

GUNNISON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND OUTDOOR TOURISM COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
June 14th, 2018

The June 14, 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:

Erica Mueller/Matt Feier, Crested Butte Mountain Resort
Christi Hicks, Crested Butte Nordic
Bruce Noble, National Park Service
Kevin Alexander, Professor of Biology WSCU
Frank Kugel, Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District
Joellen Fonken, Gunnison Nordic
Tim Kugler, Gunnison Trails
Noel Durant, Crested Butte Land Trust
Paul Merck, Crested Butte Town Council
Navid Navidi, Gunnison community member and business owner
John Norton, Gunnison Crested Butte Tourism Association
Chris Parmeter, Colorado Parks and Wildlife
Mallory Logan, Gunnison City Council
Kristi Murphy, BLM
Ashley Hom, USFS

Others in Audience:

Marlene Crosby
Chris Haaver
Mel Yemma

Staff Members Present:

Cathie Pagano, Director of Community and Economic Development
Rachel Sabbato, Planner II

CALL TO ORDER:

Pagano called the June 14th, 2018 meeting of the Gunnison Sustainable Tourism and Outdoor Tourism Committee to order at 2:00 P.M.

DETERMINATION OF QUORUM:

APPROVAL OF MAY MINUTES:

Pagano acknowledged that the May Meeting Minutes had not yet been sent to the group and that she would send them soon.

Meeting Minutes

Pagano requested that committee members provide a brief update of their current projects and relevant funding needs.

Dave Ochs: CBMBA has hosted two work days, and its first Women's Work Force (WWF) trail day. CBMBA's large fundraiser will be on July 6th. This year it will be held at the Budd's barn on Peanut Lake Road. The Whalers will be playing and Ochs anticipates it to be a very fun event. The CBCC is five weeks in with a staff of six, including one new high school student. The crews are working in all drainages on multiple projects with a diversity of partners. CBMBA is seeking \$63,000 to fund the CBCC. Ochs explained that a grant to the National Forest Foundation (NFF) is due before July for work in Gothic.

Matt Feier: Mueller introduced Matt Feier as her replacement. Feier currently works as the Director of Planning and Sustainability for CBMR. Feier explained that CBMR is still working on the Teo expansion process as well as standard summer operations.

Christi Hicks: Currently, CB Nordic is focused on its summer work which includes improving internal systems. There are also plans in place for a new facility and some new trail projects.

Noel Durant: The Slate River Working Group has convened for two meetings. The group's work is entirely focused on river recreation and aims to deliver a coordinated draft river management plan for the heavily used Upper Slate River. The plan will outline needed infrastructure improvements for 2019 and 2020. Immediate actions being taken this season include signage and defining river etiquette parameters. The Land Trust is also moving forward with its Gunsight Bridge replacement project and will soon announce a \$60,000 matching gift for the project.

Joellen Fonken: Gunnison Nordic will continue with its education efforts.

John Norton: A new kiosk will be installed at Hartman Rocks and two additional kiosks at OBJ and CBMR. To meet grant guidelines, the kiosks must be built before the year end. Some kiosk panels are still to come as part of the next project phase. The signs include a large and small map and an interpretive leave-no-trace panel acknowledging ranching. The messaging has the ability to be tailored to specific locations. Norton added that there is potential to secure additional funding for needed kiosks. Ochs added that the CBCC and CBMBA are installing the small aluminum discs (blazes) where appropriate along trails. The committee briefly discussed the location and material of 15 installed kiosks.

Hicks added that Silent Tracks is interested in developing the winter equivalent to mountain manners, which led her to ask about shared use of kiosks for winter messaging. Messner also emphasized the need for kiosks at river access points and fishing areas. Durant added that the Slate River Working Group has landed on river-use parameters for the Upper Slate River and that they will be posted on temporary

signs for this summer and on permanent signs next year. Pagano asked if there is potential for the multiple signage funding needs to be acquired through a single grant.

Norton shared information about the nascent trail development in Bentonville, AR. In particular, he stressed recent research that showed both the economic and mental and physical health benefits of accessible trails to downtown areas. Norton suggested enhancing the partnership with One Valley Prosperity Project partners to achieve such benefits in the Gunnison Valley.

Frank Kugel: Kugel briefed the committee on two projects; the Gunnison River Festival and the Watershed Management Planning effort. The Watershed Planning effort is intended to prepare the Valley for changed water quality and quantities in the future. The project team is trying to mitigate these challenges through water efficiency gains and various improvements. This season, they are focused on work in the East River.

