

# Colorado State Recreational Trails Committee

## Meeting Minutes

Friday, June 21, 2019  
Colorado Parks and Wildlife  
6060 Broadway, Denver, CO 80216

Members Present: Scott Jones, Linda Strand, Janelle Kukuk, Dustin Wilkinson, Christian Meyers, Jill Ozarski, Wally Piccone

Ex-Officio Present: Jack Placchi (BLM)

CPW Staff Present: Fletcher Jacobs, Tom Metsa, Megan Sims, Pam O'Malley, Gabby Smiley, Felicia Lohnes, Ben Plankis, Randy Engle, Brad Henley

Visitors: Morgan Lommele (People for Bikes), Steve Bonowski (Colorado Mountain Club), Chris Shaver (Great Old Broads), Roz McClellan (Rocky Mountain Recreation Initiative), Don Holmstrom (Backcountry Hunters and Anglers), Elena Lazarevska (DNR)

**NOTE:** Unresolved issues with internet access and telecom in the meeting room. Unable to offer teleconferencing or Wi-Fi access for this meeting. Some participants were able to use a personal hotspot to access online sites.

**Call to Order** – Chair Scott Jones called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

### Welcome and Introductions

**Agenda Amendments** – Amended to allow public comment related to each issue on the agenda  
*Christian Meyers made a motion to approve the agenda as presented*  
*Linda Strand seconded the motion*  
*Motion passed unanimously*

**Approval of Meeting Minutes** – Request for any additions, changes or edits to the March 29, 2019 meeting minutes. Name correction for Jill Ozarski, added guest listing for her newborn.  
*Christian Meyers made a motion to approve the meeting minutes*  
*Linda Strand seconded the motion*  
*Motion passed unanimously*

### Director's Update – Fletcher Jacobs for Margaret Taylor

- CPW has a new director – Dan Prenzlou. Fletcher gave a short bio on Dan's tenure with the state. Dan will schedule events across the state to meet employees.
- Leadership Team has been working to fill two vacant regional manager positions for the Southeast and Southwest regions. Interviews are complete and an announcement is expected soon.
- Gary Thorson, Assistant Director, Information and Education is retiring. The position has been announced and interviews are underway.
- CPW is studying metrics on increasing public access on public land, hunting, fishing and recreation as a whole. Looking at finding alternative sources of funding.

- The Partner's Conference in Breckenridge (April 24-26, 2019) was a great success with over 500 attendees – the largest to date. There were excellent topics and breakout sessions with discussions on balancing conservation and outdoor recreation. We will be looking for a larger facility next year. It would be good for the Trails Program to have more of a presence at the conference. Linda congratulated all and said it was an excellent program, especially with seeing the children and their interest in the outdoors and stewardship.
- The Rocky Mountain State Park Conference (RMSPC) had 13 states in attendance with 100 attendees. The planning team did a survey on best practices and received 100% satisfaction with the event. Particular interests included Staunton State Park's track chair demo and a COTREX presentation.

