



The San Juan Mountains got a fresh dusting of snow Jan. 10. (Submitted photo/Joseph Harold)

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# Gov to praise Montrose

*Mayfly, area economic development said to be included in today’s State of the State*

- **Speech set for 11 a.m.**
- **Local leaders honored by potential inclusion**
- **Speech will be live-streamed**

By MATT LINDBERG  
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Gov. John Hickenlooper has got love for Montrose. For a second consecutive year, Hickenlooper is tentatively expected to give Montrose a

shoutout in his State of the State address. Hickenlooper will speak as part of the 2018 Legislative Session, which opened Jan. 10, at 11 a.m. today at the Colorado State Capitol in Denver. The speech will be live-streamed on the governor’s Facebook page and by some Denver-based TV stations. The governor is expected to highlight Montrose’s Mayfly

*“It’s an honor for the governor to recognize the quality of work going on in Montrose, and we are thrilled to be a part of the speech.”*

David Dragoo  
Mayfly Outdoors president

Outdoors (see related story below), though there could be more, according to Montrose Economic Development Corporation Executive

Director Sandy Head. The MEDC leader said she first learned of Hickenlooper’s intention to include Montrose in his speech

back in December when members of his camp reached out to talk about Mayfly and other area happenings. “They interview you for hours and it’s probably less than 60 seconds of his speech,” Head joked on Wednesday. Mayfly Outdoors President David Dragoo, who will be attending the event in

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Gov. John Hickenlooper (Courtesy photo/Hickenlooper’s Facebook page)



A construction worker uses heavy equipment to dig on Jan. 9 at the Colorado Outdoors Project site in Montrose. (Sydney Warner/Montrose Daily Press)

## MURA launches construction on river corridor revamp

- **Phase 1 expected to be complete in late fall**
- **City manager, Mayfly president express excitement**
- **Money to be kept local, officials say**

By MATT LINDBERG  
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And they’re off. Construction on phase 1 of the Montrose Urban Renewal Authority’s Public Infrastructure Project across from the Montrose County Justice Center officially started this week. As part of it, workers will construct about 1.5 miles of roadways and utilities within the central 40 acres of the site in support of the Colorado Outdoors Project. The City of Montrose previously declared about 160 acres along the Uncompahgre River, from about North Ninth Street to Launa Drive, as blighted, in accordance with the statutory requirements of the Urban Renewal Act for the Colorado

Outdoors Project. With nine other entities, including Montrose County and special taxing districts whose boundaries cover the 158-plus acres, the city earlier last year formed an urban renewal authority (URA), to finance public infrastructure and improvements via a tax increment finance district, or TIF. Last October, Montrose’s Mayfly Outdoors broke ground on what will become its new, state-of-the-art headquarters (3.8 acres, 41,000 square feet) that will be a focal point of what the company’s president, David Dragoo, previously said will be a “world-renowned business park” aiming to attract outdoor-focused industries to relocate to Montrose and include river restoration and high-end commercial, residential and industrial development. A 100-room Marriott Town Place will also be featured, as previously reported. “It’s the beginning of the core infrastructure, which is a big

deal,” Dragoo told the Montrose Daily Press on Jan. 10. “We’re excited for this next chapter. Two years worth of work was compressed into about six months to make this happen, which is a testament to (City Engineer) Scott Murphy, the City of Montrose, Steve Stevenson and the team at Del-Mont (Consultants Inc.).” Residents should expect, in the coming months, to see the clearing of brush and several trees in the project area, as well as the installation of utilities (storm and sanitary) and off-site utilities going north to LaSalle Road. “Water, sewer, gas, electrical, streets — all utilities. Curb, gutter and sidewalk,” City Manager Bill Bell said of the work that will be done in phase 1. Murphy said getting the utility work done in the winter was good because groundwater levels are low this time of year.

