

## Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area

### Citizen Task Force (CTF)

Wednesday, October 26, 2022 • 9:30a - 11:30a

In Attendance: Bob Hamel, Trey Shelton, Kalem Lenard, Tom Waters, Jennifer Crawford, John Kreski, Dede de Percin, Leslie Tyson, Steve Fleming (Mountain Mail), Logan Myers, Larry Payne (TU)

Via Zoom: Christina King, Gail Tubbs, Ed Perko, Greg Felt, Drew Elder, Tappan Brown, Justin Zeisler

#### Notes

1. Welcome & Introductions Bob Hamel, CTF Chair
  
2. Public Attendees and CTF Members Roundtable 5 minutes/person
  - 2.1. Friends of Browns Canyon is in the preliminary stages of applying for Dark Sky status in Browns Canyon National Monument. They are soliciting letters of support and raising funds. If you are interested in volunteering to assist with this process, contact [Logan](#).
  - 2.2. A subdivision (Trilogy Harvard Major Subdivision) has been proposed to be built near the bottom of Miracle Mile in the Numbers section. CPW is contacted only when development is proposed near AHRA land (as opposed to all water development) but will keep an eye out for this proposal.  
\*Note: Greg Felt recused himself and left the meeting during portion 2.2
  
3. AHRA Updates
  - 3.1. Park Manager Updates Tom Waters, AHRA Park Manager
    - Hecla Road  
Outfitters are requesting that the road into Hecla be paved as washboards are hard on buses and are bumpy for people. This is a county road, not an AHRA road. Because this would be a major rebuild (adding shoulders), it's not likely to move forward, but CTF will be updated if that changes.
    - Ruby Mountain FLAP grant  
The project to widen the road into Ruby Mountain is still moving forward, with a projected start date of Fall 20223. The scope changed since the last meeting; moved closer to Ruby, parallel to Rock Capital Partners LLC (previously Nestlé) ponds, extending to parking by wash, cutting into rock wall. More updates to follow as they become available.
    - Salida Lowhead Dam  
CPW is still actively seeking funding for this project. Plans are currently at 30%. CPW is working on getting plans to 100% (shovel-ready) in hopes of a successful grant request. Project will include dam removal with gradient control and wetland re-creation, restoring the area to a more natural condition.
    - VFMP summary  
Thanks to our supporting partners, VFMP water was used to maintain a

flow of 700 for most of the season (Jul 1-Aug 15), with Pueblo Water Works supplementing near the end. The early season Spring fishery portion of the VFMP program also proved successful.

- **Salida East Project**  
AHRA is currently in Phase 2 of the Salida East renovation project, which includes a rebuild of the campground portion of the recreation site. Phase 1 is complete and included updates to the boat ramp and parking, as well as the addition of shade structures and a new direct road to the boat ramp. The campground is currently closed for camping but is expected to re-open by Memorial Day 2023.
- **Rincon**  
A cement apron will be constructed this fall between the Rincon recreation site and Hwy 50. The site will be closed for 5 days while the concrete sets.
- **Keep Colorado Wild (KCW)**  
A new park pass tied to CO vehicle registrations will become available beginning in 2023. Individuals are automatically opted in to purchase a \$29 park pass upon registration or renewal but may choose to opt out. Information about this pass program will be posted at site entrances.
- **Budget Requests**  
Requests for capital funding are due in December. Any ideas for projects within the park can be emailed to [Jen](#) by mid-November.
- **Fred Rasmussen Award nominations**  
AHRA is seeking nominations for the Fred Rasmussen Award. Submit your nominations via email to [Tom](#), including the nominee's name and a simple write-up of how this individual exhibits outstanding commitment to the river corridor.
- **Decision Item for PMII (Ranger position)**  
AHRA was awarded an additional ranger position. This individual will come on staff no earlier than July 2023.
- **Director's Innovation Fund (DIF)**  
AHRA was awarded DIF grant funding to study ADA access within the park. A contractor has been hired to review and consult on 5 sites within the park.
- **Dispersed Camping**  
The BLM and USFS are currently developing a camping management plan for the area. Upon plan completion, AHRA will work with these agencies to incorporate dispersed camping changes within the park where necessary. Jennifer Fenwick with National Forest Foundation has been collecting data on dispersed camping locations and conditions in the area, as well as creating a plan to better manage these sites.

### 3.2. Rationing and Permit Updates

John Kreski, Rationing & Permits

- **Private Boat Counts**  
AHRA records private boater counts from images taken from whitewaterphotography.com between the hours of 9a-5p. During events, boaters wearing race bibs are counted but excluded from the total

private boater number. Private boat counts will be published on the [AHRA Private Boaters page](#) upon completion.

- Commercial Outfitter Numbers  
Commercial outfitter preliminary numbers were presented and are expected to be down approximately 10-15% from 2021 (a record year). Final numbers will be presented at the next CTF meeting and will be posted to the [AHRA River Outfitters page](#) upon completion.

#### 4. BLM Updates

Kalem Lenard, RGFO Asst Field Manager

- Secretary of the Interior Visit  
Secretary of the Interior, Deb Haaland, visited the AHRA and participated in a hike and approximately 2.5 hours of presentations on wildfire mitigation, indigenous antiquities, agriculture, community engagement, and the like.
- Browns Canyon National Monument (BCNM) Interp Planning  
The BLM, along with GARNA, USFS, and Friends of Browns Canyon, are working on an interpretive and education plan for BCNM.
- Chaffee County Camping Travel Management Plan  
The public comment period for the [Chaffee County Camping and Travel Management Plan](#) environmental assessment closed a couple of weeks ago. Kalem is reading and responding to comments.
- Staffing Update  
BLM is interviewing to fill a vacant park ranger position as well as a career seasonal position. There is some thought on moving the Recreation Ranger to career seasonal status.
- End-of-Year Visitation Report  
BLM visitation was down approximately 400,000 visits from 2021 but has returned to a more normal growth rate following the COVID spike.

#### 5. CTF Chair/Roundtable and Enviro/Recreation Committee Updates

Bob Hamel

- Black Hills Property Update  
Remediation work is complete on the Black Hills property. The City of Cañon City will be voting (Issue 2C) to permit the City to accept land to be used as parks or playgrounds with approval by ordinance of Council after a duly noticed public hearing.
- Hill vs. Warsewa Access Case  
No updates.
- Roundtable Enviro Rep board seat open  
The Roundtable has an Enviro Rep board seat open. CTF members are encouraged to apply. The enviro rec board meets every-other month and reports back to Roundtable, which meets monthly. Interested individuals may contact [Bob](#) for more information.

#### Upcoming meeting dates:

- December 15
- January 18
- February 15
- March 15