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MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Monument Trail Chainbreaking Celebration Trail Completion Marks Major Milestone in Outdoor Access, Conservation and Community Connectivity

GRAND JUNCTION, Colo. April 24, 2025 – Colorado West Land Trust (CWLT) and the City of Grand Junction will host a chainbreaking ceremony on Friday, May 2, at 4 p.m. at the Lunch Loops Trailhead to celebrate the completion of the final phase of the Monument Trail. The event will feature food trucks and a group ride to commemorate the long-awaited connection between the Colorado Riverfront and the iconic red rock landscapes at the base of the Colorado National Monument.

The completion of this three-mile paved trail realizes a decades-old vision to connect the city's neighborhoods with one of the most popular natural areas in the area. The Monument Trail provides a critical piece of outdoor recreation infrastructure that supports the local economy, promotes healthier lifestyles, and helps preserve the natural beauty of the region.

"The completion of this trail marks a significant milestone for our community—one that reflects years of planning, advocacy, and collaboration among many key partners. As a cyclist myself, I understand the value of safe, accessible spaces for people to walk, bike, and move through our city in ways that support both health and sustainability. This trail is more than a path; it's a connection point—linking neighborhoods, promoting active transportation, and enhancing quality of life. It's also part of a broader commitment to building a community that supports a variety of travel choices for all residents," said Grand Junction Mayor Abram Herman.

Once only accessible via singletrack dirt trails, the Lunch Loop/Tabeguache area can now be explored by walkers, runners, bikers, kids on scooters, families with strollers, and individuals of all ages and abilities. The trail winds through native vegetation, offering views of the Colorado National Monument, Grand Mesa and Bookcliffs, and provides a safe, scenic way to experience nature up close.

In addition to providing easier access to nature, the trail serves a broader purpose. It is now part of a multi-modal transportation network — a place where commuters can ride from home to work, students can safely travel to school, and mountain bikers can reach Lunch Loop without ever getting in a car.

The Monument Trail forms the backbone of the Redlands Loop, a 10-mile route that connects desert, riparian and lake ecosystems in one breathtaking ride through Lunch Loop, Connected Lakes, the Audubon Preserve, the Riverfront and nearby neighborhoods.

“The Monument Trail represents what we can achieve when we work together to balance recreation with conservation,” said Rob Bleiberg, executive director of Colorado West Land Trust. “It’s a legacy project that protects the land we love while making it more accessible to the community.”

“This has truly been a team effort to secure the space, conserve this natural resource, and build a network for active transportation for all those that will travel along this trail” said Trent Prall, City of Grand Junction Engineering and Transportation director. We’re proud of this investment in infrastructure that promotes health, tourism, and outdoor recreation.”

The Monument Trail is the result of years of collaboration among Colorado West Land Trust, the City of Grand Junction, Mesa County, the Regional Transportation Planning Office, and the Bureau of Land Management. Since 2012, Colorado West Land Trust has partnered with the City on nine land transactions, conserving 213 acres of public open space and raising more than \$5 million to support land acquisition and trail development.

Funding for the final phase of trail was secured by the city and raised funds in partnership with CWLT and a Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) grant. A \$1.5M GOCO grant provided the majority funding of the first part of the Monument Connect trail from Downtown Grand Junction to the Lunch Loop trailhead that opened in 2019. This second and final part of the Monument Trail completes the trail from the Lunch Loop trailhead to Jurassic Flats trailhead at the footsteps of the Colorado National Monument. A \$500k GOCO was provided for this final segment. Proceeds from the Colorado Lottery fund all GOCO grants, Colorado Parks and Wildlife and direct allocation to agencies providing parks and recreation such as the City of Grand Junction and Mesa County.

Additional partners include the Monument Stewards, Grand Valley Audubon, One Riverfront, The Cycle Effect, Riverside Educational Center, Eureka!, COPMOBA, Grand Valley Outdoor Recreation Coalition and the Mesa County Trails and Restoration Crew, all of which work together to promote recreation in balance with stewardship.

To learn more about the history and vision behind the Monument Trail, visit cowestlandtrust.org/monument-trail.

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About Colorado West Land Trust:

Colorado West Land Trust, a private, charitable nonprofit organization, has conserved more than 144,000 acres across six western Colorado counties: Delta, Gunnison, Mesa, Montrose, Ouray and San Miguel. Its mission is to protect and enhance agricultural land, wildlife habitat and scenic lands in western Colorado to benefit the community at large, enrich lives, provide opportunities for outdoor recreation, and ensure our connection to land for generations to come. To learn more about Colorado West Land Trust’s work or to contribute, visit cowestlandtrust.org.