



COLORADO

Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

Colorado's Recreational Trails Committee

Established January 1, 1985

1313 Sherman Street, Room #618 • Denver, CO 80201

Trails@state.co.us

Meeting Minutes

Friday, January 29, 2021

Via Zoom Webinar

Members present: Christian Meyer, Janelle Kukuk, Pamela Denahy, Jerry Abboud, Scott Jones, Heather Hormell, Jill Ozarski, Bill Koerner.

CPW Staff: Heather Dugan, Fletcher Jacobs, Tom Metsa, Pam O'Malley, Megan Sims, Jeannie MacMurtrie, Gabby Smiley, Felicia Lohnes, Brad Henley, Luke Svare, Randy Engle, Ben Plankis, Josh Stoudt, Dan Zimmerer, Elena Lazarevska, Brad Henley, Scott Roush

Others: Ex-Officio Jack Placchi (BLM), Chad Schneckenburger (USFS), Betsy Blecha (CPW Commission)

Guests: Christine Shaver, Craig Grother, Nancy Working, Robyn Cascade, Roz McClellen, Steve Bonowski, Chris Yuan-Farrell, Sherry Schenk, Wendy Sweet, Brian Baldwin, Richard Hackett

Call to Order: Chair Christian Meyer called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m., opening with a roll call.

Agenda Amendments: None presented

Approval of Meeting Minutes from December 4, 2020

Motion to approve minutes – Scott Jones

Motion seconded – Bill Koerner

Motion passed unanimously

Public Comment: None at this time

Director's Update – Heather Dugan

- Update on CPW Operations. State Parks saw an estimated 15 million visitors in 2020. Staff that were previously housed at 1313 Sherman St. in Denver have now all relocated to the 6060 Broadway office. The Trails Program, Registration and Boating Safety will remain at the Littleton office. Grant Brown, Boating Manager, will also manage the Registrations Unit.
- 6060 Broadway will have a combined law enforcement training area in 2022. All Park and Wildlife law enforcement trainees will report to this location when complete.
- Gray Wolf Proposition. The Parks and Wildlife Commission (PWC) voted on the first step to introduce wolves to the Western Slope of Colorado by 2023. Participation information will be posted and advertised on the CPW website and social media. Reid DeWalt, Assistant Director Aquatics, Terrestrial & Natural Resources will head up the initiative. CPW will periodically post dates to the [Wolf Management](#) page.



- One of the Wildly Important Goals (WIGs) for Trails is to balance outdoor recreation with wildlife habitat and conservation.
- The Governor spoke to the PWC about sustainable funding, with the possibility of extending capital funding through a stimulus bill. He wants to explore ideas on growing state parks and address the challenge between population growth and protecting natural resources.

Trails Program Update - Fletcher Jacobs

- Update on WIG #2 – Balance Outdoor Recreation and Conservation with statewide and regional collaboration, and strategies to increase public access for recreation and to promote conservation.
- Update on the Planning Trails with Wildlife in Mind activities. There will be links to external resources, and increased collaboration between conservation and recreation interests. Roll out and implementation is planned for June 2021.
- The Trails Program was asked to track crew hours. 110,000 hours were recorded for FY 2019-2020. The goal for FY 2020-2021 is 112,500.
- The CYCA 21 OHV Project RFP received 14 applications, requesting \$951,167.00. Three projects were funded: Grand Lake, Alpine Loop, and Rainbow Trail for a total of \$319,512.00
- COTREX is now receiving input from 206 land managers and has information on 200,000 miles of trail. There is a 538% increase in usage. Alex Alma has transferred to the Trails Program on a fulltime basis. He will continue to manage this program.
- Update from the Forest Service – Chad Schneckenburger. The Rocky Mountain Region has released a trails stewardship strategy with a goal of rethinking how they manage trails. A huge component is engagement with partners. Access is a primary goal in terms of physical geographical access, especially for underserved communities. The USFS is releasing new e-bike directives that will follow what the BLM has done.
- Update from the BLM – Jack Placchi. They saw a 30% visitor increase, from 9 million to 12 million. They are finalizing the e-bike rule, which will allow them to make a choice on whether or not they can exempt and call e-bikes non-motorized, or analyze motorized routes for e-bikes (class 1, 2, and 3). Jack discussed an Action Plan report that encompasses the BLM and the Forest Service. There will be public meetings throughout the State, and information will be released shortly. Jack announced his retirement from the BLM, effective May 8, 2021.

