



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

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Meeting Minutes

Friday, June 17, 2022

Hybrid Meeting

Members present (onsite): Janelle Kukuk, Jack Placchi, Scott Jones, Jill Ozarski. Via Zoom: Pamela Denahy, Jerry Abboud, Meara McQuain, Heather Hormell, Jason Meyer

CPW Staff: Fletcher Jacobs, Shannon Schaller, Pam O'Malley, Crystal Read, Josh Stoudt

Others: Ex-Officio Tim Finger (BLM), Ben Lara (USFS), Martha Williamson (USFS)

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 April 1, 2022

Motion to approve minutes – Jill Ozarski

Motion seconded – Pam Denahy

Motion passed unanimously

Public Comment: None

Director's Update – Fletcher Jacobs for Heather Dugan

- Heather Dugan is serving as the Acting Director of CPW. Ty Petersburg will serve as Acting Field Services Assistant Director and will attend STC meetings in her place.
- Update on DNR Legislation including:
 - Outdoor Regional Partnership received funding and 1 fulltime position.
 - Sweetwater Lake received approval for 3 full-time positions.
 - HB151 – Funding approved for Safe Passage for Wildlife (Hwy system).
 - HB1072 – Habitat Partnership reauthorized.
 - HB1379 – Approved \$20M in funding for State Parks Wildfire Mitigation.
 - HB168 – Search & Rescue approved for \$1M in funding. As a result of a study a few years back, death benefits to family are now included as well as additional eligible expenses for reimbursement. Volunteers no longer a liability, now having State immunity. Search & Rescue will now have a full-time position within CPW.
- Wolf Reintroduction Update: 10-J Rule. Separate federal rules that help relax requirements with Fish & Wildlife regarding wolf management. Groups created to work through rules and



education possibilities. Phases – temporal, endangered, animal counts, etc. Keystone Policy Group is managing coordination.

- WIGs (Wildly Important Goals):
 - Sustainable Funding: Keep Colorado Wild Pass for \$29 (as part of the motor vehicle annual registration process with opt-out) begins Jan 1 2023. Trails Program is part of the programs to be funded once state park operations, search and rescue, and avalanche education have received their full funding.
 - Trail Crew Hours: Numbers are looking even higher than expected so will meet the FY22 goal and may increase our FY23 number. Fletcher to report increased numbers to Governor's Office.

Trails Program Update – Fletcher Jacobs

- The Parks & Wildlife Commission approved updates to Policy A-104, Trails Committee Policy.
- Non-Motorized categories approved – Maintenance & Construction and Planning & Support. See further discussion later in notes.
- Senate Bill 22-103 adds new Congressional District, District 8. State Recreational Trails Committee will add a District 8 member and an OHV At-Large member, hoping to have both by September 16, 2022 meeting.
- Rec Trails Workshop: Stakeholders met prior to Partner's Conference. Discussion groups summary: One-stop shop for volunteers. Makes volunteer and trails stewardship easier and gets leadership pipeline in place. Non-Motorized Good Management Crews being considered for clubs and non-profits. Benefits in retaining FTE and Seasonal positions for these crews. Considering possibility of a Statewide NM Crew – develop, fund, schedule – maybe a pilot program. Using technology to improve coordination for tracking trail conditions and maintenance needs. STC member attended Rec Trails Workshop where frustration was shared regarding volunteer groups' ability to become better connected with higher profile volunteer programs.
- Trails Program is now fully staffed, adding Maggie Gillard, Project Coordinator. Her primary focus is COTREX, and Chrystal Read, Federal Grants Administrator, focusing mostly on LWCF at this time. Thanks to staff covering responsibilities during vacancies.
- Colorado 14ers received *Partner of the Year Award* at Partner's Conference this year.

Snowmobile Program Update – Tom Metsa

- Tom presented a program review, including the number of grooming clubs (27), the make-up of the Snowmobile subcommittee, funding history and the grant cycle/review timeline. Grooming Clubs maintain and groom almost 3,300 miles of trail.
- The Program is currently looking at challenges to better distribute funds among clubs. Flexibility is needed to get money into the hands of the areas with large snowfall vs. areas with small snowfall is limited. The program will use data collected over the last 20 years to help with creating a better funding model.
- Tom presented the subcommittee's recommendation for funding. It will move forward to the PWC July 21-22 2002.

