



## 2023 Performance Report Dolores County, Colorado

The Region 9 Economic Development District of Southwest Colorado Inc. (Region 9) is a nonprofit, 501 (c) 6 public-private partnership that promotes and coordinates economic and community development efforts throughout Southwest Colorado. Region 9 covers 5 counties, 10 municipalities and the 2 Native American Tribes in Colorado (Ute Mountain Ute and Southern Ute). Incorporated in 1989, Region 9 is led by a 26-member Board of Directors; 17 from local governmental jurisdictions and 9 from the private sector.

### 2023 Dolores Representatives

**Dan Fernandez** – At Large, Secretary  
**Steve Garchar/Linda Yellowman** – Dolores County  
**Chauncey McCarthy** – Rico  
**Vacant** – Dove Creek  
**Brad Fox** – Loan Committee  
**Gus Westerman** – Loan Committee



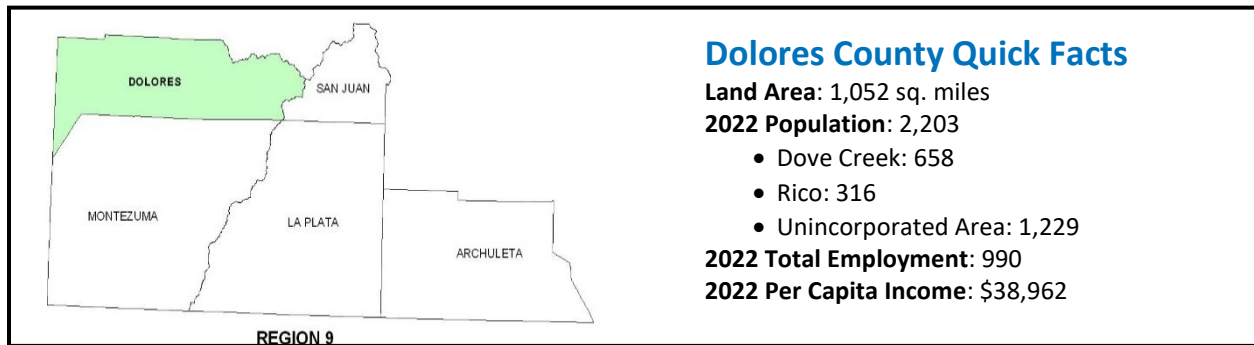
### Region 9 Staff and Contractors

**Laura Lewis Marchino** – Executive Director  
**Brian Rose** – Deputy Director  
**Jenny Stollar** – Business Loan Officer  
**Terry Blair-Burton** – Program Administrator  
**Shirley Jones** – Comptroller  
**Stephani Burditt** – Grant Compliance Specialist  
**Elizabeth Heine** – Office Manager

**Heather Otter** – Economic Development Project Manager  
**Shak Powers** – Regional Projects Manager  
**Tiffany Brodersen** – Community Grant Writer  
**Claire West**, SWORD Project Coordinator  
**Donna Graves**, Information Services  
**Elizabeth Marsh** – SCAPE Executive Director  
**Brittany Cupp** – SCAPE Program & Community Manager

## Region 9 Programs and Services

- Business loans
- Regional broadband, housing, transportation
- Colorado State Data Center local affiliate
- Technical assistance and special projects
- Southwest Enterprise Zone administration
- Research for community and regional projects
- Southwest Colorado Accelerator Program for Entrepreneurs (SCAPE)
- Grant Navigator
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
- Administrative support for San Juan Development Association with financials and microloan program
- Administrative support for San Juan Resource Conservation District, All Hazards, SWIMT
- Facilitation for SouthWEST Opioid Response District (SWORD)



**Technical Assistance** – Region 9 provides technical assistance in Dolores County, Dove Creek, and Rico by participating in community meetings and initiatives, researching, and administering grants, and advocating for communities at the Regional, State, and Federal levels. Activities are listed below.

### County-Wide

- Responded to 60 inquiries which increased from 52 inquiries in 2022, regarding business resources, loans, EZ Contribution Project inquiries, grant, and data requests.

	Loans	Data	EZ	Grant	General Inquiry	OZ	TOTAL
Dolores County	2	0	5	5	5	0	17
Dove Creek	4	0	0	0	4	0	8
Rico	1	2	24	1	7	0	35

- Worked closely with Dolores County Development Corporation (DCDC) and
  - Served on DCDC Board and attended monthly meetings.
  - Helped support the DCDC microloan fund.
- Participated with the Town of Rico on the High Alpine Roadmap Team.
- Participated with Dolores County on the Montezuma-Dolores Roadmap Team.
- Presented Region 9’s Economic Development Fundamentals and CDAP to Rico Town Council.
- Provided economic development training with CSU Extension intern in Dolores County.

- Assisted Montezuma County, Dolores County, and the Town of Rico develop a pilot program to transport Rico seniors to Cortez weekly for groceries, shopping, and medical appointments.
- Coordinated and led Colorado Division of Housing staff and CHFA on a tour of regional housing projects with visits to Dove Creek and Rico.
- Assisted Town of Dove Creek with water reservoir project.
- Participated in meetings with the Town of Dove Creek, the EPA and with Senator Bennet’s office to discuss the Big Canyon Water Pipeline Project to meet the Town’s water supply needs and explore the potential for Congressionally Directed Spending. Providing significant staff support.
- Assisted with the Town of Rico’s Energy/Mineral Impact Assistance Fund Grant application for the public works project.
- Assisted with successful EZ Contribution Project designation for Rico Fire District’s expansion capital project.
- Held bi-monthly office hours in Dolores County and Town of Dove Creek.

**Regional Highlights** – Region 9 EDD serves Dolores County through regional initiatives and programming including broadband, transportation, and transit initiatives, as well as coordination around regional housing including.

