

Visitors to the Ute Mountain Roundup (2019)
How many were there, where did they come from,
how can we get more of them?



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Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	1
Sales Tax Revenues	2
License Plate Tallies	3
Ticket Sales.....	3
E-Tix Visitor Information 2019	4
Online Survey	5
Heritage Tourism is Big Business	7
Other Benefits of the Event	8
Advertising is Important	9

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Executive Summary

The annual Ute Mountain Roundup Rodeo (UMR), began in 1930 and is typically held the second week of June. The Rodeo sees roughly 5,000 spectators, and 300+ contestants each year. An added bonus is the estimated 2,000-3,000 nightly visitors to the Frazier Carnival, attracting people from throughout the Four Corners area. Many of those visitors are spending a whole day in Cortez doing their shopping and enjoying a nice lunch and dinner out. Other rodeo focused community events include the Rodeo Parade, Library Days, the Chuck wagon Dinner, and the Rob Yates Memorial Cowboy Golf Tournament.

The UMR Committee would like to know where most of the rodeo and rodeo related activity visitors are coming from, how they learned of the event, and where they are spending their money. That information will give them a baseline in order to determine how they can make the best use of their limited marketing budget. **Information Services, Inc.** (Donna Graves) proposed to collect and analyze information to address the questions posed by the UMR Committee. This included: 1) sales tax revenues reported in Cortez during the event; 2) a tally of license plates each night at the Fairgrounds; and 3) an online survey of “non-local” visitors who purchased tickets to the event on line. For the purposes of this report, non-local refers to people from outside of Montezuma County.

The results of data collection for the 2019 UMR indicates that the venue is primarily attended by locals (Montezuma County, and neighboring counties in the Four Corners).

- **Sales Tax Revenues** – One expectation of the sales tax collection research was that sales would be higher during the UMR event, assuming that more people would be in town making a variety of purchases. However, average sales tax collections were higher during the weekend following the UMR event for each type of establishment with the exception of Restaurants.
- **License Plate Tallies** – There were 3,018 cars tallied over the course of the event. Vehicles from Colorado were the most frequent each night of the event (82%).
- **Ticket Sales** – In 2019, ticket sales (4,488 tickets sold) were up 3.4% from 2018. Ticket sales garnered \$65,057, with an average ticket price of \$14.50.
- **Visitor expenditures** – Based on the results of the online survey, expenditures per person per day totaled \$315 for dining, shopping and recreation.

Marketing the event by radio advertising might be the most effective avenue to reach the larger region, including cities such as Albuquerque, Phoenix and beyond. If the event were advertised at the National/International level, possibly as part of the advertising package offered by the Colorado Tourism Office¹, a larger audience could be reached.

¹ <https://www.colorado.com/association/colorado-tourism-office>

Ute Mountain Roundup 2019

Sales Tax Revenues

This information was collected by the City of Cortez. The City uses a tracking system called MUNIRevs in which specified businesses can be flagged to capture sales tax revenues at specific points in time, i.e. during the Rodeo. This information was used to see which retail sectors benefited the most based on actual (**average**) sales. As a benchmark, the same information was collected for a time period outside of the event. In this case June 13-15 was selected as no special events were being held in Cortez. Information was collected from 240 businesses in Cortez, it was a required field at the bottom of most returns for in-city businesses. The number of occupied rooms is an average. **Nonevent on average:** out of 6.46 rooms that were available to rent only 5.48 were actually occupied. **UMR on average:** out of 6.46 rooms that were available to rent only 5.26 were actually occupied.

Cortez Tax Collections Per Establishment Type

	Non event June 13-15, 2019	UMR June 6-8, 2019	% Difference
Occupied Rooms	5.48	5.26	-4%
Total Lodging Revenue	\$ 546.93	\$ 539.31	-1%
Total Restaurant Revenue	\$ 1,411.70	\$ 1,556.38	9%
Retail Revenue	\$ 7,600.69	\$ 6,017.06	-26%
Other Revenue	\$ 3.62	\$ 1.08	-235%

Source: MUNIRevs, City of Cortez

One expectation of the sales tax collection research was that sales would be higher during the UMR event, assuming that more people would be in town making a variety of purchases. **Interestingly, average sales tax collections were higher during the weekend following the UMR event for each type of establishment with the exception of Restaurants.** Sales tax revenue for Restaurants was 9% higher during the event weekend.

