

Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area
Citizen Task Force (CTF)

Wednesday, February 15, 2023 • 9:30a - 11:30a

Hybrid Meeting Options:
AHRA Visitor Center @ 307 W Sackett Ave, Salida, CO 81201
Zoom Registration: ahra.mobi/ctf

Anglers: Larry Payne, Braden Baker • Commercial Permittees: Bob Hamel, Trey Shelton
Private Boaters: Dede de Percin, Leslie Tyson • Environmental Interests: Christina King, Logan Myers
Water Users: Justin Zeisler, Ed Perko • Government Organizations: Dwayne McFall, Greg Felt
River Front Property Owners: Drew Elder, Gail Tubbs • Outdoor Recreation/Other: Gary Gossage, Mike Sugaski

Notes

Attendees: Tom, Corrine, Larry Payne, Trey, Jeff, Jen, Glenn, Mike Sugaski

Zoom: Bob Hamel, Brett Ritchie (private boater), Braden Baker, Christina King, Drew Elder, Edward Perko, Gail Tubbs, Leslie Tyson, Logan Myers, Ryan Dalton, Steve Fleming, Kalem, Greg Felt

- Welcome & Introduction Bob Hamel, CTF Chair
- Public Attendees and CTF Members Roundtable 5 minutes/person
 - AHRA has an operating plan with USFS and BLM
 - Can provide early pages of plan
- CTF Business Jennifer Crawford, AHRA Admin Asst
 - Solicitation for Nominations
 - [Nomination/Application Form](#) is located on [CTF site](#).
 - Delegates with 2-year term expiring 04/2023: (THANK YOU!)

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County/Municipal Gov Orgs: Dwayne McFall
River Front Property Owners: Drew Elder
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- AHRA Updates
 - Park Manager Updates Tom Waters, AHRA Park Manager
 - Fred Rasmussen Award Nominations
 - <https://ahra.mobi/frvote>

- Will report votes after the meeting
- VFMP
 - Spring flows
 - Paul Foutz, CPW SE Region Senior Biologist
 - Looking for info on non-recreational inflows affecting fish habitat
 - 59,000-acre feet estimated to be imported (good news - average)
 - Fry Ark collection is currently at 108%
 - Pueblo Board of Water Works - ability to share 2-3,000 acre feet for VFMP (voluntary contribution on top of 10,000 acre-feet)
 - Exchanges are completed during low-impact times for fishery
- Staffing Changes
 - Tappan has been promoted from River Ranger Supervisor at AHRA to the SE Region Trails Coordinator
 - Jeff Hammond is now the River Ranger Supervisor
 - Glenn/Corrine/Tom will cover land, misc. until a new ranger is hired
- Budget Requests Submitted
 - There is no update at this point about submissions
 - AHRA has received road and parking funds to support small-cap projects
- Salida East
 - There is continued construction, crews have poured concrete in some of the sites
 - Anticipated opening is Memorial Day or sooner
 - The cement apron needs to be poured into the site, this shouldn't cause any closures (one side at a time) on the boat ramp
 - Boat ramp traffic is changing to an immediate hard left on a separate road that parallels the highway (not through the campground)
- Memorials on the Park
 - AHRA has been receiving several requests for memorials within the Park
 - Proposal is no more physical memorials at the sites, but a donation program in honor with a plaque placed in the Visitor Center to remember
 - Goal is to minimize effect on the natural environment
 - It is up to the Park Manager's discretion for large memorial events
 - Temp memorials are allowed for 14 days, then removed by park
 - Similar to other public lands partners

- Current ones have been grandfathered in
- Meeting the Challenge
 - Directors Innovation Fund (DIF) grant fund from GOCO to fund accessibility report
 - Based on the report, AHRA will first work on parking and restrooms.
 - Focus on sites with fee tubes first: Big Bend and Parkdale.
 - After the scope is defined, we will share it with the group.
- Summer Kick-Off Event
 - Instead of a holiday open house, AHRA will host a Summer Kick-Off event
 - Temps will run an outdoor event following training, providing face time with staff and the public.
 - AHRA will share the date and information for the event when decided
 - The goal is for May, before Memorial Day, on a Saturday
 - Stone Cabin
 - On BLM land
 - What type of use does this get?
 - Request is for another campground on the upper part of the river
 - Stone Cabin is on AHRA's radar, but it is not on board for future improvements at the moment
 - Would need to work with BLM on planning
 - Numbers Access Site
 - Land is currently owned by USFS but is an area of co-ownership
 - Development of a campground would require land trade/swap or new agreement with the USFS
 - Salida Lowhead Dam
 - American Whitewater may have funding
 - Just received journal for winter
 - One section specifically mentions the LH dam
- Rationing and Permit Updates John Kreski, Rationing & Permits
 - Commercial Use Reports
<https://cpw.state.co.us/placestogo/parks/ArkansasHeadwatersRecreationArea/Pages/RiverOutfitters.aspx>
 - Private vs. Commercial Overage Dates from 2022
- BLM Updates Kalem Lenard, RGFO Asst Field Manager
 - Chaffee County Camping and Travel Mgmt Plan
 - 30 day appeal period must pass before they can start

- Browns Grotto off of CR 194 near Hecla (one of first sites)
- Commercial outfitters can give input
- Plan is for 129-157 campsites on BLM land and possible expansion of places like Turtle Rocks
- Potential for developing campgrounds
- USFS also working on camping plan
- Hiring
 - Need approval for career seasonals, can work year round, get federal benefits, permanent staff but can take off for a few months.
 - One is funded by Chaffee County commissioners- based in Chaffee County.
 - Other one is funded by an OHV grant and will be doing OHV work. \
 - Last one is funded by BLM and will float around between groups.
 - They will start work in 12 days.

- CTF Chair/Roundtable and Enviro/Recreation Committee Updates Bob Hamel
- Roundtable (All)

Upcoming meeting dates:

March 15