

OTERO MUSEUM

The Otero Museum, located at 3rd & Anderson Ave in La Junta, documents and illustrates the history of Otero County. The museum's primary historical coverage ranges from about 1875 through the end of World War II. The exhibits are designed and arranged to show how residents of the area lived and conducted their business. Exhibits at the museum illustrate transportation, military, postal, agricultural, business, school, and many other aspects of life beginning in pioneer times. The seven building museum is open from June 1-September 30, Monday-Saturday and admission is free.

www.oteromuseum.org

KOSHARE INDIAN MUSEUM

The Koshare Indian Museum, located in La Junta, houses a world-class collection of Native American art and artifacts focusing on the Plains and Pueblo tribes. The building, built in 1949, is a tri-level museum with an attached Kiva that is built with the largest self-supporting log roof in the world. The museum is open seven days a week and there is a fee for admission. The Koshare Indian Dancers, members of a local Boy Scout troop, perform interpretations of Native American dance at Summer and Winter Ceremonial shows at the Kiva.

www.visitlajunta.net

ROCKY FORD MUSEUM

The museum, located at 1005 Sycamore Avenue in Rocky Ford, is housed in the fabulous Carnegie Library which was built in 1908 and converted to a museum in 1976. The building itself, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is worth the stop alone. The museum follows the history of Rocky Ford from it's founding through the 20th century. Featured exhibits include a history of the Arkansas Valley Fair, the oldest fair in the state, and agricultural history including the world famous melons and beet sugar industry. The museum is open June 20-October 1, Tuesday-Saturday and admission is free.

FOWLER HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Located at 114 Main in Fowler, the Fowler Historical Museum houses artifacts from the earliest Native American people, articles from typical pioneer homesteads, farm implements, pioneer schools, and general 20th century and military memorabilia. You may browse at your own pace.

For more information call (719)263-4046

SOUTHEAST COLORADO

ENHANCED RURAL ENTERPRISE ZONE

The Colorado Enterprise Zone (EZ) Program is designed to promote a business-friendly environment in economically distressed areas by offering state income tax credits that incentivize businesses to locate and develop in and non-profit organizations to assist with the needs of these communities. The Enhanced Rural Enterprise Zone (EREZ) program provides greater financial incentives to businesses to promote and encourage new job creation in designated rural Enterprise Zone counties.

1. 3% Investment Tax Credit of equipment purchases
2. 1.5% Commercial Vehicle Investment Tax Credit of commercial vehicle purchases
3. New Employee Tax Credit \$1,100 per net new job; additional \$2,000 per new job located in EREZ
4. Agricultural Processor New Employee Credit \$500 per new job; additional \$500 per new job located EREZ
5. 12% Job Training Tax Credit of qualified expenses
6. Employer Sponsored Health Insurance Credit \$1,000 per covered employee
7. R&D Tax Credit 3% of increased R&D expenditures
8. Vacant Building rehab Tax Credit 25% of rehab
9. Contribution Tax Credit 25% cash - 12.5% in-kind contributions to EZ projects
10. Manufacturing/Mining Expanded Sales and Use Tax Exemption
11. Local incentive flexibility possible if located in EZ

www.choosecolorado.com/ez

OTERO COUNTY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Otero County Economic Development promotes responsible, sustainable development and growth through the expansion and/or retention of the county's business and agricultural sectors. The location of Otero County was recognized by the pioneers as a trade center and the same outlook remains today as it continues to be the trade hub for Southeastern Colorado. The diverse economy of Otero County consists of industry, agriculture, historical sites, and recreational activities. Otero County Economic Development offers assistance in relocation, expansion, or new business startups to Otero County. Call for more information (719)241-4992.

SOUTHEAST COLORADO

ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT, INC.

(SECED, Inc.)

Created in 1986 by the counties of Baca, Bent, Crowley, Kiowa, Otero, and Prowers, SECED administers programs in cooperation with our 31 members, comprised of local governments.

SECED provides incentives and develops promotional activities that will market and advertise the advantages of locating a business in the Southeast Colorado area, create a positive identity, encourage retention and expansion of existing business, promote redevelopment, expand the region's tourism industry, attract new businesses, and generally enhance the economic growth of the area.