Because of its location within the Four Corners area Cortez has developed as a tourist crossroads and regional trade center for surrounding communities and unincorporated areas, including nearby Indian reservation lands (Ute Mountain Utes and the Navajo Nation) and communities in southeast Utah. Cortez also serves as the county seat. So, many of the local, and regional, shoppers may have changed their regular shopping and business days in order to attend the event without other encumbrances, such as a carload of groceries sitting in the hot sun.

According to the event Profit and Loss statement for 2019 concession sales of food and beer were brisk, though event merchandise sales were down. Overall, total income for the three day event was up about 11% from 2018 to 2019.

Ute Mountain Roundup 2019

License Plate Tallies

These were collected by parking lot attendants at each night of the event at the Fairgrounds. This information could only be collected at the state level. This information was used to estimate the ratio of local and non-local visitors.

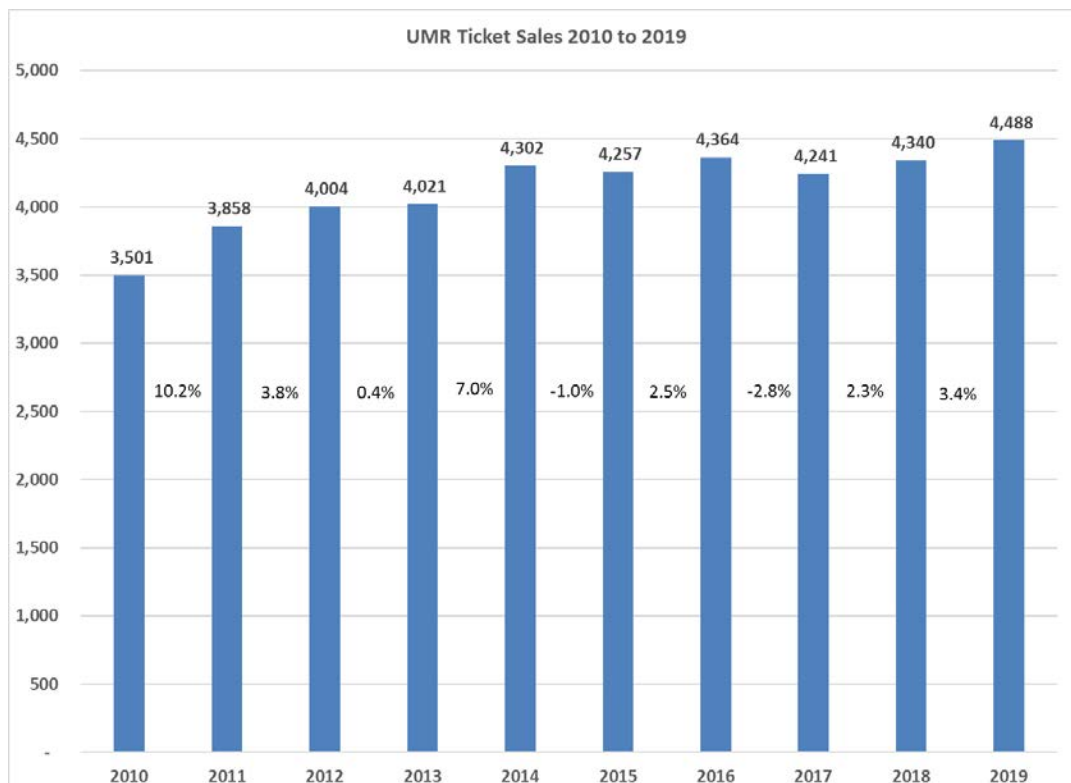
2019 Parking Lot Tally

	6-Jun	7-Jun	8-Jun	Total	%
Colorado	965	750	748	2,463	82%
Arizona	44	51	77	172	6%
New Mexico	20	48	84	152	5%
Utah	14	19	49	82	3%
Other	50	51	48	149	5%
Total	1,093	919	1,006	3,018	100%

Vehicles from Colorado were the most frequent each night of the event.

