

Home to the most visited mountain resorts in the U.S.

# COLORADO BLUEPRINT

A bottom-up approach to economic development

30 60

## Regional Data

### Examples of Largest Employers

- Vail Resorts
- Aspen Ski Company
- Winter Park Resort
- Copper Mountain Resort
- Everest Materials, LLC
- Freeport-McMoRan
- Vail Valley Medical Center
- St. Anthony's Summit Medical Center
- Aspen Valley Hospital

### Top 5 Key Industries by Employment

1. Tourism & Outdoor Recreation
2. Health & Wellness
3. Financial Services
4. Creative Industries
5. Infrastructure Engineering

### Top 5 Regional Assets

- Open space and scenic beauty of Rocky Mountain Resort Region
- Colorado Mountain College
- Mountain resorts and recreation
- Aviation: Aspen/Pitkin County Airport, Eagle County Regional Airport, Kremmling Airport
- I-70 Corridor

### Where the Region would like to be in 5 years

- Recognize opportunities to help develop systems to build and maintain existing businesses while creating diversification of new businesses in the regional economy
- Recognize the economic opportunities that can be harnessed by community centered re-development to attract private investment
- Focus on improvements to transportation by the development of an international airport and by promoting viable strategies for the I-70 congestion issues

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Rocky Mountain Resort region (Region 12) is located just west of the Front Range in the northwest portion of Colorado and includes the counties of Eagle, Grand, Jackson, Pitkin and Summit. Northwest Council of Governments (NWCCOG) is the region designated as State Planning and Management Region 12. It is in the heart of the Rocky Mountains and is characterized by its mountainous terrain and very high overall altitude. Most of the area is located among the high peaks of the Colorado Rockies. The region is bordered in the east by the Continental Divide, in the north by Wyoming, to the west by Garfield County, and to the south by the Elk Mountain Range in Pitkin County.

The region has often been referred to as the Rocky Mountain Resort Region, given its rural character and tourism-oriented economy.

A main section of the region has I-70 running through it, the state's main east-west transportation corridor. This enhances the proximity of the region to Denver/Front Range metropolitan communities, as well as Grand Junction. This proximity to large metropolitan areas has contributed greatly to the region's popularity as a mountain recreational area.

The region's economy has transformed over time from a combination of mining and agriculture in its early history (1800s) to recreational tourism today. The quality of life, the mix of local businesses, a skilled workforce, a beautiful natural setting, and the international name recognition provided by world-class ski resorts are invaluable underpinnings unique to the region's economy.

## VISION

The Rocky Mountain Resort region is internationally known for providing a classic Colorado lifestyle with year-round resorts and unique high-alpine environment to guests from around the world and to locals alike. Our vision is to grow and strengthen our economy in diverse, collaborative, and sustainable ways.

## MISSION

The Rocky Mountain Resort region is internationally known as an active recreation region with diverse communities ranging from rural rangeland to mountain peaks, practicing sustainability in a cooperative business environment, boasting high-quality lifestyle and natural beauty. Specifically, the region will focus on:

- Becoming known as a hotspot for smaller entrepreneurial innovative businesses that diversify and balance the local economy
- Attracting businesses that enhance and support existing key economic drivers of the region

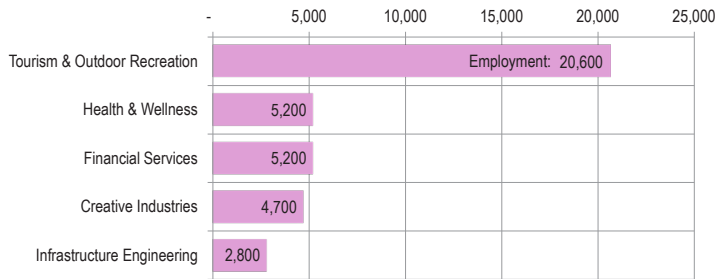
## QUICK WINS

- NWCCOG EDD completed first year as EDA-funded Economic Development District in 2013
- Colorado Mountain College (CMC) now offers 4-year bachelor degrees in business and sustainability
- All towns in Grand County have completed downtown assessments in the last 3 years, and are now working together on a county-wide economic development effort
- Expansion of air service at the Eagle County Regional Airport - 2 non-stop flights were added: Houston Flight in the summer and an international non-stop flight to Toronto in the winter 2014. Working on developing an international terminal
- Kremmling Memorial Hospital has expanded to Granby with the construction of the Middle Park

