

## **SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION**

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### **1.1 PURPOSE**

This plan has been prepared by the Town Red Cliff, with assistance from the Northwest Colorado Council of Governments, Silverthorne, Colorado. This plan is an official public document and policy guide affected by appropriate ordinances enacted by the Town of Red Cliff Board of Trustees. It is designed to be used by public officials and private citizens alike in making and implementing plans and decisions concerning the future physical development of the Town of Red Cliff. The purpose of the plan is to:

- Articulate Red Cliff's vision of what its future will look like and what its residents want it to be.
- Identify current community facilities, land use, capital improvement programs, historic and environmental resources, transportation, and population and provide a legal basis for their development.
- Estimate the impacts of future trends within the community that will be influenced by regional social, economic and physical development.
- Recommend policies that will achieve the Town's long term growth objectives.

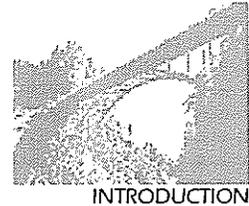
The principle objective of the comprehensive plan is to coordinate plans for all geographical parts and functional elements of the community.

### **1.2 RED CLIFF – THE VISION**

The citizens of Red Cliff would like a town that provides the traditional public services while maintaining the historical, mining mountain-town environment. They accept the fact that they may have to work harder to preserve this life style, even though they may in the near future have all the amenities of larger, more tourist and commercial based municipalities.

To maintain the desired character of the Town while continuing to provide and upgrade current services, Red Cliff may have to accomplish the following:

- Provide an environment conducive to measured, but steady growth.



- Encourage cottage industries, service industries, low impact light manufacturing, and other small businesses to be located within the town.
- Encourage development of residential areas in accordance with current zoning codes.
- Ensure that plans for facilities and utilities are accomplished to support the above.

### **1.3 PLAN BACKGROUND**

In 2004, the Town of Red Cliff Board of Trustees, as one of its yearly objectives, was to review town government responsibilities by creating a long range planning agenda that included a Comprehensive Plan and Three Mile Plan. Beginning at the first of the year in 2005, the Board of Trustees applied for a planning grant from Northwest Colorado Council of Governments to begin initial work on the comprehensive plan. On receiving the state grant to write a comprehensive plan, the Board of Trustees contracted a planning consultant to work closely with the Red Cliff Town Planner and Northwest Colorado Council of Governments to provide assistance in writing this plan.

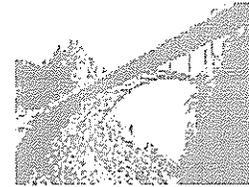
The Board of Trustees invited citizens to several public meetings to discuss issues that were important to them. The following examples reflect the many issues that were discussed such as: Community character, commercial and private growth, land use, community facilities, services, infrastructure, Community design, and tax base.

### **1.4 LEGAL OVERVIEW**

The legal authority for making, adopting and amending a comprehensive plan for the physical development of a municipality is granted by the State of Colorado through enabling legislation, Section 31-23-208, C.R.S. 1973 assigns this authority to the municipal planning commission. Statutory cities such as Red Cliff, in contrast to home rule cities, are bound by the State Statutes in this regard.

### **1.5 LOCATION**

Red Cliff is located in central Colorado within southern Eagle County; approximately 36 miles from the Eagle County seat in Eagle, Colorado and 110 miles west of the Denver metro area.



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## 1.6 REGION

The Town of Red Cliff is located in the mountainous region of Colorado. Elevations in the area range from 7,600 to over 14,000 feet. Public lands administered by the Department of Agriculture, White River National Forest, and Holy Cross Ranger District, adjacent Federal public lands including the San Isabel National Forest in Lake County, Arapaho National Forest in Summit County, and Pike National Forest in Park County. The Holy Cross Wilderness Area is just west of Red Cliff. Immediately north, east, and west is private land. The abandoned mining town of Gilman lies just to the north approximately 3.5 miles.

