dean Runyan Tourism Economic Impact Report, visitor spending reached \$563.3 million, supporting 3,600 local jobs and generating more than \$41 million in state and local tax revenue. These dollars help sustain local businesses, fund community services, and support the quality of life that residents value.

Throughout 2025, the Tourism Board focused on ensuring those benefits continue while also protecting the landscapes and communities that make Grand County special.

One of the most significant milestones of the year was the first full year working with Madden Media, which introduced a refreshed marketing approach and the launch of the Source of the Wild campaign. This new campaign celebrates Grand County's authentic mountain heritage and highlights the region's role as the headwaters of the Colorado River.

Supporting this effort was the launch of a completely redesigned VisitGrandCounty.com website, featuring Mindtrip, an AI-powered itinerary builder that helps visitors plan their stay while highlighting local businesses and experiences across the county.

The marketing strategy delivered measurable results. Across all platforms, campaigns generated more than 26 million impressions and over 230,000 clicks, producing an estimated \$5.26 million in visitor economic impact. Key travel markets included Denver, Dallas, Kansas City, and Houston, helping expand Grand County's reach beyond traditional audiences.

Digital engagement also saw significant growth. The website welcomed more than 409,000 users, a 23.7% increase year over year, while total pageviews climbed to 857,000. Following the website rebuild in late 2025, search performance improved dramatically, strengthening Grand County's visibility across search platforms.

Social media also experienced substantial momentum, with reach and engagement doubling year over year and follower growth increasing by more than 300 percent. Influencer partnerships and thoughtful storytelling helped showcase Grand County's communities and outdoor experiences to new audiences.

Public relations efforts expanded national exposure even further. Strategic media outreach and hosted journalist visits generated more than 100 media placements, reaching an estimated 1.45 billion potential travelers worldwide. Coverage appeared in major outlets including Forbes, Yahoo Lifestyle, Outside Magazine, National Geographic, and the Denver Post, reinforcing Grand County's reputation as a premier year-round mountain destination.

Beyond marketing results, 2025 also marked important progress in stewardship and community engagement. Grand County was selected for a mentorship through the **Colorado Tourism Office** to help develop the **Do Grand Right stewardship campaign**, which will guide visitor education and responsible recreation messaging in the years ahead.

At the same time, the Tourism Board continued investing directly in the community through its grant program. In 2025, **\$709,217 was awarded to organizations across the county**, supporting arts, events, recreation, education, and community development initiatives that enhance both the visitor experience and quality of life for residents.

In August, the Board held its annual retreat and developed a focused **two-year strategic plan**, strengthening alignment between tourism efforts and community priorities while identifying clear goals for the future.

Looking ahead, the path forward is clear. Tourism must continue to support our communities while protecting the landscapes, traditions, and experiences that define Grand County. Through thoughtful planning, strong partnerships, and responsible stewardship, the Tourism Board remains committed to ensuring tourism works for residents, businesses, and visitors alike.

Thank you to our Board members, partners, community organizations, and local businesses who continue to make this work possible. Together, we are shaping the future of tourism in Grand County.

Gaylene Ore
Executive Director
Grand County Colorado Tourism Board

Advertising Summary

In 2025, the advertising strategy used a **full-funnel approach** to move audiences from discovery to booking. Awareness was driven through **Meta, programmatic display and Connected TV**, and **editorial storytelling with Wildsam**, expanding reach and strengthening destination credibility. **Search and Performance Max** captured high-intent travelers and drove engaged website traffic and trip planning. **Expedia and Epsilon partnerships** delivered measurable ROI through bookings and visitor spend. Local-facing media also highlighted tourism's value to residents, helping build community support and positive sentiment.

The top-performing location, Denver, contributed 47,476 sessions, with notable growth in cities like Colorado Springs (+6.93%), Aspen (349.8%), Boulder (4.18%), Pueblo (90.08%) and Houston (+30.81%).

Building on insights from 2024 that showed traffic peaking during the summer months, 2025 media efforts were strategically optimized to increase off-season engagement. The results indicate meaningful growth during key shoulder and off-season periods.

In the spring season (April 1 – June 30), the campaign drove 111,995 total users, representing a 7.11% increase, while sessions rose to 137,369, reflecting an 8.92% increase year over year.

