

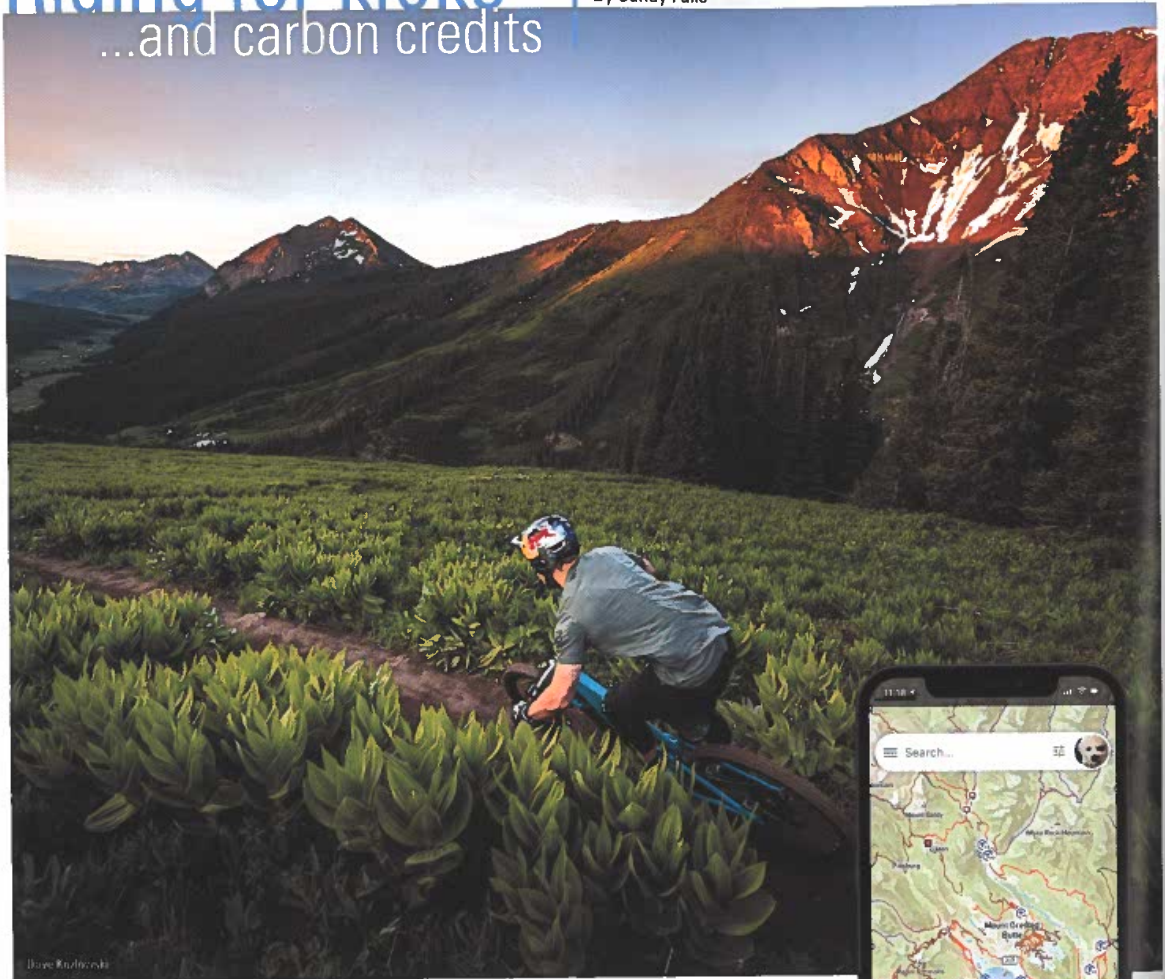


# crested butte magazine

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# Riding for kicks ...and carbon credits

By Sandy Fails



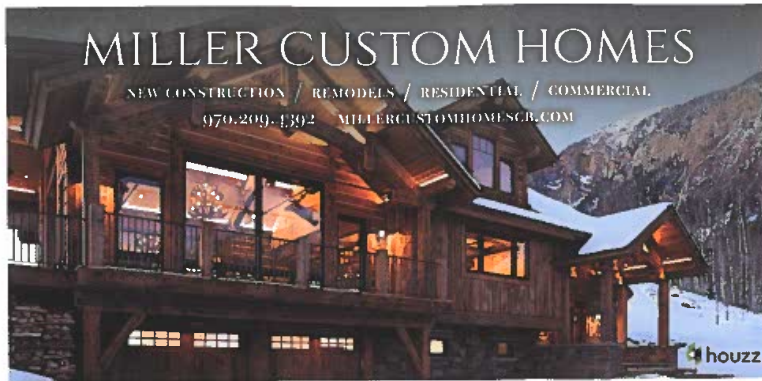
TerraQuest and the county's tourism association just invented a game-changer: using local biking and hiking miles to fund global climate action.

