



COLORADO

Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

Colorado's Recreational Trails Committee

Established January 1, 1985

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Meeting Minutes

Friday, September 16, 2022

Hybrid Meeting

Members Present: Bevin Carithers*, Mick Daniel, Pamela Denahy*, Heather Hormell, Janelle Kukuk*, Meara McQuain, Jason Meyer, Jill Ozarski*, Jack Placchi, Brad Schwartz

CPW staff: Randy Engle, Maggie Gillard, Fletcher Jacobs, Jodie Kennedy, Jeannie MacMurtrie, Tom Metsa, Pam O'Malley, Ty Petersburg, Chrystal Read, Justin Rutter*, Chris Sill, Josh Stoudt*, Luke Svare

Others: Tim Finger (BLM)*, Eric Freels (USFS), Scott Jones (former STC member), Brendan Kelly (USFS), Miles Miller (USFS), Gene Peteranetz (Grand Lake Grooming), Cameron Stone (Grand Lake Grooming), Maire Sullivan (Headwaters Trails Alliance), Craig Wilkerson (Grand Lake Grooming), Dan Zimmerer (GOCO)

*Participated virtually via webinar

Call to Order: Janelle Kukuk called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m., opening with a roll call.

Agenda Amendments: None presented.

Approval of Meeting Minutes from June 16, 2022:

Motion to approve minutes – Jill Ozarski

Motion seconded – Heather Hormell

Motion passed unanimously

Public Comments: None.

Director Updates: Justin Rutter

- Justin Rutter provided an update on the FY21-22 OHV and Snowmobile Recreation Funds, which remain relatively in line with the previous year.
 - OHV Q4 and YTD revenue showed a slight downturn in registrations, but other revenues were up on the previous year. Expenditures showed an increase in capital, which included \$100k in improvements. Ten-year balance sheet shows a reserve of \$17.2m.



- Snowmobile Q4 and YTD revenue showed registrations unchanged and federal grants up on the previous year. Expenditures showed an increase in capital costs but nothing significant. Ten-year balance sheet shows a reserve of \$875k, which is relatively unchanged for the last six years.

State Trails Program Update: Fletcher Jacobs

- Field trip organizers were thanked, especially the USFS, Headwaters Trails Alliance and Youth Corps. Committee members expressed their appreciation, which included new members being grateful to see trail work in person.
- Youth Corps lower youth application rates were discussed and the need to encourage participation rather than carve out money for funding. Fletcher Jacobs noted that approximately \$62k was awarded for 62 weeks, but money was returned from crews that were unable to hire enough people. Continue with CYCA investment. Heather Hormell will help to review applications.
- Non-Moto and LWCF grant round opened August 3, final deadline for applications is October 4. First year that the Non-Motorized categories officially been split after the 3 year pilot into construction, maintenance, planning, and support. Online platform not possible this year due to budget constraints but will research possible implementation for next year.
- Outdoor Equity Grant Program supports outdoor organizations creating opportunities for underserved youth and their families. First round awarded \$1.8m to 43 organizations. Second round currently open, applications due September 30.
- Keep Colorado Wild Pass goes live January 1. Passenger vehicle registrations will increase by \$29 unless people opt out. Refunds issued for current annual pass holders.
- Wolf reintroduction is progressing. Technical work complete, reports currently being finalized. Draft plan presented to CPW commission at the December 2022 meeting.
- Fishers Peak Master Plan open for comment through October 9.

Action Item - Election of Officers

Vice chair – Jill Ozarski

Motion to re-elect – Pam Denahy

Motion seconded – Jason Meyer

Motion passed unanimously

Chair – Janelle Kukuk

Motion to re-elect – Jill Ozarski

Motion seconded – Meara McQuain

Motion passed unanimously

Subcommittee Member Appointments

Member self-nomination for subcommittee chair positions:

- OHV – Heather Hormell
- Snowmobile – Janelle Kukuk
- Non-Moto Construction – Pam Denahy
- Non-Moto Maintenance – Meara McQuain

- Non-Moto Planning and Support chair – Jason Meyer
- LWCF – Jill Ozarski

2023 Meeting Dates

- No issues identified with 2023 meeting dates. Fletcher Jacobs will send calendar invites. Meeting times will likely follow the same hybrid 9am – 3pm format.
- The September 2023 meeting will be held in the Southwest Region. A field trip will be scheduled for Thursday.