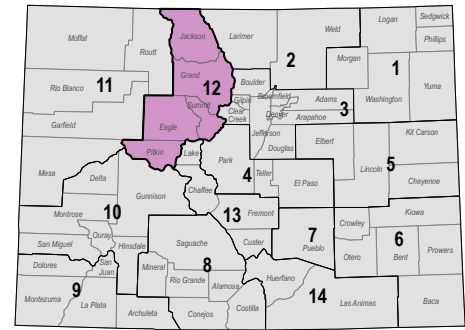
- Medical Center
- Gypsum Biomass Plant will be up and running early 2014
- Completion of I-70 Twin Tunnels Project in Clear Creek County has improved traffic flow from the region to the Front Range during peak times. This has benefitted the tourism industry
- NWCCOG completed the Regional Strategic Plan for Broadband – regional broadband coordinator will be hired in 2014 to implement action steps to improve broadband in region as identified in plan
- NWCCOG re-establishes Northwest Loan Fund which provides new and existing businesses in the region with the access to capital they need to create jobs. Re-capitalized the fund with \$500k from CDBG funds.

- NWCCOG will serve as host to NWSBDC in 2014. Two satellite offices will be established in Grand County: Kremmling and Winter Park.
- Passage of Ski Area Recreational Opportunity Act allows for more activities on USFS/ski area land during the summer. This has resulted in substantial increased summer tourism, evidenced by increased sales tax in the region (up 7% overall for region, summer 2013 vs. summer 2012.)
- Recovery of tourism revenues to pre-recession and record levels
- Awarded \$3 million from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, Energy/Mineral Impact Assistance Grant

## TOP 5 KEY INDUSTRIES BY EMPLOYMENT



Source: EMSI, 2013.2



State of Colorado, Region 12

### 1 Build a Business-Friendly Environment

#### GOALS

- Provide resources to assist communities in the region to create and foster a business climate that is friendly to existing businesses, as well as entrepreneurs looking to start a new business in the region
- Regional collaboration on business climate
- Identify and monitor federal, state, and local regulatory environment that impact this region

#### DELIVERABLES

- Develop tools necessary to retain businesses in region, including re-establish Northwest Loan Fund; development of monthly resources bulletin
- Create new NWCCOG EDD website to easily identify resources, programs and other tools
- Streamlining processes for doing business in the region
- Regional roundtables to identify barriers to business

### 4 Create and Market a Stronger CO Brand

#### GOALS

- Strengthen local brands
- Support the region's tourism businesses/agencies
- Build on destination marketing campaign
- Foster regional collaboration, building credibility
- Marketing strategy to promote top 5 industries
- Align with Colorado Business Brand

#### DELIVERABLES

- New NWCCOG EDD website to serve as marketing tool for doing business in the region
- No regional marketing brand will be established at this time; instead we will work on identifying and marketing each communities' unique brand through the website, newsletters, social media
- Create a collaborative and cooperative Region 12 partnership – NWCCOG EDD working group will continue to facilitate this partnership
- Promote success stories through all channels
- Conduct a campaign to businesses in the region on Colorado Brand

## CORE OBJECTIVES

### 2 Recruit, Grow and Retain Business

#### GOALS

- Entrepreneur incubator – build upon Vail Leadership Institute, CMC Entrepreneur programs, and other programs that encourage entrepreneurship in the region
- Build the capacity of the SBDC programs
- Support transportation solutions to improve congestion issues on I-70 (i.e. advanced guide way system)
- Remain competitive