Bruce Noble: Nobel explained that a “Friends of Black Canyon National Park” group has formed to take on advocacy work for the park, fundraising and more. The group is an official non-profit organization. A grant proposal has been submitted to the National Park Foundation to help complete a Strategic Plan. Noble added that funds were acquired from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to acquire a nearby property and that funds are likely to be secured to complete the Wilderness and Backcountry Management Plan.

Tim Kugler: Kugler reported that the 11th Growler race went well and that there were over 700 riders with no major medical issues. It contributed to what was described as one of the busiest Mays on record for Gunnison shops. He added that the Gunnison Trails Crew is through week two of a ten-week season. Kugler added that they are a three-person crew that works 40 hours a week. Kugler concluded that there are several projects slated for this season, including the decommissioning Chicken Scratch Trail, and restoration work on Signal Peak (pending BLM approval). Kugler added that funding for the trail crew has been secured from multiple small grants (Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District, City of Gunnison, and others still pending).

Messner asked if there is an opportunity to partner with other groups to work on Taylor Park. The committee discussed reasons for why the CBCC and Gunnison Trail crews do not prioritize Taylor Park.

Paul Merck: Merck stressed the need to focus on the entire Valley, underlying the importance for the upper and lower ends of the Valley to work together. Merck briefed the committee on organizations and events supported through the Town’s grant cycle; the Land Trust, CBCC, HCCA (Slate River Clean Up), the Fat Tire 40, the Adaptive Sport’s Center and more. Merck noted the importance for all organizations to consider ADA compatibility needs in projects.

Mallory Logan: The City of Gunnison is working on plans to improve the safety of the Main street and Tomichi intersection. In addition to housing projects, there have been approved amendments to land development code to decrease the required widths of buildings, and to eliminate parking requirements in the central business district. The City is looking for feedback on the planning stage of the Lazy-K project, for which GOCO funds will be requested.

Chris Parmeter: Parmeter explained that CPW is hoping to have a trash pick-up day as part of the Gunnison River Festival.

Kevin Alexander: Alexander noted that the Partners and the Outdoors conference, hosted by CWP, was great and he encourages folks to attend next year. He shared that the Flyathon will take place this September (14th-16th) and will be on the Lower Lake Fork. Funds raised from the event go towards native fish restoration. Alexander added that the GPLI process is wrapping up and encouraged committee members to send in comments. To fill in for Scott Borden, Alexander added that Western will be implementing a new MS in Ecology.

Rachel Sabatto: Sabatto briefed the committee on the Shady Island project; a parcel north of Garlic Mikes on the Gunnison River that was acquired by the County last fall. The County has a site visit planned with County staff and stakeholders and plans to replace the north bridge river access and ramp which is currently C-DOT access. Currently, the infrastructure and access does not accommodate the intended use. The project will also include the addition of tent platforms. Sabatto concluded that there will be a variety of opportunities for the public to submit comments on the project.

Ashley Hom: Hom explained that she was filling in for McCombs. Major USFS projects include toilet installation and improved parking at the West Marron Bells trailhead. Funds for the work have come from the Met Rec and the National Forest Foundation. The USFS is also continuing work on camping, signage and fencing and is also working with the County to place boulders along the road in certain drainages to prevent off-road travel. A permanent toilet will also be installed at the Musician Flats area this August. Next year the USFS will be seeking grant funds for the Almont Camp Ground put-in. They are also in the process of discussing the Snodgrass to Gothic walk-way in an effort to keep pedestrian traffic off the road. The USFS is continuing their effort to designate dispersed camping in up-valley drainages. Lastly, Hom explained that they are working to re-route the Scarp Ridge trail which currently goes through Eleven's property.

Kristi Murphy: Murphy explained that two new toilets have been put in at Hartman Rocks and that the area's brochure has been re-designed. GOATS submit a grant for OHV parking lots and a skills course through CPW's OHV grant cycle. Murphy added that toilets are needed at Kill Hill and that Main Street will need to be re-routed in the future, which will require funding. The re-design of OBJ will be happening this September and October and funds have been secured to install the bridge. The bridge should be installed this fall, or next spring. A new kiosk will also be going in at OBJ and BLM is working with the Land Trust to build a trail that connects OBJ to Gunsight Bridge. BLM is also working with the Land Trust on creating river etiquette signage. BLM is working with the Adaptive Sports Center to build ADA compatible tent platforms at OBJ. A new toilet will be going in at River Flats and parking will be improved. Murphy concluded that the BLM could use help and/or funding for trail decommission work in sage grouse habitat.

Where we're going from here:

Pagano explained that the group's Strategic Plan will soon be finalized and that near and long-term project goals still need to be discussed.