This summer, when you hit the local trails by bike or foot, you can feel good for all kinds of reasons. You can burn some calories, soak in the beauty, and – through a new CBGTrails carbon challenge – help fund global efforts to lower carbon emissions into the atmosphere.

Gunnison County's Tourism and Prosperity Partnership (TAPP, formerly known as the Gunnison-Crested Butte Tourism Association) and TerraQuest, an app and mapping company, four years ago set up the TrailQuest game. Mountain bikers record their routes, or tracks, with ongoing leaderboards and the ultimate goal of covering all 750-plus miles of singletrack trail in the valley. Wilderness TrailQuest invites hikers, trail runners, backpackers and horseback riders into the game.

"We have more than 1,000 people playing TrailQuest, approximately a third of them from outside the valley," said John Norton, TAPP's executive director. "We were asking ourselves if there were other games we could create with the app that might cast a wider net. Derrick [Nehenberg of TerraQuest] had the idea of people riding and hiking for carbon credits. Visitors could basically offset the carbon they used to get to the valley [e.g. driving from Denver or flying from Houston]. We mountain lovers have a stake in eliminating carbon in our atmosphere."

This summer, visitors or residents can download the free CBGTrails app, join the carbon challenge and record their biking or hiking tracks in the valley. For every 100 miles of track recorded, TAPP will purchase a carbon credit, equivalent to one metric ton of carbon offset, through a tradeable carbon currency called UP2CO2. UP2CO2



### 82 COUNTY ROAD 740 | CRESTED BUTTE

This river estate exemplifies fine construction in every detail. The home features nearly 7,000 square feet of livable space, an exquisite patio overlooking the East River, which is perfect for entertaining. The well equipped Thermador kitchen has ample room with double ovens, a five burner cook top, a prep sink, a generous pantry and plenty of room to share conversation around the island. The open layout provides a seamless flow into the living room to enjoy the floor to ceiling windows which brings in the natural Colorado sun.

4 BED | 6.5 BATH | 6,935 SQFT | 1.19 ACRES | \$3,750,000



### 170 LOWER ALLEN ROAD | CRESTED BUTTE

This quaint cabin sits on the banks of the East River on a very secluded half acre parcel.

3 BED | 2.5 BATH | 2,398 SQFT | \$1,189,000



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currency is used to retire VCUs (verified carbon units) from carbon emission-reduction efforts. Those include well-vetted REDD+ (reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation in developing countries) projects in South America, Africa and Indonesia. A third party, Verra, monitors and confirms the offsets.

Norton said if the CBGTrails carbon challenge game is "wildly successful," TAPP this year could contribute up to \$150,000 to fund carbon offsets.

"There's a lot of talk about climate change and how to tackle the problem," Nehrenberg said. "When you do the math, carbon credits are a viable option. They're not a panacea, but they're a bridge to future solutions."

For Nehrenberg and TerraQuest, the carbon challenge might be even more of a game changer.

"It's incredibly exciting," Nehrenberg said. He foresees large corporations, municipalities and other entities jumping on board with similar challenges – "whoever wants to take the lead, taking decisive action on climate change not just by purchasing carbon offsets but also by engaging their communities." Cities could reward bicycle commuters with carbon credits; companies could likewise encourage their employees' healthful practices. TerraQuest would set up and maintain the challenge for each entity. "Things are going to change for TerraQuest very rapidly," Nehrenberg predicted.

TerraQuest benefits from its TrailQuest games by incentivizing people to hit the trails and share their tracks, which adds data and on-the-ground observations to the company's navigation services. Though Nehrenberg's office is in Crested Butte, TerraQuest's detailed trail mapping covers the entire United States, building off trail users' data. The company aims to provide "wearable navigation" of the highest sophistication. Explorers can download information for their region and use the app anywhere, even without cell service, because it uses GPS satellite technology. The app offers route building with audible turn-by-turn navigation, winter map layers and other unusual features.

Nehrenberg said it's appropriate to debut the carbon challenge concept in this valley. "The spirit of Crested Butte is in this. The community has very deep connections to the outdoors. That's why I'm here."

Norton also expects the carbon challenge idea to take off locally and then spread to other places. "It's just another reason to come and ride our beautiful trail network," he said. As for becoming a model for other entities, he said, "It's always fun to be first." **cb**