#### DELIVERABLES

- Identify and inventory available business resources through monthly resources bulletin and up to date website
- Build the capacity of the NWCOSBDC's business consulting services throughout the region
- Establish regional Colorado InSite portal on NWCCOG EDD website; encourage local economic developers to populate the site with available properties
- Feasibility study for business incubator – first EDD working group meeting of 2014 had 3 speakers on incubator projects underway in the region; will be held at co-working space of Vail Leadership Institute – "Entrepreneurial BaseCamp"; further explore development of business incubation projects
- Complete a competitive analysis

### 5 Educate and Train the Future Workforce

#### GOALS

- Develop and support existing programs that help attract and retain the regional workforce
- Coordinate workforce training, education and business needs

#### DELIVERABLES

- Encourage programs that preserve the region's assets that serve to attract the workforce to this region
- Participate in Colorado Workforce Development Council's Sector Partnership initiative
- Identify business workforce and key industries needs in the region and connect to existing programs
- EDD staff will continue to serve on Workforce Investment Board for the region

### 3 Increase Access to Capital

#### GOALS

- Continue to market and promote the Northwest Loan Fund; keep the NLF capitalized
- Identify and serve as a clearinghouse of information on existing lending sources (i.e. SBA, CHFA, USDA Programs, etc.)
- Build relationship with banks to understand funding opportunities
- Explore the development of local investing opportunities

#### DELIVERABLES

- Northwest Loan Fund Director of business lending to serve as counselor to businesses in the region seeking access to capital; assist with NLF, and refer to other funding sources as appropriate
- Develop an inventory of private funding opportunities – this is a page on the new NWCCOG EDD website
- Market the Northwest Loan Fund through monthly resources bulletins, business resource events, website
- Form a local investment opportunities working group

### 6 Cultivate Innovation and Technology

#### GOALS

- Explore the development of programs that serve to nurture entrepreneurs and growth companies in the region, which will help diversify the regional economy.
- Improve broadband capacity in the region

#### DELIVERABLES

- Explore and implement, where appropriate, programs to nurture entrepreneurs – this may include business incubators, alternative funding networks, trainings, workshops, conferences for growth industries
- Execute regional broadband strategic plan. NWCCOG will hire a regional broadband coordinator in 2014 to implement the plan.

## STRATEGIC PROJECTS

- Development of broadband strategic plan
- Healthcare sector partnership development
- Innovation Index

## STAKEHOLDERS

### Towns/Counties - NWCCOG Member Jurisdictions of:

- Eagle County
- Grand County
- Jackson County
- Pitkin County
- Summit County
- City of Aspen
- Town of Basalt
- Town of Carbondale
- Town of Dillon
- Town of Eagle
- Town of Fraser
- Town of Frisco
- City of Glenwood Springs
- Town of Granby
- Town of Grand Lake
- Town of Gypsum
- Town of Hot Sulphur Springs
- Town of Kremmling
- Town of Minturn
- Town of Montezuma
- Town of Red Cliff
- Town of Silverthorne
- Town of Snowmass Village

- City of Steamboat Springs
- Town of Vail
- Town of Walden
- Town of Winter Park
- Other Partners:**
- U.S. Economic Development Administration
- Colorado Department of Local Affairs
- Northwest Colorado Council of Governments
- NW Colorado Small Business Development

- Center Colorado Workforce Center
- Small Business Administration
- Colorado Mountain College
- Vail Valley Partnership
- Grand County Economic Development
- WP/Fraser Valley Chamber of Commerce
- North Park Chamber of Commerce

- Aspen Resort Chamber of Commerce
- Summit County Chamber of Commerce
- Summit Independent Business Alliance
- Roaring Fork Business Resource Center
- Eagle County Airport
- Aspen CORE
- Eagle Valley Alliance for Sustainability