- Promotes economic development through tax credit incentives
- Business loan fund within the 6 county area
- Owner occupied housing rehab - Baca, Kiowa, and Prowers Counties
- Technical assistance
- Regional Transportation Planning Region 2
- Region 6 planning and management agency
- SECOG Southeast Council of Governments
- Opportunity Zone Designation (2019)

The vision of SECED is to challenge our citizens to continually reach for superior social and economic characteristics, utilize natural resources to the fullest potential in cooperation with a multi-agricultural economy, and assert a vigorous campaign for aesthetic improvements to enhance business recruitment and retention.



Southeast Colorado Enterprise Zone Administrator
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www.seced.net



OTERO COUNTY

Otero County is centrally located in the Southeastern region of Colorado and considered a trade hub for the area. Founded in 1889 it was named in honor of Miguel Antonio Otero, an early businessman, banker, politician, and railroad promoter. Today the area is rich with recreational activities, historical sites, and western traditions as well as birding trails, excellent schools, and opportunities for business expansion and relocation. With mild winters and hot summers, the semi-arid climate is excellent for ranching and farming. Most employment for the citizens is found in the area of industry, agriculture, historical sites, and recreational activities. The county is a wildlife paradise rich with deer, elk, big horn sheep, antelope, bobcats, and over 400 species of birds. The museums, cultural events, recreation, and local amenities enhance the attraction of the area as a great place to visit but a better place to live.

Home to the towns of La Junta, Cheraw, Fowler, Manzanola, Rocky Ford, and Swink

- La Junta (The Junction), county seat
- Population (2015) 18,343
- Area 1,268 square miles / 14.8 people per sq. mile
- Average Elevation 3,600 feet
- Diverse terrain
- Cost of living index 83.05%
- Unemployment rate (2016) 4.0%
- Median age 42.9 years
- Low crime rate / safe towns
- Clean air
- Historical and agricultural heritage
- Diverse business base
- Semi-arid climate
- Average annual precipitation 13 inches
- Public schools / 6 Districts provide K-12 education
- Otero Junior College
- Multiple churches
- Hospital
- Nursing care facilities
- Assisted living facilities
- Airport

PRAIRIE CANYONS TRAIL / PLOVER TRAIL COLORADO BIRDING TRAIL

Otero County is home to the Prairie Canyons and the Plover Trail Regions of the Colorado Birding Trail. The southern Prairie Canyons area is a maze of canyons, an arid forest with wildlife typical of the desert southwest. You can view Burrowing Owls, Scaled Quail, horned lizards, Cassin's Kingbirds, Greater Roadrunners, Curve-billed Thrasher, various nesting raptors, and Rufous-crowned Sparrows. The geography may be harsh but the trail offers many surprises with both public and private options. The Plover Trail is considered the trail that has it all. With a wide diversity of plovers; Mountain, endangered Snowy and Piping, Semipalmated, Black-bellied, and American Golden Plovers. Much diversity can be found in the mammals, reptiles, weather patterns, and landscapes.

www.coloradobirdingtrail.com

BENT'S OLD FORT

Bent's Old Fort built in 1833 by brothers William and Charles Bent, and Ceran St Vrain was considered an adobe castle on the plains. Since the area offered very little in the way of lumber, adobe bricks were used and with regular maintenance proved to be durable in the dry climate and still is today. Originally built as a trading post it soon became a commercial hub of civilization, a social center, a place of refuge and safety, and a place of rest and relaxation for people of all races along the Santa Fe Trail. It was a second home to many of the West's most famous mountain men and scouts, as well as a stopping place for travelers, trappers, and explorers. In 1846 the United States went to war with Mexico and things were forever changed at Bent's Fort. In 1849, after a cholera epidemic, the fort was abandoned, fires were set, and explosions were heard. Today the fort is a National Historic Site sitting on the mountain branch of the Santa Fe Trail where the sights, sounds, and smells of the past are recreated by living historians in period dress and shared in guided tours, demonstrations, and special events. The fort is located at 35110 State Highway 194 E, La Junta, Colorado and is open year round, except for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years Day. Hiking can be enjoyed while visiting the fort. Interpretive signs along the 1 1/2 mile trail tell of the river ecosystem, the Santa Fe Trail, and the fort. A number of species of birds can be observed while on the hike.