Even stronger gains were seen in the fall season (October – December 31), demonstrating success in driving late-season engagement. Total users increased to 87,347 (+23.08%), while sessions reached 100,785 (+19.45%).

Overall, these results show that the 2025 strategy successfully extended engagement beyond peak summer months, strengthening visitation interest during historically lower-traffic periods and supporting a more balanced seasonal demand curve.

Analysis of Digital Metrics for Visit Grand County (Jan. 1 - Dec. 31, 2025)

Overall Performance:

- **Pageviews:** 857,145 (+9.7% YoY). This growth indicates increased interest or improved reach in digital campaigns and SEO efforts.
- **Total Users:** 409,843 (+23.7% YoY). The significant rise in users suggests effective user acquisition strategies or broader visibility across platforms.
- **Engagement Rate:** 52.99% (-14.0% YoY). A decline here suggests a potential decrease in session quality, which could stem from less targeted content, slower load times, or shifts in audience behavior.

Traffic Types:

- Organic Traffic saw a decrease in Organic Users (133,964, -24.3% YoY) & Sessions (179,508, -20.0% YoY).
 - These metrics fall within the baseline range of 20%-30% decrease in Organic Traffic, as seen across all other destinations due to AI Overviews within search.
 - On Google, the website experienced a slight increase in Engagement Rate (69.78%, +2.6% YoY) and Average Session Duration (00:02:27, +7.0% YoY), indicating web traffic was higher quality overall.
 - Despite this decrease in Organic Traffic, Site Impressions increased 11.5% YoY in Q4, with the largest increase happening after the website relaunch.
 - The website continues to see an increase in Organic Traffic & Impressions into 2026. After rebuilding the website in late 2025, SEO health scores improved by +22 points from 66/100 to 88/100, giving web pages higher authority, clearer ranking signals, and enhanced structure.

Key Website Metrics

Total users	Sessions	Engaged Sessions	Engagement Rate	Average Session Duration
303,621	387,185	196,883	50.85%	2:05

Media Plan

The 2025 Visit Grand County media plan successfully executed a full-funnel strategy designed to connect "Discovery, Trust, and Convert" tactics while capturing high-intent demand and driving measurable economic impact.

Overall Campaign Performance

- **Total Reach:** The combined media efforts generated 26.1 million total impressions and 230,721 total clicks, achieving an overall Click-Through Rate (CTR) of 0.88%.
- **Economic Impact:** The campaign drove an estimated \$5.26 million+ in total economic impact.
- **Top Markets:** Across multiple platforms, the strongest performing feeder markets were consistently Denver, Dallas, Kansas City, and Houston.

Discovery & Trust (Upper to Mid-Funnel)

- **Meta:** Served as a major awareness driver, delivering 5.18 million impressions and reaching over 1.7 million users through aspirational visual storytelling and "Stand Grand" messaging.
- **Azira (Programmatic & CTV):** Achieved over 2.1 million impressions and 101,000 clicks. The Connected TV (CTV) placements delivered a highly engaged 99% view rate, and the platform successfully tracked 282 unique users who visited a Grand County Point of Interest (POI) after being exposed to an ad.
- **Wildsam & Nativo:** Built credibility and destination trust through editorial and native storytelling. Wildsam delivered 6.3 million impressions across print, digital, and a massive 3-million-send email campaign. Nativo drove an

additional 2.1 million impressions through sponsored articles on premium publisher sites.

Paid Social Metrics

Impressions	Clicks	CTR	Landing Page Views	CPC
5,181,531	106,343	2.05%	78,830	\$0.33

Capture & Convert (Lower-Funnel)

- **Google (SEM & Performance Max):** Captured users actively planning trips, delivering 784,000 impressions and over 41,000 clicks. These channels drove highly engaged traffic, keeping users on the site for an average of nearly 3 minutes.

Google SEM & Pmax Performance

Impressions	Clicks	CTR	CPC	Cost
784,464	41,215	5.25%	\$0.29	\$12,000

Expedia Performance

Attributed Revenue	ROAS	Room Nights Booked	Travelers	Average Length of Stay
\$4.5 million	149.3:1	366	9,436	4.2

Epsilon Performance

Messaged Visitor Spend	ROAS	Unique Individuals Reached	Average Message Yield Per Visitor	Total Transactions
\$760,000	\$15:1	5,000	\$151	13,000

Local Campaign

The Grand County local campaign was a targeted effort to educate residents about the value of tourism and the activities of the Grand County Tourism Board. Here is an overview and summary of the campaign's strategy, messaging, and performance:

Campaign Goals & Messaging

Primary Objective: The campaign aimed to connect the dots between healthy tourism and healthy local businesses, with a long-term business plan goal to raise resident sentiment from 62% to 67% agreement that tourism benefits the community by 2027.