Snowmobile Grooming Allocations: Tom Metsa

- Program and funding overview provided.
- Formula sticker money discussed, due to conflicting thoughts with committee members in the past in terms of the distribution of funds. Committee looked into changing the formula this year but more data is needed to ensure a greater level of accuracy before the formula can be amended (along with investigating the capacity of clubs to spend it).
- Federal funds now more difficult to use for equipment purchases as Build America, Buy America is now applicable. Repairs and operating costs are eligible.
- Underwriter dropped out of snowmobile insurance. Issue resolved with a new underwriter. Includes general liability insurance for all clubs, total cost \$46k per year. Low number of claims but high risk. Work is currently underway to include property insurance to cover snow cats and collisions. Clubs are responsible for insurance beyond general liability, i.e., extra groomers and sleds at a cost of \$1,100. Trail exposure is an additional \$300.

USFS Update: Brendon Kelly

- USFS is hiring interns through SDA, RMYC but had a reduced number of applicants. New centralized hiring system may be the issue. Summer 2023 positions advertised September 29.
- A National Recreation Hiring Event identified more vacancies than qualified applicants.
- Recreation trends show this year is higher than average (but not as high as 2020).
- GAOA funding – not accepting new projects for 2024.
- Legacy roads and trails program generally include road maintenance, some trail work and water shed improvements, such as re-routing trails from stream corridors.
- Trails stewardship formed 1.5 years ago (region 2 committee) to identify challenges and solutions for implementation from 2023.

BLM Update: Tim Finger

- There is a new BLM state director, Doug Vilsack, who was formerly with Colorado Department of Natural Resources. BLM state office moving in January/February 2023 to the Lakewood federal center.
- Seasonal hiring for 2023 will start in November. Trying to move away from seasonal to career hiring though to boost numbers.
- Recreation trends show elevated use this year, BLM is still seeing resource impacts.
- BLM Dingell Act public comment session – request to access private land.

- Tentative agreement with R&D density and impact of vehicle routes and oil and gas leasing. This will require plan amendments. BLM holding public meetings but currently only a small focus group looking at oil and gas roads and impacts. If numerous amendments are identified, wider public consultation will be needed. Impacts to trails unknown as initial scope did not include participation from outdoor recreation. BLM monitoring and will amend consultation approach accordingly.

Regional Outdoor Partnership Update: Jody Kennedy

Jody presented information about the program's inception and mission, which brings county and regional organizations and coalitions together who have different agendas but common goals. She discussed the ties with 'Vision 2050' where Colorado's people and economy thrive because of our healthy lands, water, wildlife, working farms and ranches, and improved hunting, angling and recreational opportunities for all. She informed the group about their grant program to fund new and existing coalitions. Local and regional planning efforts that work to inform a statewide conservation and recreation plan are also eligible for funding. Efforts are made to include adequate representation from the wildlife, agriculture, outdoor recreation and economic development sectors.

Grand Lake Trail Grooming: Cameron Stone

Cameron gave a comprehensive overview of the grooming club, including their history and partnership with the USFS. He discussed trail usage (approximately 40,000 people per year), importance to the local economy, and how the trails are groomed with support from the State Trails Program via Snowmobile Grants. Grooming challenges were discussed, including rising costs in labor, fuel, parts insurance and impacts from recent wildfires.

Public Comment Period: None.

Regional Trails Coordinator Quarterly Reports - Luke Svare, Randy Engle, Josh Stoudt

Round Table

Fletcher Jacobs discussed the reconfiguration of the committee with the changing boundaries and addition of the 8th district. An extra seat was added to the committee to ensure an odd number for voting. Now 11 seats in total, one remains vacant (6th district) but is hoped to be filled soon. New members Mick Daniel, Brad Schwartz and Bevin Carithers introduced themselves and outlined their experience in outdoor recreation. The other members welcomed them to the committee.

Meeting adjourned 1.55pm by Janelle Kukuk.