

GUNNISON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND OUTDOOR TOURISM COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
March 8th, 2018

The March 8th, 2018 Gunnison Sustainable Tourism and Outdoor Tourism Committee (STORC) meeting was conducted in the Gunnison County Blackstock Government Center, 2nd floor meeting room, located at 221 N. Wisconsin #D, Gunnison, CO 81230.

Committee Members Present:

Voting Members:

John Messner, Chair, Gunnison County Commissioner
Kevin Alexander, Vice Chair, Professor of Biology WSCU
Erica Mueller, Crested Butte Mountain Resort
Christi Hicks, Crested Butte Nordic
Chris Parmeter, Colorado Parks & Wildlife
Ben Breslauer, GOATS
Frank Kugel, Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District
Joellen Fonken, Gunnison Nordic
Aaron Drendel, U.S. Forest Service
Tim Kugler, Gunnison Trails
Kristi Murphy, Bureau of Land Management
Noel Durant, Crested Butte Land Trust
Paul Merck, Crested Butte Town Council
Navid Navidi, Gunnison community member and business owner
Scott Borden, Graduate Faculty at WSCU
John Norton, Gunnison Crested Butte Tourism Association
Mallory Logan, Gunnison City Council
Bruce Allen, Gunnison Stockgrowers Association
Sandy Snell-Dobert, National Park Service

Others in Audience:

Chris Haaver
Hilary Henry

Staff Members Present:

Cathie Pagano, Director of Community and Economic Development
Rachel Sabbato, Planner II
Marlene Crosby, Director of Public Works

CALL TO ORDER:

Messner called the March 8th, 2018 meeting of the Gunnison Sustainable Tourism and Outdoor Tourism Committee to order at 2:00 P.M.

Approval of February Minutes:

Norton pointed to a typo on page 5, line 4 and Kugel noted that a committee member's last name was spelt incorrectly. With these edits addressed, the committee approved the minutes February, 2018 STORC meeting minutes.

Strategic Result Strategizing:

Sabbato began by explaining that changes were made to the Strategic Plan based off the last meeting's discussion. The clean and updated Strategic Plan was provided to the committee. Sabbato explained that today, the group should focus on breaking down the individual goals and priorities. To do this, large pieces of paper were hung around the room, each representing a strategic result identified in the plan. Committee members were each asked to sign-up for three strategic results, and more if they felt inclined. Pagano noted that the goals committed to by committee members will ultimately be the strategic results they work to implement.

Pagano reminded the group that there are four goals total, each with their own strategic results. The plan includes a table for each strategic result that outlines necessary tasks required for accomplishing the result, an estimated completion date and a date completed.

Once committee members have signed up for their three strategic results, Sabbato suggested that they break into smaller groups to discuss high-level strategies for accomplishing one of the strategic results they chose. To start, the entire committee divided into three groups, each discussing one of the strategic results.

Prior to breaking into groups, Norton asked about the partnership with the NFF and why that was prioritized. Messner explained that it was meant to serve as a potential funding source.

Navidi asked if certain tasks were removed from Goal 4. Sabbato explained that some of the tasks were moved to other goals. Pagano noted that it was unclear if the group came to a consensus on whether to assess carrying capacity. Navidi responded that he thought carrying capacity would be considered in regards to the entire community and the amount of tourism it can sustain. Messner replied to Navidi, explaining that he does not feel that can be realistically measured and determined. Messner added that several of the strategic results address degrees of carrying capacity but that the committee should not have a philosophical debate about the number of people invited to the valley, rather develop strategies for maintaining sustainable tourism.

The committee discussion paused for members to sign-up for three strategic results each.

Following the sign-up period, Pagano suggested that the committee break into smaller groups to strategize on methods for accomplishing one of their respective strategic results.

When the committee re-convened, Pagano noted that Goal 4, strategic result 2 had several committee members associated with it, which she suggested was good because of its complexity. For this reason, Pagano suggested that certain strategic results may require additional sub-committees or sub-groups.

Strategic Result Group Conversation Report Back:

The group reconvened to discuss three strategic results; Goal 1: SR 1, Goal 1: SR 3, and Goal 4: SR 1&2.

