

Colorado State Recreational Trails Committee
Meeting Notes

Friday, March 29, 2019
Colorado Parks & Wildlife
6060 Broadway, Denver, CO 80216

Members Present: Jerry Abboud, Linda Strand, Janelle Kukuk, Christian Myer, Jill Orzawski (with newborn daughter Mirabel Keeley), Dustin Wilkinson (Call-in), Jack Placchi, BLM Ex-officio

CPW Staff: Margaret Taylor, Nick Dellaca, Windi Padia, Brad Henley Ben Plankis, Tom Metsa, Josh Stoudt, Megan Sims, Alex Dean (DNR) Pam O'Malley, Felicia Lohnes, Jeannie MacMurtrie, Rob Seel (Call-in)

Guests: Steve Bonowski, CMC; Jim Chambers, OHV Subcommittee; Missi Ballard, Wild Connections; Chris Shaver, Great Old Broads

Call to Order: Janelle Kukuk called meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

Welcome and Introductions

Introductions were made around the room. A special mention, introducing Fletcher Jacobs, the new CPW Trails Program Manager, was made.

Agenda Amendments – None Presented

Motion to approve Agenda – Linda Strand

Motion Seconded – Christian Meyer

Motion Passed Unanimously

Approval of Meeting Notes – Requests for any changes, edits or additions

Motion to approve February State Trails Committee Notes – Christian Meyer

Motion Seconded – Linda Strand

Motion Passed Unanimously

Public Comment: Steve Bonowski, Colorado Mountain Club, spoke of one concern he would like the Committee to hear – what is the definition of a motorized recreationist. He would like the Motorized Action Plan opened to more trail user groups. He stated, "This is the question of "what is a motorized user?" It is not well defined. It could be a user of a bike; ATV; UTV; or some 4x4 users. Many of the Club's trip leaders; including me; own 4x4s used to access obscure backcountry trailheads. Scott Jones stated these meetings would be open so some of us may appear. I'll conclude that I'm not looking for wild-eyed crazies who are anti-OHV no matter what. Rather, I'd be looking for people able to make reasonable and measured comments. Thank you.

Director's Update – Margaret Taylor

The March PWC meeting was rescheduled due to the inclement snowstorm here in Denver. The meeting has been rescheduled for April 10th and will be a one-day meeting instead of two.

- The Eldo/Walker Trail will be discussed in the afternoon of the PWC meeting. She mentioned that the process will involve lots of conversation and invited STC members to come listen. Meeting agenda will be emailed to STC members.
- Nick shared that a current trail connect exists that is a “hiking” only trail but that this is to discuss constructing a more sustainable trail that’s supports mountain bike use. CPW and park staff have concerns with adding another use to trails and a park that is already at capacity much of the year.
- Windi Padia, CPW NE Region, offered to provide more information if any STC members wanted it.

STC Question: Is there contention?

Response: Yes. CPW will be creating a visitor use plan and predicts 18-24 months to complete.

STC Question: How will public comment be taken?

Response: A task force will be taking a look; public comment will be taken on-line. Public will be invited to participate/listen to meetings, similar to a Town Hall.

STC Question: Will there be a chance for Q&A at the Parks & Wildlife Commission meeting

Response: Yes.

Margaret continued director's update.

- Public Comment regarding Mad Rabbit Trail in Steamboat was sent to the PWC.
- Steamboat did not come to CPW Trails for funding.
- Not exactly sure where the NW Region stands on the project right now.
- Lodging tax is paying for it but we have interests in the area and feel a bigger perspective is needed.

Director's position was sent out nationwide and closed March 22nd. Plans are to have person hired by mid-May. The interview process is being coordinated now.

Governor Polis placed 3 new Commissioners on the Parks & Wildlife Commission.

- Governor Hickenlooper had four members not yet confirmed. Governor Polis assigned three new members in their place: Boulder, Craig, and Aspen. Keeping Garcia, one of Gov. Hickenlooper's previous choices.

Legislative season is in full swing. We have current legislative business regarding penalties and fees for violations.

Rocky Mtn. State Park Executive Conference.