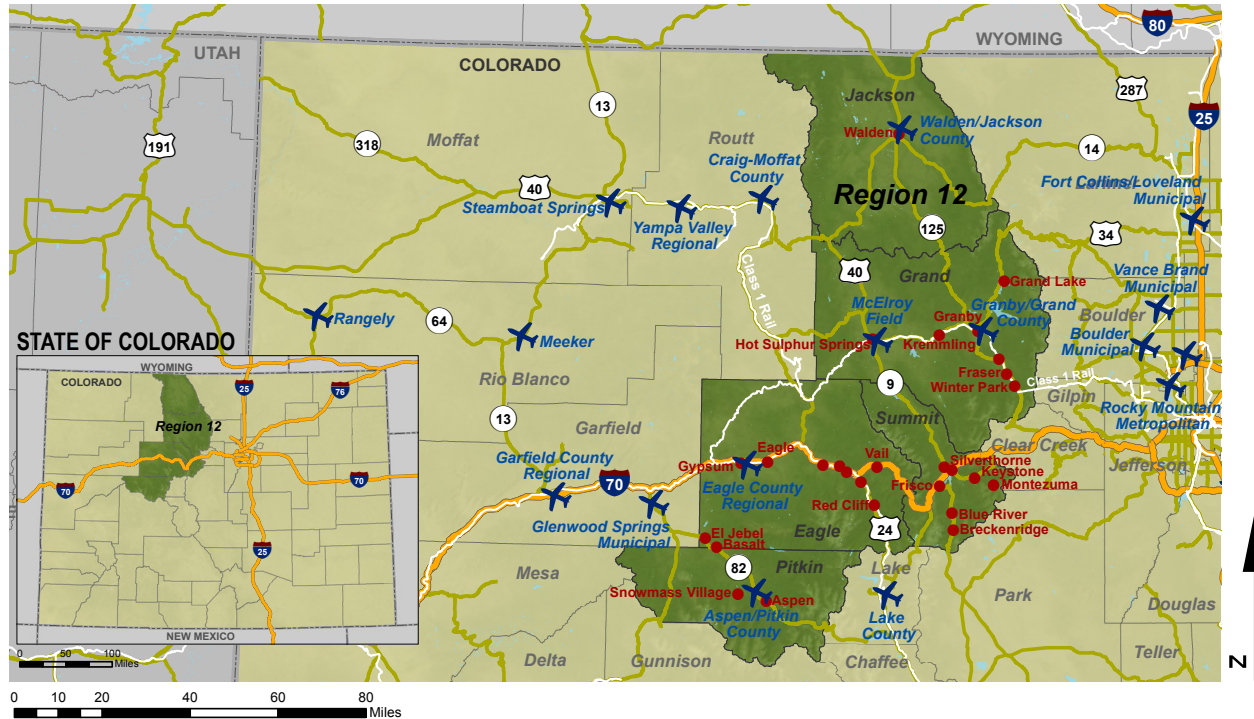
**COLORADO**  
Office of Economic Development & International Trade



