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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Delta County Awarded 1.415 Million Dollar Grant for North Fork Miners Trail**

**Delta, CO (July 22, 2022)** – Delta County has been awarded a grant by the Colorado Department of Transportation’s Multimodal Fund in the amount of 1.415 million dollars to construct the much needed and eagerly anticipated North Fork Miners Trail. The 1.2 mile trail will commence from the North Fork High School and Crossroads Park, ending on a planned interior trail at the Delta County Fairgrounds, in the heart of downtown Hotchkiss.

The completion of the trail will help eliminate the current safety concerns that exist for pedestrians and bicyclists using the heavily traveled State Highway 92. Once finished, trail commuters will journey along the North Fork of the Gunnison River corridor to access North Fork High School, North Fork Swimming Pool and Recreation District, and the recently completed Crossroads Baseball Fields. The North Fork Miners Trail will connect Hotchkiss with nearly 10 miles of the Nature Connection’s completed single track biking at Crossroads Park.

The Delta County Fairgrounds Master Plan has been finalized utilizing feedback from county sponsored public outreach meetings and an on-line survey. Results from the feedback included incorporating an additional mile for a senior/rehabilitative walking trail, and installing river paths and nature trails for youth and recreation participants. There will also be several access points to the river for rafting/boating, fishing, and recreational water play.

“In addition to greater access to nature and recreational activities located south of town, more economic benefits will be available to local businesses as the trail will connect downtown Hotchkiss and the County Fairgrounds with the North Fork High School and all the great recreational facilities that exist there;” said District #3 Delta County Commissioner, Wendell A. Koontz, who has been an integral part of securing the grant. Koontz also stated that the Hotchkiss community will benefit from increased tax revenues and spending at local businesses because communities along trails benefit from an influx of visitors going to restaurants and other retail establishments. Trails also increase nearby property values and make communities more attractive places to live.

The County has reached agreements on all trail land and rights-of-way for public access, and the grant will provide funds for trail construction materials and installation costs, including a pedestrian/non-motorized bridge over the scenic North Fork of the Gunnison River.

The Nature Connection is dedicated to breaking down barriers to the outdoors for youth and their families. They believe the addition of this trail will help immensely in growing the outdoor

program, giving kids and families better, easier, and safer access to public recreational areas and, in turn, increase usage of these public amenities.

“The costs of land acquisition for trails, trail construction, and maintenance are far outweighed by the economic and wellness benefits they generate.” said Delta County Administrator, Robbie LeValley, “By implementing free recreational activities to the public, any individual can partake equally. And, for those who may not have access to motorized transportation, they will now have the ability to safely enjoy the benefits of greater health and less stress through a connection with nature.”

To learn more about Delta County, please visit [www.deltacounty.com](http://www.deltacounty.com).

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