Ticket Sales

The number of tickets sold each year since 2010 is fairly consistent, and is constrained by the venue, which is located at the Montezuma County Fairgrounds. The bleachers are estimated to accommodate about 2,400 people, and there is limited space for standing room. The Fairgrounds, comprising 260 acres, could accommodate more visitors if more spectator bleachers were added, and more gravel parking areas were available.² In 2019 ticket sales were up 3.4% from 2018.



² Telephone conversation with Larry Copeland – Fairgrounds Manager, September 16, 2019.

Ute Mountain Roundup 2019

Advance sales	\$ 33,257
less online fees	\$ (3,227)
Gate Sales	\$ 35,027
Total	\$ 65,057
Avg sales price	\$ 14.50

Ticket prices vary by point of sale, by night, and by age group. The average ticket price is \$14.50 over the course of the event.

Gate (or other) sales	2,287	51%
Online adult tickets	1,821	41%
Online children tickets	380	8%
Total Ticket Sales	4,488	100%

The majority of tickets (51%) are sold at the gate.

E-Tix Visitor Information 2019

Outside USA	2	1%
Outside Four Corners	7	3%
CO - Mesa	1	0%
CO - La Plata	6	2%
CO - Montezuma	232	91%
UT - San Juan	2	1%
AZ - Apache	2	1%
NM - San Juan	3	1%
Total	255	100%

Of the 4,488 tickets sold, online ticket purchases accounted for 49% of sales (2,201 tickets). Of these online sales 83% were adult tickets and 17% children's tickets. Online Survey of "non-local" (out of county) visitors using data collected from online ticket purchases – ETIX. Most (91%) of the E-tix ticket purchasers were from Montezuma County.

There were very few non-local online ticket sales, only 15 survey invitations were sent out, and only five respondents (representing 13 people) completed the survey, though a \$50 prize was offered. The winner of the prize was Theresa Burke who shared her experience as follows.

Theresa Burke traveled from Charleston, WV (by air) in early June 2019 to visit her parents who lived in Farmington. She stayed with them in Farmington in their RV. Together they took a road trip to Utah (Arches and Moab) and returned via the Canyon of the Ancients and Cortez. Her parents had been to the Ute Mountain Roundup several times and planned to finish the road trip in Cortez to attend the Rodeo. That Friday (June 7th), the family of three had lunch in Cortez, visited the Walmart, bought gasoline and attended the Rodeo. They had previously purchased Rodeo tickets online. They did not attend the carnival, but did eat dinner at the Rodeo venue. Estimated purchases in Cortez were: \$50/per person on dining; \$100/per person on retail; and \$25 per person on entertainment – including the Rodeo. Total amount of purchases for their party of three was \$525, or \$175 per person. They returned to Farmington that evening.

Theresa thoroughly enjoyed the Rodeo. It was a unique experience for her as they do not have rodeo performances in her part of the country. She thought it was very professional, and smoothly run. She would like the opportunity to see more events like this.

Ute Mountain Roundup 2019

Online Survey

How did you hear about the Ute Mountain Roundup Rodeo?

Choose ***all*** that apply:

Newspaper Brochure Word-of-Mouth Radio
Internet Search Social Media Other _____

Results: Radio (3); Newspaper (1); Word-of-Mouth (1)

Did you visit other area attractions?

Choose ***all*** that apply:

National Parks/Monuments Other Public Lands (Forest Service or BLM)
Other _____

Results: National Parks/Monuments (4); Other Public Lands (1)

Choose ***One*** Answer:

How many people were in your party? 1 2 3 4 more than 4

Results: 2 People (2); 3 People (3) = 13 people represented

How many nights did you spend in the area (within 100 miles of Cortez)?

0 1 2 3 more than 3

Results: 0 Nights (6); 2 Nights (4); More than 3 Nights (3) = +17 Room nights

What town(s) did you stay in?

Choose ***all*** that apply:

Durango, CO Cortez, CO Bluff, UT Blanding
Other _____

Results: Durango (3); Cortez (4); Farmington (3); Local ? (3)

Ute Mountain Roundup 2019

What sort of accommodations did you stay in?

