



February 1, 2020

Dear Don Booher; Tom Brady; Wynne and Liddy Breeden and David and Kristen Breeden; Christina Cain and the University of Colorado Museum of Natural History; Tom Carl; Mike Carson; Sam Fyler; Russ Gamon; Harvey DuChene; Bill Goodwin; Doug Hamel; Tom Hamel; Chuck Heald and Healdworks, Inc of Del Norte, Colorado; Supervisor JoAllen Blowers and Hinsdale County Road & Bridge crew; Katherine Heidt; Jud Hollingsworth; Monte Hannah; Leigh Ann Hunt (USDA Forest Service archeologist, retired); the Lake Fork Area Fire Protection District and then-Chief Bill Hagendorf, Mike Ralph, Mike Carson, Joe Wonnacott, Richie Hurd, Mike Tuttle, Darren Hardy, and Evan Milski; Jesse Kendall; Karen McClatchie; Jeff Merrill; Evan Milski; Michelle Pierce; Oklahoma University (OU) Professor Dr. Bonnie Pitblado & Chris Merriman (geoarchaeologist), Project Manager Josh Davis, Bill Ankele, Steve and Brenda Bowen, New Mexico archaeologist Rebecca Hawkins, and OU students Chandler Chaeirs, Ella Crenshaw, Rachel Igo, Rebeka Link, Lupita Menoza, Riza McCurkin, Sally Robinson, Amber Vinson, Cody Webster, Noah Place, and Jeremy Barton; Supervisor Marlene Crosby, Gunnison County Road & Bridge & Public Works; Mesa Moving & Storage; Charlie Morgan; Mike Schell; Nicolle Rosecrans; Rene Gianola and Rene's Garage; Linda Pavich; Steve and Marty Priest; Carl Stewart of University of Colorado Building Manager with National Heritage Responders/American Institute of Conservation; Mary Rupp, Archives Librarian, Universeity of Colorado, Colorado Springs; Becca Goodrum, Kirkland Museum of Fine and Decorative Arts in Denver; Frankie Colton, Sanford Museum; Loline Sammons; Tim Stroh, Michael Owen, Todd McMahan, and History Colorado; the Cultural and Historic Resources Task Force; Josh and Jessie Boyd of Alpine Archaeological Consultants; Mr and Mrs Doug Whitehead; Schylar Denham; Roy Shaw; Echo Weust; and Miriam Truitt.

On behalf of the Hinsdale County Historical Society board of directors, we would like to thank you for your generous assistance evacuating and storing our archives and exhibits during our hour of need last year. Please know that this time was chaotic for us and we sincerely apologize for leaving anyone off this list; we appreciate the commitment to historic preservation in our community, our region, and our state.

In March of 2019, Hinsdale County, Colorado, experienced unprecedented avalanche activity. More than 55 significant snowslide events occurred. Record amounts of snowfall compounded by debris flows into the primary waterways of Henson Creek and the Lake Fork of the Gunnison River created concerns for high run-off and potential flooding.

A Unified Coordination Group (UCG) of state and federal partners gathered to assist our local governments with preparedness, monitoring, mitigation, notification, and potential evacuation. Work included extensive public outreach, an Alert & Warning plan including evacuation routes, installation of a temporary siren, and monitoring of stream flows on Henson Creek and the Lake Fork of the Gunnison River. Volunteers from around the state helped place 17,000 sandbags; additional supersacks were placed around critical infrastructure. A temporary berm was constructed on the north side of Henson Creek and a portion of the Hidden Treasure Dam was deconstructed. Debris was removed along primary travel routes. Fortunately, cold temperatures and snowfall into June of 2019 resulted in high and sustained run-off but few flooding impacts occurred.

For the Museum and Historical Society, we completely evacuated all exhibits and archives, stored these items off-site of the Museum grounds and in Gunnison County, and sandbagged our facilities. The urgency of this effort and helping us mobilize assistance was driven thanks to the passion of Michelle Pierce and Dr. Bonnie Pitblado. Chuck Heald immediately and personally began delivering storage pods which were kindly stored on

the higher-ground Breeden property. The Fire Department assisted with multiple evacuations; Mike Carson helped build storage boxes for our most valuable artifacts. Other collections were stored in snowmobile trailers and relocated to locations in Gunnison. The volunteer and professional help to catalog, transport, and return artifacts was made possible by Carl Steward and Leigh Ann Hunt and so many resource specialists.

We installed a sump pump, emergency generation, and better lighting into our basement and constructed shelving for improved storage. We are grateful to have sustained minimal impacts and believe we will be better prepared for our next event, thanks to your generous volunteer labor and support! Thanks to financial assistance from the State Historic Fund and private donors, the majority of these unanticipated expenses were covered.

The Hinsdale County Historical Society strives to bring together people interested in history through the discovery and collection of materials which help establish, preserve, or illustrate the history of our county. Thank you.

With warm regards,



Grant E. Houston, President, Hinsdale County Historical Society & Lake City Museum  
Kristie Borchers, Shawna Shidler, Peggy Bales, Glenn Heumann, Marcia Connell  
Lake City, CO 81235