Core Message: The foundational message was "Tourism benefits you". The creative concept, titled "The Source of What Keeps Us Going," highlighted that tourism isn't just about bringing in more people, but about visitor spending keeping stores open year-round and sustaining service jobs.

Strategy & Media Tactics

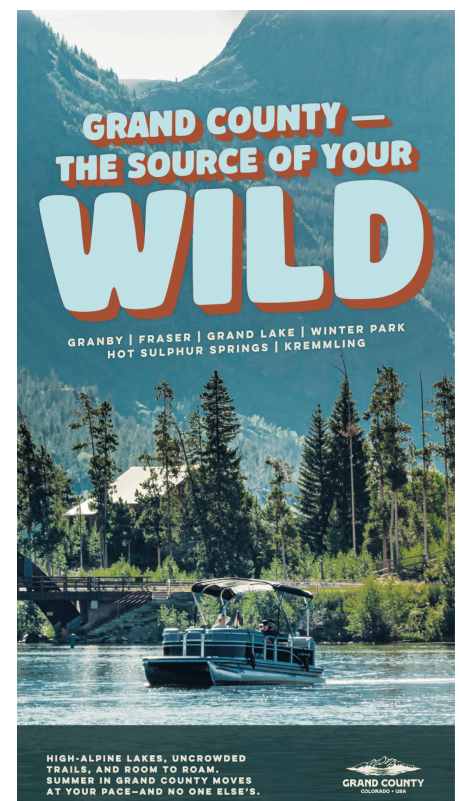
The campaign ran from September 1 to November 30, 2025, utilizing a total budget of \$15,000 across a mix of local and digital channels.

Local Radio: Leveraged grassroots community station KFFR (273 spots) to build trust, alongside Always Mountain Time (331 spots on KRKY & KIFT) to reach residents during commute times.

Social Media: Ran Facebook and Instagram ads utilizing static images and carousels to drive awareness. The top engaging demographics were females, ages 65+, and iPhone users.

Programmatic Ads: Used Azira for geo-targeted banners across websites and apps to drive resident engagement.

Digital Out of Home (DOOH): Placed screens in high-traffic local restaurants (130k impressions) and bars (25.6k impressions) to



engage residents in relaxed community spaces.

Sky-Hi News: Reinforced credibility through local print circulation (distributed to 300+ locations), run-of-site banners, and a dedicated email blast.

Overall Performance Results

The campaign successfully combined local channels and high-frequency digital touchpoints to generate strong resident engagement. Overall metrics included:

- 900,533 total impressions
- 14,197 total clicks
- 1.57% average Click-Through Rate (CTR)
- Notable highlights included the Programmatic (Azira) ads achieving an above-benchmark 2.66% CTR, and the Sky-Hi News dedicated email achieving a very strong 37.1% open rate. Social media efforts also maintained steady engagement, generating over 6,000 post engagements.

E-newsletter Performance

Emails Sent	Delivered	Open Rate	Clicks	CTR
220,942	219,680	21%	3,131	1.4%

Campaign Evolution

In its first year, the "Source of the Wild" brand evolved from the destination's previous "Modern West" tagline that leaned too heavily into traditional western tropes. Instead, the new brand positions Grand County as an "authentic mountain west experience" that is wild, approachable, quirky, and authentic.

The foundational message of the campaign is that in Grand County, the wild is "not just a landscape—it's a way of life". It invites travelers, ranging from families seeking connection to adventurers chasing new horizons, to "start their own journey in the heart of nature" and write the first chapter of their lasting memories.

To support the brand, the campaign relies on aspirational visual storytelling designed to evoke awe and emotion across platforms like Meta, programmatic display, and Connected TV.

Organic Social Media

Instagram and Facebook alike saw exceptional momentum in 2025, with reach and engagement both doubling year-over-year and follower growth surging 300%, driven largely by organic discovery of Grand County experiences. Influencer outreach and campaign management were brought under the social media contract, resulting in four highly successful partnerships that expanded visibility and engagement with new audiences. The top-performing campaign featured a June visit to Kremmling.