www.nps.gov

PICKET WIRE CANYONLANDS

Withers Canyon is the trailhead for Picket Wire Canyon and is the only allowable access to the canyon lands for the general public. Picket Wire Canyon is located on the Comanche National Grassland south of La Junta. Hiking, non-motorized bicycles, and horseback riding are permitted. The hike is a long hike so you must plan your time accordingly. As you hike towards the dinosaur tracks, you will encounter the Dolores Mission and cemetery, which was built between 1871 and 1889 by Mexican pioneers settling the valley. Partial remains of the mission and cemetery are still visible. To view the dinosaur tracks you will need to cross the river so please use caution when wading across. The Rourke Ranch sits at the end of this hike if you choose to go the full distance. The Rourke Ranch, also known as the Wineglass Ranch, was a cattle and horse ranch founded in 1871. The ranch was sold in 1971, 100 years later, and was one of the oldest and most successful enterprises in southeast Colorado expanding from the original 40 acres to 52,000 acres. Total round trip distance of this hike is 17.4 miles from Trailhead to the Rourke Ranch and back. Due to the length and difficult terrain, this hike is advanced and you should be in good physical condition. No overnight camping is allowed. Guided auto tours are the easiest way to experience Picket Wire Canyonlands if you have your own 4 wheel drive vehicle. The guides are from the Forest Service but advance reservations are required and fees are applicable.

www.recreation.gov

DINOSAUR TRACKS

Cut into the banks of the Purgatoire River in Southeast Colorado, these primitive canyons are home to the largest documented set of dinosaur footprints in North America. 1400 prints in 100 separate trackways extending across a quarter mile expanse of bedrock are visible. 150 million years ago, this area was part of a large, shallow lake and was teeming with Brontosaurus and Allosaurus. As these massive creatures plodded along the muddy edge of this lake they left their footprints in the mud to be eventually buried and turned to stone. The guides will show you difficult to find dinosaur tracks and the interesting prehistoric, historic, and natural features of the canyons.

www.fs.fed.us/visit/destination/picket-wire-trail

ARKANSAS VALLEY BALLOON FESTIVAL

The first Arkansas Valley Balloon Festival was held in 1988 and is held each November on the first full weekend. The three day gathering includes the Balloon Festival, an art show, and a photo contest. The festivities start on Thursday morning at 6:45 am with the Wake Up Breakfast on North Main Street sponsored by the Lions Club. The balloonists arrive on Friday and provide fun demonstrations at local schools. On Saturday and Sunday, the balloons are launched at the Rocky Ford High School beginning at 6:30 a.m. Tethered rides are offered on Sunday afternoon. During the three day festival you are encouraged to visit the photo contest, art show, and sale.

www.exploresoutheastcolorado.com

THE ARKANSAS VALLEY FAIR

The Arkansas Valley Fair is the oldest, continuously operating, fair in the State of Colorado. The roots of the fair can be traced back to George Swink, a State Senator and agriculturalist who distributed free watermelons on "Watermelon Day" beginning in 1878. From this event the fair was established in 1892. The fairgrounds located at 800 North 9th Street in Rocky Ford is home to the Adobe Stables, a Works Progress Administration (WPA) project.

www.arkvalleyfair.com

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION

In 1935, the Works Progress Administration (WPA), later called the Work Projects Administration, was created under President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal. This was a massive employment relief program created to provide jobs and income to the unemployed during the Great Depression. The philosophy was to put the unemployed back to work in jobs which would serve the public and save the skills and self esteem of the workers. While attending the Arkansas Valley Fair in Rocky Ford you can visit the Adobe Stables. Construction began in March 1938 and was completed on November 25, 1938. It is estimated the construction required 60,000 adobe bricks. In 2007 the Adobe Stables was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

www.history.com/topics/works-progress-administration