Near-term: Pagano asked what types of grants committee members are seeking and for what projects? In particular, Pagano asked if there are planning grants the group can apply for.

As an example, Pagano mentioned that a planning grant could be helpful for considering a connectivity project along the Tomichi River corridor from Dick Bratton's home to Gold Basin Road, past I-Bar Ranch. Ultimately, it would provide connectivity to the proposed Gunnison Rising annexation and to Signal Peak.

Committee priorities for planning grants included:

- **Crested Butte to Crested Butte South Trail**

The group discussed potential trail alignments. Fonken explained that past planning grants were not funded for project. She stressed the need to sell it as a safety project, and that the connectivity selling point hasn't been effective with GOCO in the past. The committee discussed the style of trail needed. Feier explained that it is more likely to be accomplished along Highway 135 versus behind CB South due to the number of private property owners. Crosby suggested pursuing the multi-modal grants, which typically require matching funds.

The committee discussed the potential for forming a sub-committee to tackle planning needs for the CB to CB South trail. Crosby suggested looking into FLAP (Federal Land Access Program) grants for projects that include access to public land.

- **Gothic to Snodgrass**

Hom suggested the need for planning grants for the Gothic to Snodgrass trail, as external funding is needed for the project. Hom suggested NFF grants. It was noted that a representative on the Vail board sits on the NFF board and that the NFF grants have deep pockets.

- **Kebler Winter Trailhead**

The Kebler winter trailhead was mentioned as an area that needs planning attention. Phil Chamberland and Crosby will work on this. Town of Irwin, Nordic and hybrid winter users suggested as folks to reach out to.

- **Crested Butte to Carbondale Trail**

Committee member asked what the status of the CB to Carbondale trail is. Fonken explained that it is actively being pursued. It was added that Pitkin County is getting push-back on the Marble to Carbondale section.

Additional long-term projects suggested by the committee included: the Gunnison Circular Trail and the Gunnison to Crested Butte Trail. The Almont put-in was mentioned as a project in need of implementation grant funds. Pagano suggested that sub-committees look into top priorities.

Potential Grants

The following grant opportunities and their compatibility with Committee projects were discussed:

2018/2019 Colorado the Beautiful Trails Grant Cycle

(https://cpw.state.co.us/Documents/Commission/2018/May/Item_25-Colorado_the_Beautiful-PWCMtg-May2018.pdf)

Pagano summarized the grant guidelines, including applicable project types (new trails, trailheads, environmental restoration, signage). A committee member noted that a wildlife review must be secured by July 1st and that more information can be sought from the CPW contact, Nick Dellaca (State Trails Program Manager).

- **Signal Peak-** Signage will be needed at Signal Peak for either outcome.

GOCO's Local Government Parks & Recreation Construction or Planning

The group discussed potential projects for this grant (due October 18th), including Land Trust trailhead improvements that serve as a gateway to the backcountry, restroom infrastructure, Shady Island, Lazy-K, and the Almont put-in.

Pagano suggested that next steps should include applicable sub-groups to commit to specific projects and grant applications.

Crested Butte Conservation Corps Funding:

Ochs informed the committee that CBMBA has \$63,000 left to raise to fund the CBCC. Their summer fundraiser is approaching, which should help fill the gap. Ochs added that the organization is looking to develop more sustainable funding source for the crew and reiterated that CBCC is not just for mountain biking and he feels that the community realizes this.

Hom suggested the development of a fee system, noting that it would need community support. An example of this would be fees at trailheads for parking. Ochs explained that CBMBA applied for \$30,000 from NFF and was awarded \$10,000. Mueller asked if the Colorado Tourism Association (CTO) had potential for funding CBMBA's efforts. It was noted that the Forest Services may develop an MOU with CBMBA/CBCC to allow for contributions over \$2,500 to be made in the future. Parmeter asked if there was potential for iron rangers at trailheads. The group discussed the gray area associated with donation tubes on public land. Messner proceeded to ask individual communities members if they had yet contributed to CBCC.

Subcommittee Meetings/Actions to accomplish goals

- Develop masters plan of offerings (Mel Yemma to help Chris Haaver set up survey monkey)
- Stewardship Principles (Chris Parmeter and TA working on this and will have delivery for next meeting)
- Funding- Red Rock Pass

- Peanut Lake/Lower Loop area (Town, Marlene Crosby, Land Trust, Christi Hicks) Noel to head this conversation and gather group.
- McCabe's (Bruce Noble suggested that he work with someone on this).

Adjourn at 4:07pm