Choose ***all*** that apply:

Friends or Family	Camping	RV Park
My 2 nd home (part-time resident)	Vacation Rental	Bed & Breakfast
My own home (full-time resident)	Timeshare	Hotel/Motel

Results: Friends or Family (2); RV Park (3); My Own Home (6); Hotel (2)

On average, how much did you spend in the area on accommodations?
(Nightly rate- all people in the party)

Results: \$100 (2); \$30 (1); \$0 (10) = \$230 / 13 people
Average: \$18 per person per day

How much did you spend in the area on dining? (all people in the party)

Results: \$150 (2); \$70 (2); \$50 (9) = \$890 / 13 people
Average: \$68 per person per day

How much did you spend in the area on shopping? (all people in the party)

Results: \$500 (2); \$250 (2); \$100 (3); \$50 (3) = \$1,950 / 13 people
Average: \$150 per person per day

How much did you spend in the area on recreation/entertainment? (all people in the party)

Results: \$250 (2); \$200 (2); \$75 (3); \$25 (3); 20 (3) = \$1,260 / 13 people
Average: \$97 per person per day

Based on the results of the online survey, expenditures per person per day totaled \$315 for dining, shopping and recreation. This estimate should be used with caution since there were only five respondents to the survey, representing 13 people.

A visitor expenditure survey done in nearby Archuleta County for the Chimney Rock National Monument was based on 857 parties representing 2,114+ people. Estimated expenditures for accommodations, dining, shopping and recreation averaged \$145 per person per day in 2016.

Ute Mountain Roundup 2019

The results of data collection for the 2019 UMR indicates that the venue is primarily attended by locals (Montezuma County, and neighboring counties in the Four Corners). These locals spend money at the event for the Rodeo and Carnival, and some revenue is garnered through the Golf Tournament.

According to information provided by the Rodeo Committee the UMR has contributed an estimated \$400 to \$500 thousand dollars back into the community, including \$150 thousand into the Montezuma County Fairgrounds – benefiting the 80,000 people who use the fairgrounds per year. Improvements that the UMR contribute to the Fairgrounds are credited back to them towards the use of the facility.

Heritage Tourism is Big Business

The National Trust for Historic Preservation defines heritage tourism as “traveling to experience the places, artifacts, and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present.” The definition of a heritage tourist is broad, and includes any tourists who incorporate at least one visit to a historic site or landmark in their activities.

According to the U.S. Travel Association, 76 percent (or 129.6 million) of the 170.4 million leisure travelers in the United States participated in some sort of cultural or heritage activity in 2013.³ Those visitors spent more money overall during their trips and tended to travel for longer than did non-heritage tourists. Heritage tourists were also more likely to stay in hotels, shop, dine out, and participate in a variety of activities.

This same report found that, among all travelers surveyed (including both heritage and non-heritage tourists), 72 percent said that they “seek travel experiences where the destination, buildings, and surroundings have retained their historic character,” demonstrating the important role historic preservation plays in promoting all forms of tourism, not just heritage tourism.

Tourism (including heritage and non-heritage tourism) is big business in Colorado. According to a 2017 report prepared for Colorado Preservation, Inc., the benefits of historic preservation in Colorado extend beyond just preserving places that are meaningful to the history of the state and its residents.⁴ While that report focused on the economic benefits of the preservation of historic landscapes and properties, their findings can be extended to include prehistoric landscapes as well.

Around 73.3 million overnight (43 percent) and day (57 percent) leisure trips took place in Colorado during 2015. These tourists spent over \$19.1 billion on travel that year, supporting over 160,000 jobs throughout the state. In addition, tourism activities generated \$1.1 billion in state and local taxes, not including property taxes. Spending generated by overnight travel in particular accounted for approximately \$17.1 billion.

³ “The Cultural and Heritage Traveler – 2013 Edition”, Mandala Research, LLC.
<http://mandalaresearch.com/downloads/2013-cultural-heritage-traveler-report>

⁴ “Preservation for a Changing Colorado, the Benefits of Historic Preservation, 2017 Edition”, Colorado Preservation, Inc. <https://www.preservationbenefitscolorado.com>

Ute Mountain Roundup 2019

The activities Colorado visitors said they engaged in provide some clues as to the role heritage tourism plays in the state's tourism industry.⁵ For instance, Colorado overnight leisure trips in 2015 were more likely to include visits to landmarks or other historic sites (21 percent) than the norm for all overnight leisure trips taken in the United States (15 percent). The 2015 rate was also higher than that reported nationally (27 percent). Furthermore, 21 percent of overnight leisure trips in 2015 also noted cultural activities/attractions as a specific interest on the trip.