Non-Motorized Grant Funding – Fletcher Jacobs

- 52 applications across 4 categories received. The effort to emphasize maintenance was successful.
- All applicants (Support exempt) are required to contact the local Area Wildlife Manager one month prior to the application deadline to discuss wildlife concerns/issues. Applicants are asked to address concerns during their live presentation to the subcommittees.
- Reviewer and staff scores were presented. The subcommittees were asked to score on critical need in order to fund prioritized projects.
- Two applications were withdrawn by the applicants from the LWCF category due to timing on funding. Two non-motorized maintenance projects were recommended for LWCF funding, and applicants were allowed to adjust their budgets.
- The total for 16 recommended applications is \$3,520,752.00
- Subcommittee chairs commented on the recommendations and the projects overall.
- This year shows an increase of 81% toward maintenance as compared to the 2020 cycle. This will fund 20% toward the WIG metric for crew hours.

Action Item – Non-Motorized Grant Funding Recommendation – Christian Meyer

- Proposal to fund 20 projects (3 Construction, 9 Maintenance, 2 Planning, 2 Support and 4 LWCF), as recommended by the appropriate subcommittees.

Motion to approve scores and ranking – Scott Jones

Motion seconded by Jill Ozarski

Motion passed unanimously

Colorado Regional Outdoor Partnership Update – Dan Zimmerer and Jody Kennedy

- Presentation on the CO-OP, including information on the expanded use of natural resources during the pandemic, and how the partnership will help set a statewide vision, guidelines, and regional partnerships to achieving sustainable outdoor recreation and conservation. A new grant program is under development. Grants will fund capacity building, facilitation, coordination, planning, recreation research, and mapping. Follow the [CO-OP](#).
- [CO-OP presentation](#)
- [Executive Order](#)

Information Item – 2021-2022 OHV Grants – Tom Metsa

- 72 OHV applications were received for the 2021-2022 cycle, 48 competitive projects, and 24 Good Management. The request total was \$6,310,738.00. It is estimated that \$4.3 million will be made available for OHV grants (\$4M OHV and \$300,000 RTP). The OHV subcommittee met on January 26-27, 2021 to discuss funding strategies for the 21-22 Good Management applications and began preliminary review of all other projects that will be scored and ranked. Applicants will make a project presentation to the subcommittee March 11-12, 2021. Scoring results and related funding strategies will be presented to the STC for approval on April 2, 2021.

Information Item – Planning Trails with Wildlife in Mind – Fletcher Jacobs

- Update presented on recent and upcoming efforts, including Stakeholder Advisory Group, Land Manager Task Force, and CPW Technical Oversight Team. A draft document was distributed in the fall of 2020. Feedback suggested streamlining and creating a table, along with additional opportunities and links to external sources. A second draft will be sent to the advisory groups and land managers. Feedback and final changes will be incorporated in April 2021, with roll out and implementation in June.

Round Table:

- Janelle – questions have been raised by the public regarding our education program for youth in the Snowmobile Program. The curriculum needs to be updated, and we have a statutory obligation to provide training. Consider creating an online training program. Tom Metsa responded that we have the ability to go to online providers, but they often have a fee, and we didn't want to pass that on to the users. Requests come in single digits, which makes it inefficient to hold an in-person event. Janelle suggested that CSA could possibly offset fees.
- Betsy – The PWC has been advocating for a Trails Planning effort, and she looks forward to using it with planning our trail systems and transportation network. The online hunter education program has been successful, and perhaps this could be modeled for snowmobile users. She mentioned a lack of programs for the eastern plains, which may be due to a lack of

user groups. Mentioned access to State Wildlife Areas (SWAs) and if it might be possible for visitors to use these areas for wildlife watching. We need more representation on the plains to try to fill the gap on services and recreational access.

- Brad Henley (SE Deputy Regional Manager) reported that the new Fishers Peak State Park would host a variety of interest group discussions in the first quarter of 2021. This will be geared toward government organizations and businesses with knowledge and expertise relevant to Fishers Peak. The goal is to provide organizations an opportunity to share ideas for the parks master plan and to continue to foster relationships.

Public Comment:

- Wendy Sweet, Boulder Mountain Bike Alliance asked if there is a public list of Planning Trails groups. Fletcher responded that he would be happy to discuss this with her. Permission is needed from groups to publish their information. When received, information will be posted on the Trails News webpage.

Meeting Adjourned by Christian Meyer at 12:00 p.m.