The principle route leading to Red Cliff is U.S. Highway 24, a two lane paved road that begins in Colorado Springs and ends just north of I-70. Historic route U.S. 24 into Red Cliff became the current business loop when the Red Cliff bridge over the Eagle River was built. The historic route, now called High Street, was cut into Battle Mountain descended into town then followed Water Street out of the town to the southwest crossing over the railroad right of way under the Red Cliff Bridge climbing back up to the present U.S. 24.

## 1.7 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A continuous settlement has been maintained at the junction of Turkey Creek and Eagle River since the Rohm party set up their permanent camp at that point in early April 1879. This was the first permanent settlement on Eagle River, and until 1900 it was the principal town of the region.

Until July 25, 1879, the settlement was either nameless, or known as Battle Mountain. On that day, the inhabitants officially christened it Red Cliff after the quartzite cliffs, stained dark red by the hematite iron present in the rock surrounding the town.

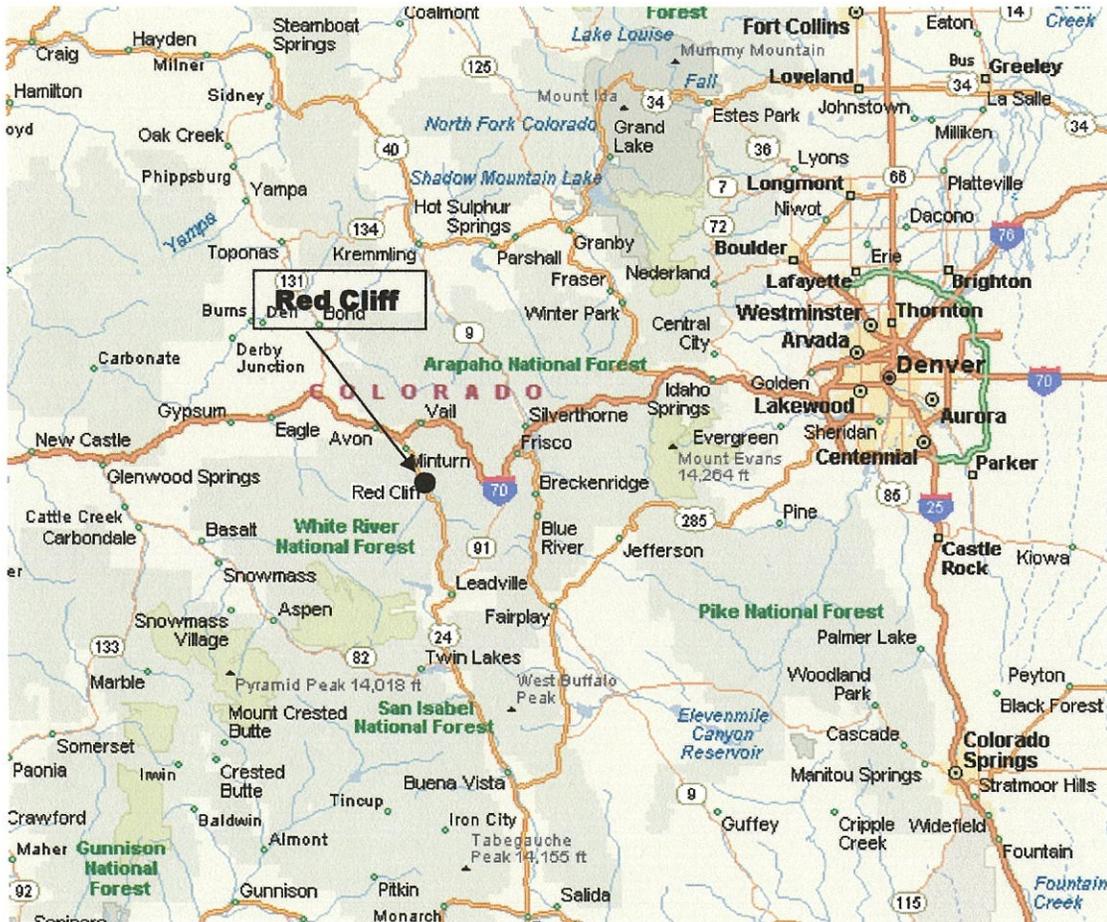
The first hotel was a two story building with cloth partitions called the Star. It remained the most luxurious lodging in Red Cliff, until the Quartzite Hotel was build some years later. In 1882, the following businesses besides the Star and Quartzite hotels were operating: The Southern Hotel, The Pacific Hotel, the Mountain House, the Iowa House, three grocery stores, two drug stores, one clothing store, one meat market, two stationery and newspaper stores, one lumber and livery stable, a stage line, a dairy, and two saloons.