In southwest Colorado there are many types of businesses that support the tourist industry, including Resorts (lodging), 2nd Homes (construction and real estate sectors), Services (restaurants, wholesale and retail trade, entertainment venues), and Transportation (airlines, car rentals, guide services, etc.).

2017	# Jobs in Tourism Industry				Total # Jobs Tourism Industry	Total # Jobs Base Industries	% of Total # Jobs in Tourism
	Resorts	2nd Homes	Services	Transportation			
Archuleta	677	598	234	35	1,544	5,145	30%
Dolores	49	6	1	2	58	822	7%
La Plata	3,445	1,352	1,353	200	6,351	24,836	26%
Montezuma	798	209	323	126	1,456	9,554	15%
San Juan	138	36	37	4	215	364	59%
Region 9	5,107	2,202	1,948	366	9,623	40,721	24%

In Montezuma County, 1,456 jobs (15% of all jobs in base industries) were attributed to tourism in 2017 according to the Region 9 Economic Development District.⁶

Other Benefits of the Event

The UMR has impacts that go well beyond what can be measured in economic terms.⁷ It contributes to the quality of life throughout the area by strengthening communities, providing unique activities and events, builds awareness of diverse cultures and identities, enables family bonding and acts as an excellent source of leadership development.

The event brings thousands of locals and visitors out for the various activities. The UMR Committee would like to build upon this enthusiasm and participation to promote the rich western heritage and culture to target a nationwide audience. Expanding the event to include even more activities throughout the week could serve to attract more people for longer periods of time. Collaboration with other entities and organizations could create a synergy. For example, the Four Corners Ag Expo attracts a similar demographic. Other activities might be a cowboy poetry event or a cowboy shooting competition. Locally crafted beverages and culinary fare are a great attraction for most visitors and agri-tourism could be part of the whole western cultural package. Mesa Verde National Park and Crow Canyon Archaeological Center's visitors would no doubt enjoy additional evening activities to enhance their time in the area. This synergy would provide additional reasons to stay overnight or longer in Montezuma County.

⁵ "Colorado Travel Year 2015", Longwoods International.

<http://industry.colorado.com/sites/default/master/files/Colorado-2015-Visitor-Final-Report.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.scan.org/uploads/Final - Economic Snapshot 2019-4.pdf>

⁷ Email correspondence from Dena Guttridge 4-18-18

Advertising is Important

Marketing the event by radio advertising might be the most effective avenue to reach the larger region, including cities such as Albuquerque, Phoenix and beyond. If the event were advertised at the National/International level, possibly as part of the advertising package offered by the Colorado Tourism Office⁸, a larger audience could be reached.

Advertising is one of the most important factors that help the tourism industry to generate tourists from both the local and international marketplace.⁹ The tourism sector is responsible for promoting the natural resources, culture, heritage, etc. that help every visitor in experiencing the destination. Tourism advertising helps the visitor to get familiar with the place even before visiting it personally.

There are three major roles that advertising plays in the tourism industry:

- To inform tourists to visit a destination and everything tourists need to know about the place.
- Persuade tourists to visit a destination.
- To remind tourists about a destination and where to do all the bookings from.

Undoubtedly, advertising is important for any business. Similarly, in the travel business, it plays a key role to entice the customer (tourist). Technically, tourism is not a product. It is intangible so unlike products, industries cannot sell it to their customers. So the industries sell the destination on the basis of the customer's imagination skills. In Montezuma County that imagination could focus on the already vibrant western heritage theme and other opportunities for outdoor enthusiasts such as world class hunting, fishing, hiking, biking, birding and much more.

⁸ <https://www.colorado.com/association/colorado-tourism-office>

⁹ <https://travel.earth/why-tourism-advertising-important/>