Action Item – Snowmobile Grant Funding Recommendations

- Proposal to fund five snowmobile grant projects, as recommended by the Snowmobile subcommittee.

Motion to approve scores and ranking – Scott Jones

Motion seconded by Jill Ozarski
Motion passed unanimously

Public Comment: None

US Forest Service Update – Ben Lara

- The Salida Ranger District currently has what they consider a non-motorized Good Management Trail Crew. They offered to let CPW Non-motorized Trails Program to use this as pilot program.
- USFS is collecting forest trail data using applications such as VeTrax and Survey 1-2-3. One is taking place in New Mexico. Staff will report on results in future STC meeting.
- Increasing capacity resulted in approval to hire an Assistant Trails Manager to work with Chad.
- USFS Wilderness – National Level: Bringing on 1300 positions nation-wide. USFS R2 Region will be getting 50 positions. Bringing on 200+ GS5, GS6 & GS7 level positions of which a lot will be working in Trails programs. This 200+ will include crew supervisor and a lot of on-the-ground stewardship.
- Collaboration between non-motorized and motorized groups is increasing and will help volunteer stewardship efforts.

Trails Grant (Criteria) Discussion:

Fletcher shared feedback that informed edits to the three application categories per the Committee request at the April 1st STC meeting. The recommended changes include

- Updated language to streamline the process for both applicants and reviewers
- References to the Planning Trails with Wildlife in Mind document
- Scoring criteria adjustments

To help improve the initial Wildlife review, all project scopes and maps will be sent to Regional Trails Coordinators in addition to the appropriate AWM for project communication purposes. For the upcoming NM grant cycle (2022-23), we will continue with the existing fillable pdf application. Staff looked at 4 different online application options as requested by the Committee. All of them were a little more expensive than anticipated and there is no budget to accommodate this year.

The Committee discussed the proposed changes. Suggestion by several members to create separate Planning and Support applications and review the scoring criteria for each application cycle to make sure they are consistent. Several Committee members volunteered to review the applications before they go live in early August. The overall consensus is that these changes are all improvements. The Committee agreed there needs to be a continued emphasis on maintenance for the 2023 cycle. Appreciation was given to the regional coordinators, subcommittee reviewers, and committee chairs who shared feedback and reviewed the draft applications.

BLM Update – Tim Finger

- New committee ex-officio for BLM (Dept. of Interior).
- Wildlife discussions also taking place at BLM. Looking at TMP (Travel Management Plan).

- Working on better focus on recreation impacts, wildlife protection, etc. in TMP efforts.
- Still experiencing staffing issues at BLM. Low number of applicants for positions.
- Focus on infrastructure (TMP) projects are planned for 2023.

Colorado the Beautiful Divide Planning Grant – Martha Williamson USFS

Martha Williamson of the USFS Divide Ranger District gave a comprehensive overview of the planning efforts taking place on the Divide Ranger District, with thanks for the Colorado the Beautiful grant award. Martha shared the following links:

[SLV GO! – San Luis Valley Great Outdoors](#)

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLh3Vn0eNB_V4AsTKLLjK9N2M7FnvFt0bJ

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hPJD2Bq-n6LPmQThNn1yOGYkY5D4XE2W/view>

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

Round Table

Members made comments about clean-up efforts being necessary due to recent tree-breaking snow and wind storms. Major efforts being undertaken in Grand Lake area to rebuild after fire damage. The Northwest region reported regarding the death of a mountain bicyclist on the Palisade Plunge trail. Great reminder to always carry enough water to properly hydrate. GOCO Officers *On-The-Road Tours* taking place during June & July in rural Colorado communities. The September State Trails Committee Meeting will be in Grand Lake area with a field trip on Thursday.

Meeting Adjourned by Janelle Kukuk at 2:05 p.m.