-April 29th – May 3rd

-States west of the Mississippi attending

- Nexus between this conference and CPW Trails
- E-Bikes
- COTREX

Trails Program Update - Nick Dellaca

- LWCF was permanently re-authorized.
 - 40% allocation to stateside - \$1.8M estimated for Colorado in 2019
 - 40% to federal
 - 20% to special programs
- E-Bikes on CPW Lands
 - State Parks
 - Class 1 and 2 are permitted on all multi-use trails where CPW currently allows bikes.
 - Class 3 will be permitted on roads.
 - State Wildlife Areas
 - Wildlife Areas will be a little different.
 - E-bikes will be permitted on designated roads and in designated camping and parking areas where motorized vehicles are allowed.
 - Individual parks and wildlife areas can still exclude or include e-bikes on specific trails if reasonable justification is demonstrated.
 - E-Bikes are not considered OHVs for registration purposes.

Member mentioned Electric Scooter Bill (HB 19-1221) in Legislature.

- Will keep eye out for any impacts on State lands.
- Regional Trails may come into play.

STC Question(s): How many State Parks have trails that tie into regional trails?

Are Hand E-Bikes included with the E-Bike policy?

Response: Not sure off the top of my head, but there are a decent amount. Just in the NE Region, I can think of four. Yes, hand-e-bikes are included in the e-bike definition if they have three wheels or less and meet the e-bike class requirements.

STC Question: Has there been talk about law enforcement, due to e-bikes looking so much like regular mountain bikes?

Response: Yes, that was part of the consideration when looking at the CPW policy. Feds will soon be holding meetings to look at how Travel Management Plans can and/or may change in relation to e-bike use.

Comment was made that from a management perspective, users of e-bikes can go further into backcountry. Going farther could become a land management issue. Response was made that things will be adjusted as they work through this. Mention was made about JeffCo Open Space's study on e-bike use.

- COTREX V2
 - Hard launch taking place at Partner's Conference, April 25th

- Brief Presentation at RMSPEC
- Will be using social media marketing as well as traditional announcements
- V2 Features for the April launch will include the ability to . . .
 - Save and share measured routes.
 - Add more details to measured routes to make them more like featured routes
 - Interactive elevation profiles
 - Tag specific users and share links
 - Tablet support
 - Will include Custom Event Layers for things like non-seasonal trail closures and other alerts
- Planning Trails with Wildlife in Mind
 - Internal kick-off meeting is scheduled for mid April
 - Set goals & objectives
 - Determine parameters
 - Develop and estimated timeline
 - Discuss additional internal and external partners and resources needed

Discussion on Pagosa Springs LWCF project

Pagosa Springs has requested to change the scope of work for the Hermosa Street Riverwalk extension.

- Options to lessen width from 10 ft. to 8 ft., make a portion of the trail asphalt, and/or make portions of the trail natural surface or crusherfines.
- Linda Strand participated in the non-motorized subcommittee in scoring this project.
 - Lots of talk about “sidewalks vs. trail because of the trail going next to the road and in front of the houses instead of along the river.
 - Some concern with traffic at Highway 160
- Probably wouldn’t have scored well requesting 8’ of asphalt
 - 10 ft. wide concrete along street made sense and would be okay – but no asphalt and less width than that.
- Most important length of trail is between Hermosa & Hwy 160
 - Wasn’t a strong project
 - Wanted to see it moved off of street altogether
- They need to do more thinking on this
- Their application scored a 72 – awfully close to the lowest % allowed at 70
- Recommendations asked of the committee.
 - Leave project as it was proposed or consider:
 - Alternative alignment? Wait another year and try again?
 - Wrong *feel* for this program all along. It is more of a community/urban trail.
 - LWCF funding being used is why they were awarded.
 - Would be more attractive if a different alignment were proposed.

2019-2020 OHV Grant Recommendation – Tom Metsa

- OHV Grant Cycle and Process was reviewed.

- 16 Member Subcommittee reviewing and ranking projects.
- Review and scoring meetings were held January 18th and February 28-March 1st.
- Projects funded with OHV registration (sticker) money and RTP.
- One project not funded – Town of South Fork.
 - Lowest scoring project.
 - Discussed partially funding with balance of just over \$91,000 of balance remaining in appropriation.
 - Recommendation to deny partial funding for this project.
 - Would like to have seen easements, etc. in place before funding any of it.
 - Comment was made that South fork should be able to come back with a better project proposal.
 - Public comment was invited – none made.

