

Colorado Chapter Backcountry Hunters & Anglers

CPW State Trails Grant Program

Backcountry Hunters & Anglers

- BHA established 2004 by 7 founding members
- CO Chapter the first official state chapter in 2005
- 622 members of Colorado BHA in 2017
- Over 1,300 members as of May 2018
- Currently 35 Chapters in the US & Canada with a membership of over 20,000

BHA's Mission

- Keeping public lands in public hands
- Long-term conservation of still wild and largely unspoiled backcountry habitat
- Science-based wildlife management under the North American Model
- Access to public lands and traditional hunting and fishing opportunity
- Adhering to the principals of fair chase

Concerns and Observations

- Proliferation of new trails into backcountry areas and key wildlife habitats
 - Trail systems designed & built by proponents in coordination with federal land management agencies
 - Trails systems built & used by mountain bikers on their own with no knowledge of BLM or FS
 - Exponential increase in recreation use of all habitats
- Lack of oversight and management by the BLM & Forest Service
 - Poor user compliance with travel management
 - Ineffective seasonal closures to protect big game
 - Additional unanticipated uses of trails

Concerns and Observations Continued

- Impacts to big game populations and hunting opportunity
 - Large & growing body of research on impacts of recreation and trail development on big game habitat and populations
 - Changes in seasonal distribution of big game
 - Evidence of declining elk populations in Colorado
 - Our experiences as hunters
 - Professional experience of CPW wildlife biologists & DWM's
 - CPW research presented to Commissioners in May
- Travel Plans are not completely implemented
 - Emphasis on new trail construction, signs, maps, marketing
 - Little to no funding for road/trail decommissioning or gates to implement seasonal closures
 - Lack of use monitoring or enforcement of compliance

Our Involvement

- Participate in Forest Plan Revisions and BLM Resource Management Plans
 - Bring wildlife and backcountry interests and concerns to the land use planning table
 - Advocate for retention and enhancement of remaining Wilderness and Roadless areas
 - Provide recognition of values of fish and wildlife and associated hunting and fishing in land use planning
 - Promote active vegetation management programs directed at maintaining & improving wildlife habitat capability

Our Involvement Continued

- Participate in federal travel management planning
 - Forest and Field Office level travel planning
 - Programmatic
 - Area-specific
- Educate ourselves and participate in the State Trails Grant Program
 - Provide comments on annual OHV & non-motorized grant applications
 - Provide comments on the non-motorized trail grant process

CPW Trails Grants

OHV Grants

- Good Management
 - \$ for seasonal Good Management crews
 - \$ for federal law enforcement
- Competitive OHV Grants
 - New construction & maintenance of trails & facilities
 - Equipment & supplies
 - Seasonal crew & law enforcement wages
 - Restoration of closed trails & pirate trails due to OHV's

Non-motorized Grants

- Small Construction & Maintenance
- Large Construction & Maintenance
- Planning
- Support
 - Program provides no funding for management & compliance

Biological Requirements

CPW Trails Grant Application

OHV Grants Appendix c-1, c-2

- Federal environmental information & Land Manager Approval form c-1
- Biological review and compliance form (non-federal)
 - Applicants are advised to contact CPW wildlife office prior to submitting application
- CPW audits and reviews at least 4 Good Management programs per year

Non-motorized Grants Exhibit A

- Small & Large Construction Grants
 - DWM must be contacted & informed prior to application
 - Environmental Forms required
- Planning & Support Grants
 - Consultation with CPW not required but recommended
 - Environmental forms not required

Comments and Suggestions

- Provide a more balanced non-motorized program
 - Require applicants to integrate CPW wildlife biologists and DWM's early and meaningfully in the planning process
 - Clearly demonstrate CPW biological review/recommendations in application with separate form from Area wildlife biologist & DWM's
 - Include ranking criteria in application directly related to conservation with equal rating to other criteria
 - Provide funding for balanced trail development and management
 - Appropriate 30% budget to conservation & restoration
 - Develop & implement Good Management category similar to OHV program
 - Fund field crews for conservation work
 - Provide funding for full implementation & management of travel plans
 - Generate funding from mountain biking to contribute to trails
 - Initiate bicycle registration program
 - Implement taxes on mountain bikes and bicycle equipment
 - Foster partnerships with major bike manufacturers to fund trail management