2025 Instagram:

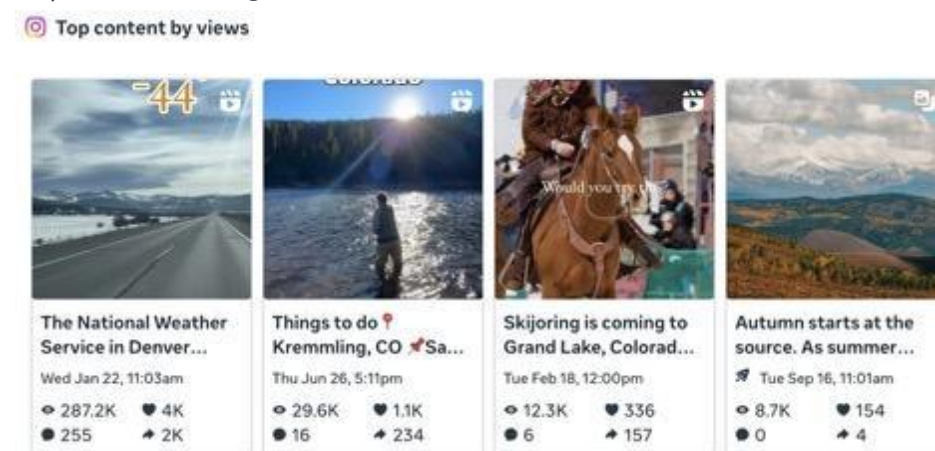
Views: 171,195 total, 110,000 from organic

Reach: 270,100 total, 44,000 from organic +100% YoY growth

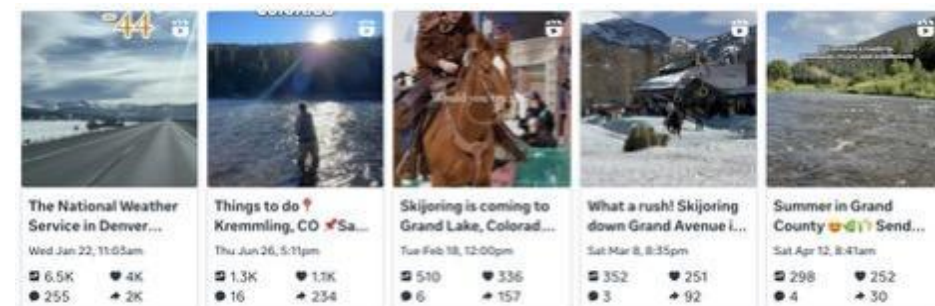
Engagement: 6,000 content interactions +100% YoY growth

Followers: +964 new follows +300% YoY growth

Top Performing Based on Reach:



Top Performing Based on Engagement:



