

| GRAND JUNCTION, CO

GRAND ADVENTURE EXPANDS

In the shadow of the Grand Mesa, the world's largest flat-topped mountain, Grand Junction, Colorado ushers visitors into a world of unique recreation. Canyons and mesas, whitewater rapids, waterfalls and glassy reservoirs are all an easy drive from town. Labyrinth trails carve through the Mesa's 500-square miles of forests, boulder fields and scenic overlooks. Many lead to hidden lakes and waterfalls. Mountain bikers, campers, fisher people, hikers and folks content to simply breathe deep and take in the scenery all find contentment here. As the name implies, the city (Western Colorado's largest with a population of almost 150,000) sits at the junction of the Colorado and Gunnison rivers. They and other area waterways also offer spectacular scenery and plenty of options for fresh-air fun. Ancient rock art testifies of the past. Modern efforts protect its future and expand the roster of grand adventures.

In May, the Western Rivers Conservancy acquired 400 acres and four miles of river frontage along the Lower Gunnison River just south of Grand Junction. The gentle stretch of waterway is ideal for floaters who want an unparalleled look at the stunning canyons. The land will be added to the surrounding Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area which was designated a protected area in 2009. Its red rock canyons, ancient fossil beds and desert flora and fauna are more reasons to visit Grand Junction. ■



Above: The Gunnison River flows past land saved from gravel mining adjacent to the Dominguez Canyon National Conservation Area in Colorado.

Below: Bike riders on Monument Road, Grand Junction