### **Trails Program Update – Fletcher Jacobs**

- Introduced himself as the new Program Manager for the State Trails Program. Thanked those he has met so far and is looking forward to working with staff and internal departments across the agency.
- The Colorado the Beautiful grant cycle for 2019 is now open. He has spoken with about 12 potential applicants. There is \$3.5M available for grants. This is the final year for this offering. Applicants are instructed to submit a short scope of work and project map to the appropriate Area Wildlife Manager by July 1, 2019. This allows the areas and regions to begin assessing projects and work out any issues before final submission on August 1<sup>st</sup>.
- The committee discussed moving the timeline for CtB to give staff and subcommittees more time to review applications. It was decided to schedule reviews, applicant oral presentations and final scoring September – November. The State Trails Committee meeting on December 6<sup>th</sup> will have an Action Item to approve and recommend funding. This recommendation will be presented to the CPW Commission in January 2020 for final approval. Fletcher will reach out to committee members regarding subcommittee participation.
- Legislative SB19-054 Military Vehicle Regulation will allow certain surplus vehicles (not historical) to be certified as Off-Highway vehicles.
- Legislative HB19-1026 Parks and Wildlife Violations of Law changes the amount of certain fines and modifies the disposition of money collected from fines. It goes into effect July 1, 2019. The Law Enforcement and Public Safety branch will send out updates and information.
- Electric scooters (Razor, Spin, etc.) have been defined as toy vehicles and are not allowed in bike lanes or in general traffic. They will be in a separate category, similar to E-bikes.
- COTREX 2.0 was launched at the Partner's Conference. Fletcher thanked Alex Dean for his work promoting the app. Denver's Channel 7 also promoted the app. Version 3 will feature winter trails. Work is underway to gather relevant data. Statistics show a 95% increase in app installs. Google search results show COTREX as the third option when searching for Colorado trails.
- CPW has a new process for registration and licensing called IPAWS. The Registration and Licensing Units are working on issues, such as online renewals. Currently people need to go to a CPW office to renew, as CIDs (Customer IDs) were not transferred correctly to the new system. This is under review and will be corrected. Janelle commented that this is a challenge for some rural customers and that if you want compliance you have to make it convenient for people.

## **Public Comment Period**

Public comment on the non-motorized trails grant application and review process was presented to the committee. Presenters were Don Holmstrom, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, Chris Shaver, Great Old Broads, Roz McClellan, Rocky Mountain Recreation Initiative. A letter was also received and distributed to the committee from Craig Gother, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers. Speakers commented on the grant application criteria and how there should be more emphasis on protecting wildlife and habitat. Planning grants should involve CPW early on to avoid conflicts with habitat and migration routes.

## **2019/20 Snowmobile Capital Grant Recommendation**

Tom Metsa presented the 2019-20 Snowmobile Capital Grant Application data and funding recommendations. Applications for thirteen (13) eligible projects were received prior to the April 9, 2019 deadline for a total grant request of \$674,353.75. Available funding for the 2019/2020 cycle is \$556,908.00.

*Janelle Kukuk made a motion to approve the scores and ranking for the snowmobile capital grant applications and to recommend funding as stated by the subcommittee to the Parks and Wildlife Commission. Dustin Wilkinson seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.*

## **Regional Trail Coordinator Quarterly Reports**

Northeast Region – Ben Plankis

Southwest Region – Randy Engle presented for Josh Stoudt

Northwest Region – Randy Engle

Southeast Region – Brad Henley (Jason Hagan is the new Trail Coordinator, starting after July 4<sup>th</sup>)

## **People for Bikes Coalition Presentation – Morgan Lommele**

Morgan discussed state laws and natural resources as they relate to E-bikes. She presented demographics on E-bike usage and a breakdown on the different classifications and regulations. Mountain E-bikes are becoming more popular at about 25% of overall sales.

## **Round Table**

Linda Strand – GOCO is starting discussions for the 2020-2025 strategic plan. One goal is to learn more about large landscape level, stewardship and using investment money in the future.

Janelle Kukuk – Excited about the amount of water Colorado received but is worried about high water accidents and fatalities. Small mountain areas are being impacted as urban centers become more populated. Infrastructure is being impacted. Land agencies as a whole need to escalate trail opportunities and funding so land managers can be more prepared. Litter is a huge problem and etiquette is missing in the backcountry. People need to be educated and possibly cited for misuse and negligence.

Scott Jones – Thanked Fletcher for joining the team as the new Program Manager. Scott Haas' position with the Forest Service is posted and there are some applicants.

Dustin Wilkinson – There has been discussions for several years on saw training for volunteers. Dustin participated in a 2-day training event with chain saws. Participants got a good review. If this is a model that the Forest Service will use, it's a good one.

Fletcher Jacobs – Jason Robertson with the Forest Service wants to do a crosscut training with volunteers and is open to figuring out how to make it work. It needs to be done with smaller groups in a 1-day session.

Jack Placchi – Reported on the White River Transportation Plan and the Little Snake Travel Management Plan. The White River Field Office is evaluating allowing Class 1 e-bikes.