2025 Facebook:

Views: 861,523 16% from organic

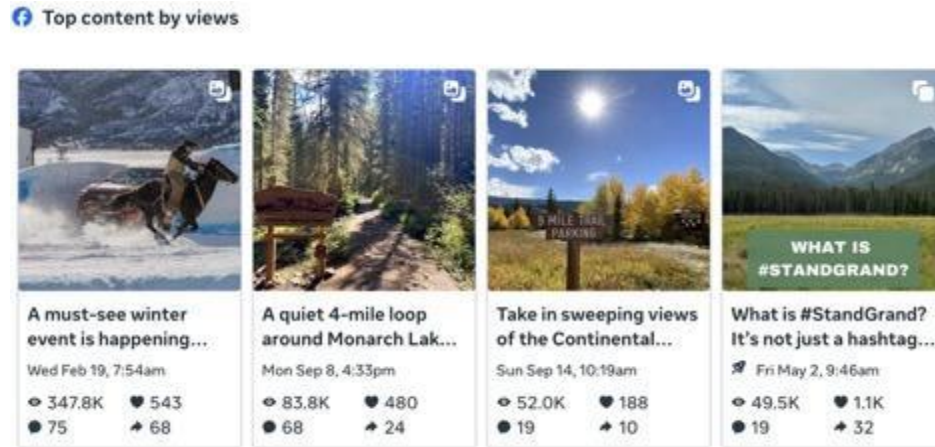
Reach: 5.7M total, 861,523 from organic

Engagement: 40.4K total +800%

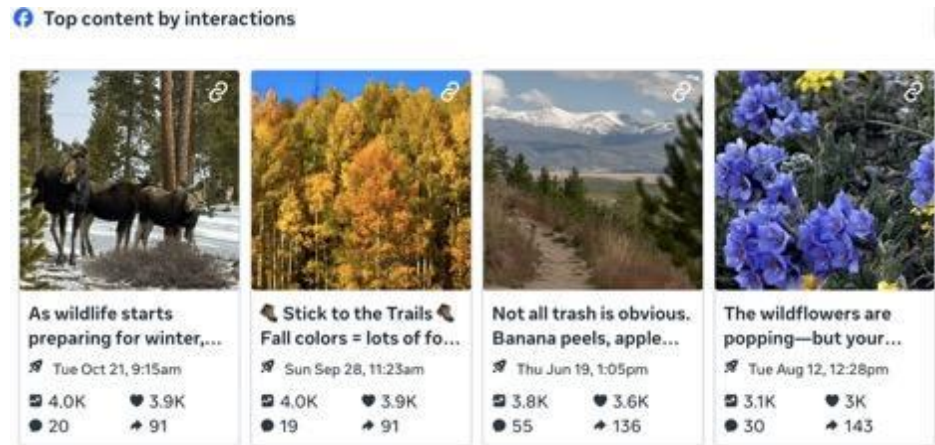
- 37,265 interactions from non-followers +770%

- 3,000 interactions from followers +300%
- Increased engagement is credited to long-running organic campaigns (like the Stand Grand campaign) and boosted organic posts.

Top Performing Based on Views: 1, 2, 3 were not boosted posts



Top Performing Based on Engagement:



Influencer Campaigns - \$10K Budget

Julia Takes a Hike – January in Grand Lake featuring pond hockey, the Nordic Center, ranger-led snowshoeing in Rocky Mountain National Park and dog-friendly stays.

Colorado Mountain Towns – June in Kremmling featuring a summer adventure off the beaten path with fly fishing, ATV excursions, and local dining.

Vanessa Chavarriaga Posada – December in Granby, Fraser, and Winter Park featuring ski days, local spots, GRAND sunsets and the Indigenous film festival at Snow Mountain Ranch.

Jake Beyer Photography – December Holiday Content Shoot in Grand Lake and Rocky Mountain National Park yielding over 100 high-quality images for full use on digital and website plus cross-posting on Jake's platforms.

PUBLIC RELATIONS IMPACT

In 2025, Grand County’s public relations program significantly expanded national visibility for the destination. Strategic media outreach, hosted journalist visits, and broadcast features resulted in widespread coverage highlighting Grand County as a year-round mountain destination for outdoor adventure, scenic beauty, and Western experiences.

2025 PR RESULTS

1.45 BILLION	\$7.34 MILLION	100+
Potential Media Impressions	Advertising Value Equivalency	Media Placements

Coverage appeared in major national and regional outlets including Forbes, Yahoo Lifestyle, AOL, Outside Magazine, Denver Post, WorldAtlas, Islands, PBS, Fox31 Denver, and National Geographic.

National Media Spotlight

- Yahoo Lifestyle – 30 Best All-Inclusive Resorts for 2026 Family Vacations
- Yahoo Lifestyle – The 6 Best Snowmobiling Destinations in the U.S.
- Forbes – 12 Vacation-Worthy Small Towns in Colorado
- AOL Travel – These All-Inclusive Resorts Go All-Out for Christmas
- NewsBreak – Drive Through Autumn’s Best in Colorado
- WorldAtlas – 7 of the Quirkiest Towns in the Rockies
- WorldAtlas – Most Underrated Towns in Colorado
- Islands Magazine – Cozy Colorado Town in the Rockies for Outdoor Adventurers

Hosted Media Program

Experiencing Grand County firsthand helps inspire authentic storytelling. In 2025, the Tourism Board hosted journalists representing leading national and regional media outlets.

- Denver Post
- Atlanta Homes & Lifestyles
- Bristol Herald Courier
- Roanoke Times
- Newsweek
- Fodor’s Travel
- Cowboys & Indians Magazine
- BBC Travel
- National Geographic Travel

- Big Blend Radio / Murray Media Group

Broadcast & Digital Exposure

- PBS Hometown
- Fox31 Denver
- Regional radio features
- Travel video and social storytelling

PR Impact

Public relations efforts helped introduce Grand County to more than 1.45 billion potential travelers worldwide in 2025, strengthening the destination's reputation as one of Colorado's premier year-round mountain getaways.