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The county seat of Eagle County was designated as Red Cliff after its creation by the division of Summit County in February 11, 1883. The original county included the communities across the range such as Breckenridge.

**MAP 1: REGIONAL MAP**

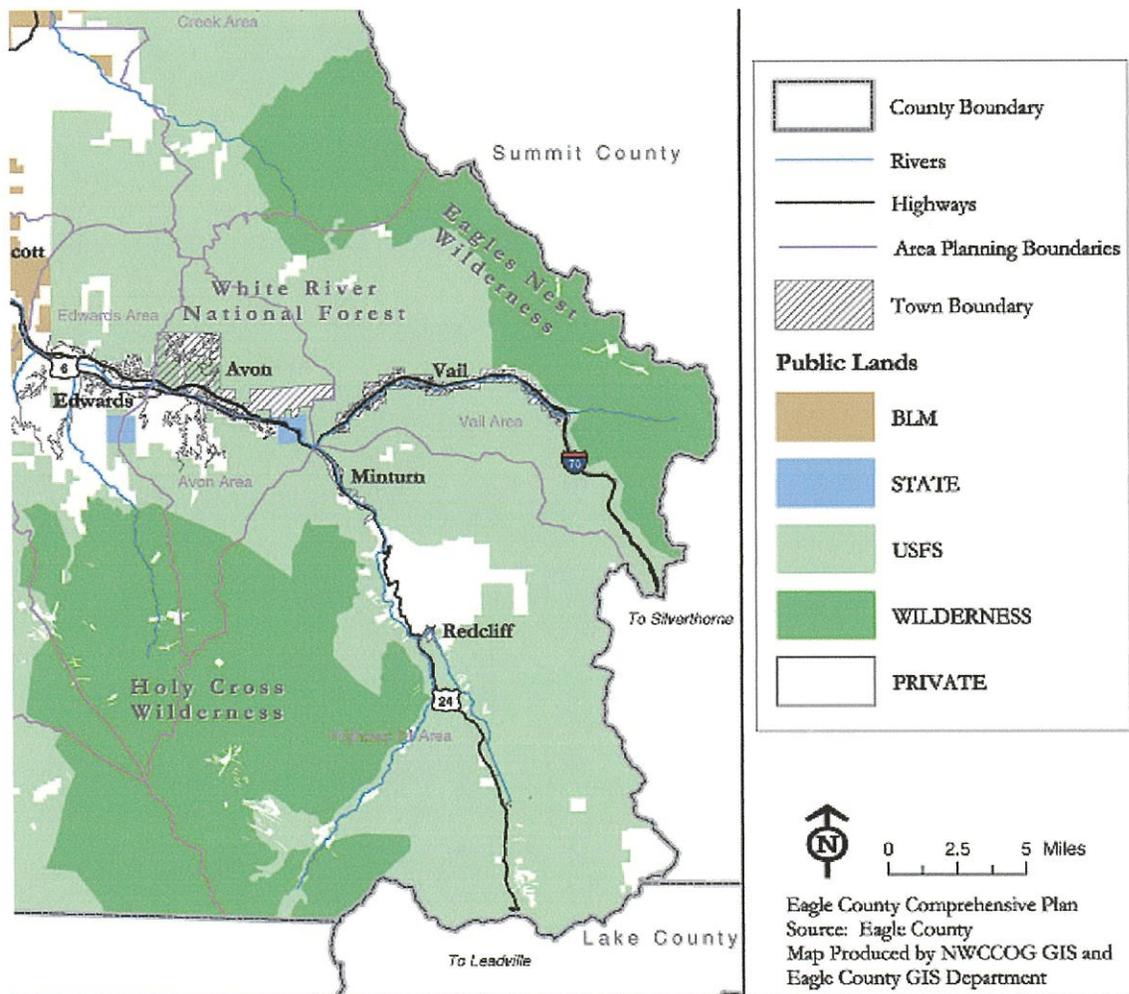


During the winter of 1879-80 many people left town due to the severe cold weather and snow. A census taken January 1880 showed a population of ninety-six people. However, in the spring, they began returning. Buildings were constructed and twenty thousand board feet of lumber was hauled into town from Leadville. The estimated population in mid-February 1880 was 250.



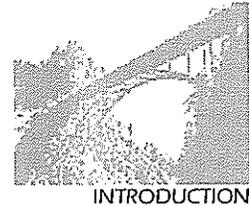
In 1880, the town was already a recognized post office. The Battle Mountain Smelter started operating in the fall and contributed toward citizen confidence in a growing town. However, a year later it was forced out of business by bankruptcy. It was during this year in March, the first board was sawed in Melvin Edward's mill and soon Burt and York's saw mill on Turkey Creek was turning out 8,000 board feet daily and A.W. Callan was thinking of building another sawmill higher on the creek.

**MAP 2: VICINITY MAP**



**RED CLIFF MASTER PLAN  
 Town of Red Cliff, Colorado**

This map is for planning purposes and should not be used for precise measurement