- Facilitated monthly SouthWEST Opioid Response District (SWORD) meetings. Region 9 EDD received a completed feasibility study to identify the best options to fill existing treatment gaps.
- Responded to 1,661 inquiries covering business resources, grants, and data requests across the region. This number decreased from 1,786 in 2022. Inquiries were 1,760 in 2021 and 1,228 in 2020. An increase in economic development staff across the region elevated the capacity within communities to manage inquiries.
- Conducted long needed audit of SCAN (Southwest Colorado Access Network) fiber.
- Received 1.55M in new funding including \$870K in CDBG funding; \$500K Colorado Forest Service Loan Fund, \$36,458 SBA Microloan and Technical Assistance funds; \$41K for Rural Technical Assistance Program (RTAP) for High Alpine recreation geospatial study as pass through for the High Alpine Roadmap groups; \$100K in Grant Navigator funds; \$40K for CEDS implementation funds to assist with SWORD Coordinator position.
- Successfully sponsored Higher Purpose Homes as Rural Jumpstart Business.
- Received NADO Impact Award for integration of Southwest Colorado Council of Governments (SWCCOG).
- Made 49 presentations to community organizations covering everything from Enterprise Zone, Grant readiness, Rural Economic development, businesses financing and data.
- Reestablished quarterly County/Town Administrator luncheons.
- Conducted quarterly Economic Development meetups for economic development professionals in the region.

- Provided significant technical assistance around Prop 123 baseline data and educating communities and counties on impacts.
- Provided quarterly e-newsletter and monthly Grant Digest.
- Established Transit website (southwestrtc.com).
- Hosted weekly collaboration meetings for broadband stakeholders and housing stakeholders across the region.

**Southwest Colorado Accelerator Program for Entrepreneurs (SCAPE)** offers in-depth mentoring, education, and access to equity funding for early stage and growing companies. The program has launched 52 companies based in rural Southwest Colorado. These businesses raised \$54M in capital contributing to the creation of 230 local jobs. SCAPE is the hub of the entrepreneurial ecosystem and hosts regional investment and startup initiatives. Visit [www.goscape.org/](http://www.goscape.org/). Region 9 is a proud investor in this program.

**Enterprise Zone Program** – Region 9 EDD is the Southwest Colorado Rural Enterprise Zone (EZ) Administrator and determines if a business is located within EZ boundaries, processes EZ tax certification forms, and administers the designation of EZ Contribution Projects and certifies donations. Businesses in the EZ boundaries are eligible for a variety of tax credits. Currently, all of Montezuma, San Juan and Dolores Counties, and sections of La Plata and Archuleta Counties, are designated EZ areas. Archuleta, Montezuma, Dolores, and San Juan Counties have also been designated as Enhanced Rural Enterprise Zones (EREZ) through 2024.

Between 2003-2023, Dolores County businesses made \$42.2M in eligible investments, claimed \$3.3M in certified tax credits, and reported 127 new jobs.

In 2023, Region 9 received a total of 792 inquiries regarding the Enterprise Zone Program. Dolores County generated twenty-nine of those inquiries. Twenty-two Dolores County businesses invested \$945K, claimed \$28k in tax credits and created four jobs. Compared to 2022, there were twenty-eight businesses that invested \$620k, claimed \$19k in tax credits and created nine new jobs.

An **EZ Contribution Project** allows donor contributions of at least \$100 (depending on the organization) to Enterprise Zone projects which are eligible for a 25% State tax credit on cash donations, and a 12.5% State tax credit on in-kind donations. Regional wide in 2023, there were 26 designated Enterprise Zone Contribution Projects. There were 7 new projects added, six renewals, and five projects ended. Projects generated \$1.2M in economic activity through direct and in-kind contributions. This continues our declining trend of participation with 2022's 25 Projects at \$1.3M, 2021's \$1.5M; and 2020's 30 projects at \$2.4M. A decline in contributions was expected because our region lost active projects to the new Homeless Contribution Tax Credit and many of our new approved projects are smaller organizations.

Enterprise Zone Contribution Projects that impacted Dolores County in 2023

- Rico Fire District
- Region 9 Economic Development District of SW Colorado – Broadband Project

**Data** – Region 9 offered data tools and prepared strategy and research reports that included data specific to Dolores County in 2023. Region 9 is a Colorado State Data Center local affiliate and provides reliable, unbiased, and timely regional socio-economic data to citizens and policymakers. All the District’s reports and data tools can be found at [www.region9edd.org](http://www.region9edd.org) under the Data tab.

- Region 9 Economic Snapshot 2024
- Regional Data Dashboard
- Regional Commercial Property Search Tool

**Loans** – In 2023, the County had no new loans and 3 loans paid off.

As a primary lender for start-up businesses, Region 9 provides commercial loans to businesses. Loan funding supports businesses in creating and retaining jobs, leveraging other funds, or exporting a good or service from the local economy. The Business Loan Fund (BLF) includes several Federal and State sources: Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) from the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT) (contracted through La Plata County and the 5-county region through an inter-governmental agreement); the USDA Intermediary Re-lending (IRP) & Rural Micro Entrepreneur Assistance Program (RMAP); the Economic Development Administration (EDA); Start Up Loan Fund through OEDIT; Small Business Administration Microloan Program (SBA) and revolved funds from previously restricted funds that are re-distributed in the community.

### Loan Clients

Silver Creek Food Trucks

Banger’s Bar & Pizza

Carhart Customs

Dickson Electric

Dove Creek Sinclair

K & J Customs

La Watha Bakery

Rico Mineshaft Inn

Thirsty Bird Energy Services

<p><b>Paid Off</b></p> <p>DC Rack Haus Enterprise Bar &amp; Grill Steele Investments, LLC</p>
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