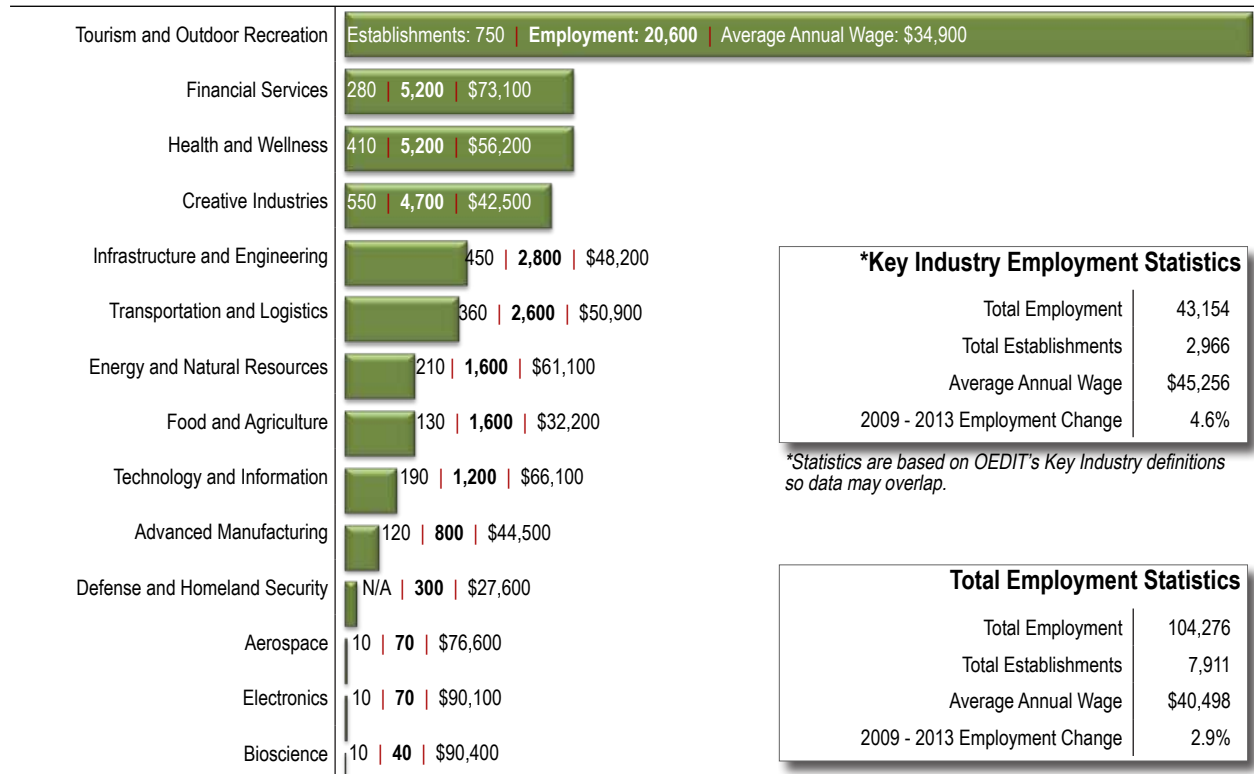
[www.advancecolorado.com/blueprint](http://www.advancecolorado.com/blueprint)

# Colorado Office of Economic Development & International Trade

## COLORADO - REGION 12: Economic Profile



### Employment by Key Industry



SOURCE: Colorado Office of Economic Development & International Trade and EMSI, 2013.2

## Top Employers by Employment

| Sectors* | Business or Organization | Jobs          |
|----------|--------------------------|---------------|
| ■ ■ ■    | Vail Resorts             | Not Available |
| ■ ■      | Aspen Ski Company        | Not Available |
| ■        | Winter Park Resort       | Not Available |
| ■        | Copper Mountain Resort   | Not Available |
| ■        | Everest Materials, LLC   | Not Available |
| ■        | Freepoint-McMoRan        | Not Available |

Note: Table does not include establishments that are primarily classified as Public Administration, Educational Services, and/or Retail Trade

\* Sectors represented by business and establishment locations

|                                    |                                       |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ■ Mining and Oil & Gas Extraction  | ■ Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation |
| ■ Real Estate, Rental, and Leasing | ■ Accommodation and Food Services     |

## About Top Employers by Employment

**Vail Resorts** - a resort company and leader in luxury, destination-based travel at iconic locations. They operate 10 resorts in the United States, four of which are located in Colorado. Vail Resorts also operates a number of hotels and condominiums. In addition, they have a real estate development division that holds, develops, buys, and sells real estate in and around resort communities.

**Aspen Ski Company** - located in Aspen, Colorado and founded in 1946, the company owns and operates four ski resorts in Colorado. In addition to skiing, the resort offers accommodations, restaurants, and tours. In the summer they provide gondola rides, hiking, and mountain biking.