## **Lunch Break**

### **Non-Motorized grants, planning and wildlife discussion – Scott Jones**

Scott opened the discussion with the need to look at wildlife input in the planning process. Due to Nick Dellaca's departure, there was a delayed timeframe in an effort to put together working groups to address issues. It was to include stewardship groups such as Colorado 14ers, WRV, VOC, etc. A meeting was proposed for May 28<sup>th</sup> but schedules did not work for most people. The plan now is to have discussions with partners prior to the next STC meeting in September.

Good management project funding on the motorized side goes mainly to the Forest Service. Non-moto would be to stewardship groups and there is a question on how to make that work. The two programs are equal in the way we address wildlife issues, but there could be a lack of effort relaying this information to the public on the non-moto side.

Christian noted that we should review objectives on good management and have earlier engagement with wildlife managers.

Discussion on the need to revise the grant applications to elevate wildlife score criteria with higher point values. Separate out maintenance and construction into two distinct applications.

Regional reviews are from a landscape level to see where it make sense for trails. They are not producing an extensive document similar to what utility companies produce. It is a 1-2 page memo that lists the same results. There is a call to share these reports on a broader level.

If CPW does not fund a project, we do not have the authority to deny having the trail built. There needs to be more transparency about the committee and their responsibilities. Members of the public do not necessarily understand the process of how grants are reviewed internally.

Suggestion to put Wildlife summary reports on our webpages. Educate people on what we do have control over (state park lands). There are 40,000 miles of trails in Colorado. The management plan (winter habitats, migration patterns, etc.) is going to be done by the agency, county level, city, Forest Service, BLM, not CPW.

Brad Henley reported that there is no manual for this at the region level, but wildlife managers are trained to look at landscape level, work with experienced staff and review past efforts, maps, and transportation/wildlife corridors. We have specialists in land, water, oil and gas. Questions should

be added to the application to show lat/long, GIS points, polygons, etc. that will show the full picture of the proposal and why one corridor might be better suited than another.

Discussed importance of planning documentation before a trail location is set. This will help mitigate potential problems. The document 'Planning Trails with Wildlife in Mind' will be updated.

Grant applications will be revised to elevate wildlife criteria. Maintenance and Construction will be split into two separate applications, and there will no longer be a large and small category. Both applications will show available funding from \$0 – \$250,000. We need to determine how to classify a reroute. If there is a resource benefit to moving the trail, it would be maintenance. If it is for esthetic reasons, such as a better view, it would be construction. Staff will have discretion to decide on the appropriate category.

A Good Management type program for non-moto has been discussed, but the sheer volume of need compared to the available funding does not work at this point. The motorized side uses sticker/registration money for match. Non-moto does not have this type of funding. Motorized projects are for the most part on federal land. Non-moto is generally seen on county and municipal land. The two systems are very different.

We will ask applicants about their plans for seasonal closures. This could include signage, gates, cameras, education and enforcement. The motorized side cites riders for registrations, spark arresters, etc. This does not exist on the non-moto side, but education can be key.

### **Public Comment on this issue**

Speakers were happy to hear that the committee and CPW have been looking at wildlife issues, habitat defragmentation and migratory issues. They feel strongly that there needs to be a higher level of concern toward wildlife over recreation and there needs to be a broader inclusion of conservation stakeholders. They would like to see more outreach to environmental groups. A suggestion was made to prepare an educational webinar about the obstacles for CPW.

Linda suggested that advocates speak with the land managers and applicants about their concerns, as CPW does not have the authority to enforce many of the points that were addressed.

Front Range recreation is a problem with population growth, especially on weekends. CPW could help with a better exchange of information with conservation groups. Jack Placchi stated that VOC is building a statewide stewardship database. It would be helpful if that including hiking groups.

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Christian asked about committee involvement in application changes. Scott suggested creating drafts that would then be sent to committee members and a few stakeholders.

The next STC meeting will be in Colorado Springs. Brad Henley suggested a conversation about things to do in the area.

**Scott Jones adjourned the meeting at 1:45 p.m.**