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Motion to approve OHV Project Recommendation as presented – Dustin Wilkinson

Motion Seconded – Christian Meyer

Motion Passed Unanimously

Discussion regarding USFS Centralized Hiring Process

- USFS has moved to a centralized staffing process.
 - We have concerns with the ability to get crew positions filled.
 - Losing consistency of experienced, qualified, crew members returning each season
 - Consider writing a letter from this committee and CPW staff asking the forest service to explain *why* the move to Centralized staffing and if the USFS can still assure employing experienced, qualified crew members.
 - Would have to run letter through the PWC – after we learn more about the process
 - Set meeting with Jason Robertson to hear more about the process

Recreation Impact Monitoring – Julie Mach, Colorado Mountain Club (CMC)

Why are we monitoring – or measuring recreation?

. . . To measure the impacts of recreation on public lands.

Who cares and will use the information we are collecting?

. . . Agencies, stewardship groups, conservation groups and citizen scientists.

What we measure is wide-spectrum types of impact.

Why recreation is important to measure

. . . Increased population and demand

Who is making impact?

. . . Hikers, bikers, motorized and non-motorized users, climbers, hunters, fishers winter users and really anyone that utilized our public lands for outdoor recreation.

Where are impacts being made?

. . . Trails, trailheads, boat put-ins, river and lakeshores, designated and dispersed campsites, etc.

How we assess impacts?

- . . . By developing list of metrics – specific and objective. Observe trends and changes, resource impacts, wildlife impacts, and human experiences.

How are we gathering data?

- . . . Talking to as many people as possible, social media(s), etc.

What current monitoring is being conducted?

- . . . Visitor use monitoring including trail counters, wildlife cameras, user surveys, mobile apps, geo tagging, social media, etc.
- . . . USFS TRACS, the internal tool used by federal land managers is very time consuming, cumbersome, requires USFS materials (paper survey), no geo-location, no access to USFS INFRA Database, only monitoring 5% of trails per year.

Case Studies . . . FOMELC Trails App, CMC Mobile App, Survey 1-2-3 Program and others exist but only in limited areas.

Rapid Trail Assessment – The mobile app CMC is currently working on

- . . . Geo-located Point Date
- Drop-Down Survey and Photo’s - easy for staff and trained volunteers.
- CANA Foundation is helping create new modules for disbursed camping and visitor use.

CMC – R.I.M.S. - Recreation Impact Monitoring System

Data Use and Reporting – Dashboard posting with maps, trails and camping assessment tab, visitor usage tab, etc.

What’s Next – now that the baseline app is in place?

- . . . Looking to define metrics
- Stakeholder input
- Pilot in Chaffee County / Buena Vista
- Expand *Citizen Scientists*

Use of this data will create more efficient stewardship, assist with better decision making, and promote best practices for less impact.

~~~~~ Break for lunch 11:55 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. ~~~~~

**Trail Coordinator’s Updates**

- Northeast Region – Ben Plankis
- Creating a Front Range Area Trails Alliance

- 1<sup>st</sup> meeting will be early summer
- Instructed at Winter Skills Training Academy (WSTA)
- ATV Training modified to 2 hours in classroom and 2 hours in field

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Southwest Region – Josh Stoudt

- Attended annual In-Service training
- Telluride Trails Meeting
- Ridgway Area Trails Meeting
- Wolf Creek Snowmobile Ride
- Avalanche risk was too high for trainings this season
- Contacts/Inspections

Southeast Region – Brad Henley

- Attended annual In-Service training
- Pueblo LWCF

**Round Table Discussion**

Jill Ozarski – Thinking about how to bring more competitive projects to the table.

Linda Strand – CPW/GOCO Acquiring land in Trinidad

- 90,000 Acres
- Next 3 years will be spent planning
- Great economic impact for Trinidad
- Will create incredible trail opportunities

Brad Henley – Republican River Development (Burlington) Heads up

- Repurposing Bonny State Park
- Doing economic study
- Feasibility study starting now
- Evaluating potential for OHV riding area
- May be open to limited uses in the meantime
- May have Lesser Prairie Chicken in the area

Meeting Adjourned at 1:00 p.m.