Common to boom towns of the period, Red Cliff suffered from disastrous fires. In September 18, 1882, early in the morning a fire broke out in the Southern Hotel. It burned completely to the ground. The fire however, spread to other buildings along Water Street and burned all that part of town. Again, in 1883 three fires occurred within a week and the citizens started a movement to establish a water system. The project was finally completed in 1887 when the water system was connected to Willow Creek, a tributary of Turkey Creek.

In November 20, 1881, the Denver and Rio Grande reached Red Cliff and opened for freight and passenger service. Passengers for Red Cliff would leave Denver at 7:30 p.m. and arrive at Red Cliff at 11:45 a.m. the following day. Direct connections were available at Red Cliff with stops for Gold Park. Pullman Sleepers were also available for night travel.

In 1890, Red Cliff had 383 inhabitants, and by 1900, the census showed only 256 people. The decreasing population came about as a result of the closing of many of the mines in the immediate vicinity of Red Cliff and a general decline in mining throughout the area. Up until the turn of the century Red Cliff was still the railhead for the mines around Battle Mountain, but in a few years, this was moved to Belden, just below Gilman, removing another incentive to population growth.

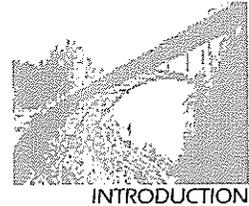
From 1895 to 1923 Red Cliff fought to keep the county seat against the rise of population in the Town of Eagle down valley.

## **1.8 GOVERNMENT**

Red Cliff is a statutory town and the oldest incorporated town in Eagle County being established in 1879 and incorporated in 1880. It is governed by a mayor and Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees is also the Planning Commission. There is currently a full time staff person to answer questions that come through Town Hall.