Grants

In 2025, the Grand County Colorado Tourism Board continued its commitment to investing in community initiatives, events, and organizations that strengthen the visitor economy and enhance the quality of life across Grand County.

Through the Tourism Board's grant program, a total of **\$709,217** was awarded to organizations and initiatives throughout the county. These investments supported arts and culture, community events, recreation, education, and destination development efforts that help attract visitors while benefiting residents and local businesses.

2025 Grant Recipients

Countywide Grants

- Grand County Library District
- PBS
- Grand County Historical Association
- Grand Nordic
- Red Barn Relay
- Sustainable Grand

Fraser Valley District

- Fraser Valley Arts
- Town of Fraser
- Shining Stars Foundation
- Winter Park & Fraser Chamber of Commerce
- Blues from the Top Music Festival
- Grand Kids Learning Center
- Headwaters Event Center
- Winter Park Horseman's Association
- Stoke Factory
- Town of Fraser – Video Project
- National Multiple Sclerosis Society
- KFFR Community Radio

- Town of Fraser Website Project

West Grand / Kremmling Area

- Hot Sulphur Springs Chamber Block Grant
- Kremmling Chamber of Commerce
- West Grand Recreation Foundation (Kow Town)
- Main Stem

Three Lakes / East Grand Area

- Grand Lake Chamber Block Grant
- Destination Granby
- Rocky Mountain Repertory Theatre
- Grand Lake Skijoring
- Colorado AeroLab
- Grand Lake Creative Arts District
- Rocky Mountain Folk School
- Colorado Mesa University Foundation

These grants support a wide range of initiatives—from cultural programs and festivals to recreation and community development—helping ensure Grand County remains a vibrant destination while supporting the organizations that make the community unique.

Community Engagement Initiatives

Social Media Strategy Enhancement

By engaging a dedicated social media contractor, we strengthened our digital presence and focused significant effort on developing and executing organic content strategies. These strategies not only emphasized timely messaging for last-minute bookings but also increased midweek travel and off-season visitation. Consistent and engaging content expanded audience reach, fostered strong connections with returning visitors, and introduced new audiences to Grand County's unique experiences.

Cross-Promotional Marketing Materials

Designed, produced, and distributed approximately 150 promotional posters each month, highlighting key events and activities across Grand County. Placement in high-traffic locations created consistent visibility for local events, supported attendance growth, and reinforced collaboration among community partners and local businesses. This ongoing effort strengthens awareness of year-round opportunities and encourages participation in community events throughout the county.

Stand Grand Visitor Education Campaign

Expanded the reach of the Stand Grand visitor education initiative through the printing and distribution of Leave No Trace-inspired posters and brochures at key visitor touchpoints throughout the county. A complementary summer social media campaign reinforced these stewardship principles, promoting responsible recreation, supporting the long-term protection of Grand County's natural resources, and strengthening recognition of local stewardship messaging.

Festival and Event Engagement

We participated in eight summer festivals across the county, setting up on-site booths to promote Stand Grand stewardship strategies and responsible recreation messaging. These in-person engagements not only created meaningful opportunities to connect directly with visitors and residents but also reinforced community values and encouraged responsible visitor behavior across Grand County.

National Public Lands Day Participation

By supporting National Public Lands Day activities through stewardship and volunteer initiatives, we reinforced the organization's commitment to protecting public lands. This involvement also encouraged community participation and helped ensure the long-term sustainability of Grand County's outdoor assets for future generations.

Summary

The 2025 Annual Report reflects a year of strong results and steady progress, with tourism continuing to serve as a cornerstone of Grand County's economy. Visitor spending reached \$563.3 million, supporting 3,600 jobs and generating significant tax revenue that benefits local services and businesses. Strategic marketing and public relations efforts expanded national visibility, drove measurable economic impact, and strengthened year-round visitation, while more than \$709,000 in community grants supported events, recreation, and cultural programs across the county. At the same time, expanded stewardship and community outreach efforts reinforced responsible recreation and long-term sustainability, ensuring tourism continues to support both residents and visitors well into the future.