Logan summarized the group's strategy for Goal 1: SR 1, "**By (date), support and enhance a sustainable, diverse and adaptable array of tourism and recreation offerings and opportunities.**"

Logan explained that the group's first task is to identify current offerings in the form of an offerings spreadsheet. Activities and/or events would populate the spreadsheet, including their respective season/date(when), geographic area/location (where), and the entity/user (who). The spreadsheet would also include a measure of impact that the activity has on the environment (low, medium or high). Logan provided the committee with an example;

Activity: hunting **Season:** fall **Location:** areas that permit hunting **Entity:** available hunting guides and agencies that provide permits **Impact(s):** camping and support of local economy through use of lodging and other services.

Next, Logan explained the group's desire to identify additional opportunities that are not being utilized to their full potential. This, she explained, would increase the matrix of current offerings. To conclude, Logan explained that the offerings spreadsheet, combined with their impact rating, could serve as a rubric to measure opportunities and their impact on both the environment and economy. The rubric would then be used to rank and guide the marketing of certain activities/offerings.

Messner summarized the group's strategy for Goal 1: SR 3, "**By (date), develop a comprehensive branding and wayfinding strategy for County recreation amenities, as measured by:**"

Tasks outlined by their group for accomplishing the strategic result included:

- Develop a contract for comprehensive logo/branding, by Aug. 1st, 2018.
- Develop a communication plan with two elements; methods of communication, and messaging.
- Develop an informational piece which identifies/ranks complexity of projects (easy – challenging)
- Develop training curriculum for school groups and visitors.

Kugler noted that a great job has been done to develop consistent and education-based signage up-valley. He asked if the future way-finding system could be designed to complement existing signage. Fonken noted that cost is always an issue, and that perhaps the group explore a method for adding a logo/brand to existing signage to help link them. Kugler suggested that messaging consistency is also sought between apps, as certain apps still list illegal trails. Norton suggested the group refer to the CBG app because it is frequently updated and will interface with cattle drive patterns. Pagano suggested then that one of the goals of this group could be to help other local users, such as commercial users, refer to this app. A committee member asked how interactive the app is, and if there is potential to overlay fishing data. Norton responded that it would only work O.K., but that there are other apps that may be more applicable for certain user groups, such as OnX, an app typically used by hunters and growing in

popularity. A committee member noted that Share the Slate will also be using the TA app for their mapping efforts.

Durant summarized strategies discussed by the third group for Goal 4: SR 1&2, **(1) “By (date), develop a management, maintenance, and implementation plan for recreation infrastructure to ensure a sustainable and high-quality experience.”** And, **(2) “By (date), prepare a recreation infrastructure assessment and implementation plan identifying recreation assets in Gunnison County and gaps and/or needs in those assets, along with alignment of those needs with other priorities in this Strategic Plan.”**

Durant explained some of the approaches discussed by their group, including the need to establish baselines through a data-driven GIS mapping process. Ideally, this living map would include all recreational infrastructure managed by involved entities. Durant added that the process has potential to serve as a GIS internship for a Western student. Further, he explained the need to consider seasonal changes for infrastructure.

Additionally, the group established the need to map priority areas/areas in need of enhanced management as perceived by wildlife, environmental, recreation and ranching management. Where multiple priority areas overlap, Durant explained, would show hot-spots. Further, a process could be developed to class identified hot-spots as low, medium or high. It was noted that GPLI has broadly identify some of these areas, and that the STORC process would serve as an extension of it.

Pagano asked if some groups feel they would benefit from re-visiting their strategic result strategy discussion at the next meeting. Some groups confirmed they would need more time (i.e. Goal 4: SR 1&2), while other groups felt they were ready to move-on (i.e. Goal 1: SR 1).

The committee briefly discussed which strategic results could be addressed in smaller groups outside of the scheduled meeting times. Pagano asked for each group to provide her with their notes from the day’s discussions.

Pagano concluded by updating the committee with an overview of the CO Outdoor Stewardship grant application. At first, the application was submitted in support of the Crested Butte Conservation Corps’ (CBCC) effort, however, the County was told the proposal had to be project-specific. Further conversation with GOCO, and later with Dean Winstanley, indicated that the County’s grant application had made it to a second round, along with 3-4 other applications. Winstanley let Pagano know that their application showed strong collaboration and adequately expressed the impacts being felt by the region from tourism and recreation. GOCO will make their final decision at their June meeting. There is potential for 2-3 projects to be funded. Pagano urged committee members with contacts at GOCO to advocate for the County’s proposal.

Adjourned at 4:00 P.M.