## **1.9 POPULATION**

Growth in Red Cliff during the past 100 years can be characterized as stable. In 1900 the population was 256 people. In 2000 the population was 289 people, an increase of 33 persons or 11%. Historically, the population has tended to rise quickly, slow, then decrease. Most of the historic growth and decrease popularly called "boom and bust" is attributed to the demand for



mineral extraction in the mining industry and ancillary supporting services such as timber harvesting and railroad maintenance.

The Colorado demographics table and the U.S. Census 2000 table below summarizes the general population characteristics of Red Cliff.

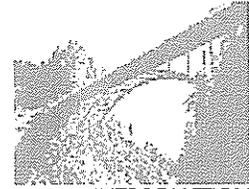
TABLE 1  
POPULATION TRENDS – RED CLIFF

Census Date	Population	% Change
1890	383	
1900	256	-33%
1910	383	+33%
1920	347	-9%
1930	544	+57%
1940	715	+31%
1950	556	-22%
1960	586	+5%
1970	621	+6%
1980	409	-34%
1990	297	-27%
2000	289	-3%

Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs

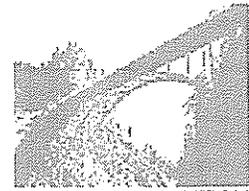
TABLE 2  
CENSUS 2000 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RED CLIFF

General Characteristics	Number	Percent	U.S.
Total population	289	100.0	100%
Male	160	55.4	49.1%
Female	129	44.6	50.9%
<u>Median age</u> (years)	32.9	(X)	35.3
Under 5 years	21	7.3	6.8%
18 years and over	229	79.2	74.3%



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65 years and over	29	10.0	12.4%
<u>One race</u>	282	97.6	97.6%
White	182	63.0	75.1%
Black or African American	2	0.7	12.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native	2	0.7	0.9%
Asian	0	0.0	3.6%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	1	0.3	0.1%
Some other race	95	32.9	5.5%
Two or more races	7	2.4	2.4%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	179	61.9	12.5%
Household population	289	100.0	97.2%
Group quarters population	0	0.0	2.8%
Average <u>household</u> size	2.65	(X)	2.59
Average family size	3.16	(X)	3.14
Total housing units	122	100.0	100.0%
Occupied housing units	109	89.3	91.0%
Owner-occupied housing units	74	67.9	66.2%
Renter-occupied housing units	35	32.1	33.8%
Vacant housing units	13	10.7	9.0%
<b>Social Characteristics</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>U.S.</b>
Population 25 years and over	230	100.0	
High school graduate or higher	161	70.0	80.4%
Bachelor's degree or higher	34	14.8	24.4%
<u>Civilian veterans</u> (civilian population 18 years and over)	30	12.2	12.7%
Disability status (population 21 to 64 years)	25	12.2	19.2%
Foreign born	6	2.0	11.1%
Male, Now married (population 15 years and over)	66	44.6	56.7%
Female, Now married (population 15 years and over)	58	55.8	52.1%
Speak a language other than English at home	113	40.4	17.9%

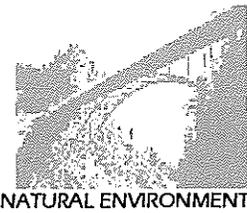


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(population 5 years and over)			
<b>Economic Characteristics</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>U.S.</b>
In labor force (population 16 years and over)	176	70.4	63.9%
Mean travel time to work in minutes (population 16 years and over)	36.8	(X)	25.5
Median household (dollars)	50,104	(X)	41,994
Median family income (dollars)	44,219	(X)	50,046
Per capita income (dollars)	19,864	(X)	21,587
Families below poverty level	5	6.8	9.2%
Individuals below poverty level	29	9.8	12.4%
<b>Housing Characteristics</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>U.S.</b>
Single-family owner-occupied homes	58	100.0	

(X) Not applicable.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Summary File 1 (SF 1) and Summary File 3 (SF 3)



# TOWN OF RED CLIFF, COLORADO MASTER PLAN

## Section 2 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

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