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## Police: Man attempted to disarm officer

- **Mental health issues reported**
- **Two officers allegedly assaulted**
- **Suspect tasered during struggle**

By KATHARHYNH HEIDELBERG  
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Officers Wednesday faced serious risks to their safety, according to Montrose Police Department reports. About 3:40 a.m. Wednesday, police responded to reports of a possibly suicidal and homicidal man, later

identified as Jason Ross, 33. Officers were told Ross had stated he was going to kill someone and that he might have been suffering from a mental health issue, Cmdr. Gene Lillard said. Officers Samantha Graves and Andrew Spear arrived with Sgt. Billy Stroup and attempted to assist Ross, but he became aggressive, Lillard said, and allegedly tried to grab Graves’ sidearm. Graves struggled to

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## BOCC tussles over reorganization

- **Davis questions appointment**
- **Rash: Process was proper**
- **Job description, attorney hire debated**

By KATHARHYNH HEIDELBERG  
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Questions — and a few sparks — flew this week over the process by which Montrose County appointed its public works director. At a special meeting on Tuesday, commissioners considered formal adoption of a resolution reorganizing the board for the year. The resolution included certain appointments, among them, Public Works Director Keith Laube as roads supervisor. Nothing in the statute precludes Laube from holding the second role, which is an appointed position, it was explained. A decision last year made Laube public works director, putting him in overall charge of roads and bridges, engineering and the fleet department. “Therein lies my problem,” Commissioner Glen Davis said, contending there had not been a proper public meeting or public discussion for Laube’s appointment as public works director. “This has been tried before. It usually winds up costing someone their job ... It was never

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## MURA

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“Otherwise it becomes really difficult,” he said, adding it will pave the way to focusing on roadwork.

The construction comes after a busy 2017 that saw numerous officials put in “many, many hours” into engineering, design efforts and surveying in addition to the Mayfly groundbreaking.

***“We want to keep this momentum going. The design work went really well and it’s fun to see this come to fruition so quickly. It’s awesome; it was a fantastic project. It has a lot of layers and a lot of challenges from a design standpoint, similar to the construction.”***

*Scott Murphy  
City of Montrose engineer*

“It’s really exciting to see stuff being built. I think it helps people understand it’s a real project and there are tangible results for the money that is being spent,” Bell said. “On the private side, Mayfly started its construction and hopefully we’ll have several private projects breaking ground there early in the summer.”

Murphy had a similar perspective.

“We want to keep this momentum going. The design work went really well and it’s fun to see this come to fruition so quickly,” Murphy said, adding he believes phase 1 will be complete by the late fall.

“It’s awesome; it was a fantastic project. It has a lot of layers and a lot of challenges from a design standpoint, similar to the construction.”

Like the design work, the construction and the money spent on it will stay local. Through a bidding process, the construction contract went to Ridgway Valley Enterprises, which Bell said gave some of the work to a Montrose family-owned and operated business, Haynes Excavation Inc.

“For the most part, \$7 million will stay in Montrose, which is awesome,” Bell said. “It’s also really cool local contractors have that skill set. I think it’s great we have very competitive contractors here



A sign on the property of the Colorado Outdoors Project indicates its purpose. (Sydney Warner/Montrose Daily Press)

in Montrose.”

Those who want to check out the construction’s progress can do so without leaving their home. Two cameras will soon be placed near the north and south ends of the area, according to Bell and Dragoo.

“People will soon be able to live-stream site activity,” Dragoo said.

The webcams’ purpose is twofold, according to Bell: They will allow residents to see what’s happening and also prevent trespassing and vandalism. Once the cameras are functioning, people can watch live on the city’s website, [cityofmontrose.org](http://cityofmontrose.org), or the project website, [coloradooutdoors.co](http://coloradooutdoors.co).

Any questions regarding the project may be directed to Murphy at 970-901-1792 or by email, [smurphy@ci.montrose.co.us](mailto:smurphy@ci.montrose.co.us).

*Matt Lindberg is the managing editor for the Montrose Daily Press and an award-winning journalist. He’s a University of Kansas graduate with years of experience in the news business, as well as a father of two and a husband. Follow him on Twitter @MattLindberg.*



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