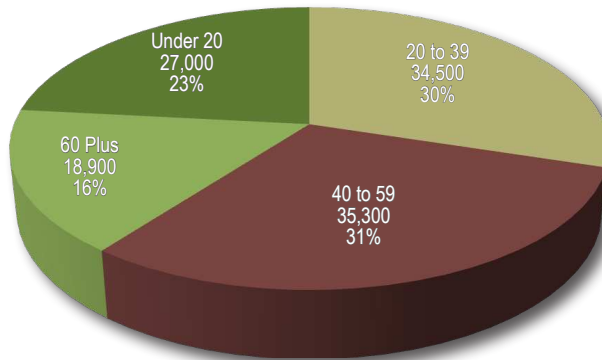
**Winter Park Resort** - Colorado's longest continually operated ski resort featuring over 3,000 acres of terrain including groomers, terrain parks, bumps, and steeps. The resort is 67 miles northwest of Denver and offers its guests a variety of activities and events.

**Copper Mountain Resort** - is one of the Summit County's largest ski areas with 2,465 skiable acres, including wide-open bowls for advanced skiers. The village offers lodging, shops, restaurants, and drinking establishments.

**Everest Materials, LLC** - is a family owned business that supplies aggregates, asphalt, and concrete materials to communities throughout Colorado. They contribute to many of the mountain communities, such projects include: the Lowe's retail store in Silverthorne, Williams Fork Dam (which provides water to the Western slope) near Parshall, and Copper Mountain Zip Line for the Copper Mountain Resort in Fisco.

SOURCE: Dun & Bradstreet, Equifax, Local Economic Development Groups, Corporate Websites, and Other Sources

## Population by Age Groups



SOURCE: EMSI, 2013.2

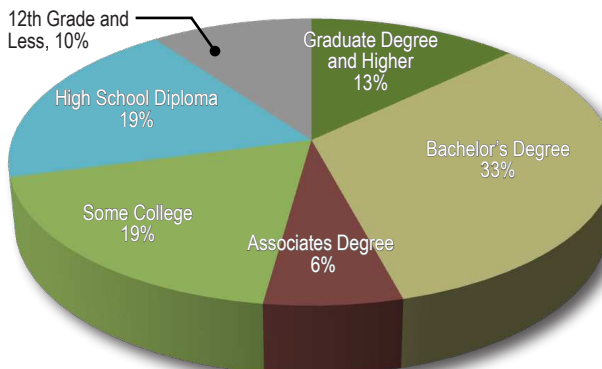
## Top Occupation Categories by Employment

|   | Jobs   | Median Wage | Annual Wage* |
|---|--------|-------------|--------------|
| Sales and Related                       | 17,800 | \$17.92     | \$37,300     |
| Food Preparation and Serving Related    | 12,300 | \$11.77     | \$24,500     |
| Office and Administrative Support       | 10,900 | \$17.21     | \$35,800     |
| Building Grounds Cleaning, Maintenance  | 8,400  | \$13.27     | \$27,600     |
| Construction and Extraction             | 7,500  | \$18.43     | \$38,300     |
| Management                              | 7,300  | \$26.97     | \$56,100     |
| Business and Financial Operations       | 6,800  | \$29.50     | \$61,400     |
| Personal Care and Service               | 5,200  | \$13.26     | \$27,600     |
| Arts, Design, Entertainment, and Sports | 4,400  | \$17.66     | \$36,700     |
| Installation, Maintenance, and Repair   | 3,700  | \$21.25     | \$44,200     |

\* Annual wage is based on a 40 hour work week

SOURCE: EMSI, 2013.2

## Educational Attainment



SOURCE: EMSI, 2013.2

## Population and Households

|                          |          |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Population               | 113,576  |
| Total Households         | 46,260   |
| *Median Age              | 40       |
| *Median Household Income | \$64,000 |
| *Mean Household Income   | \$87,100 |
| *Median Family Income    | \$81,100 |
| *Per Capita Income       | \$37,100 |

\* Average of median or mean values of all counties in Region

SOURCE: U.S. Census, 2010 and ACS 2007-2011 5 Year Estimate



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