

**GUNNISON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND OUTDOOR TOURISM COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
July 12, 2018**

The July 12, 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, Gunnison County Commissioner, Chair
Matthew McCombs, USFS District Ranger
Navid Navidi, Gunnison community member and business owner
Scott Borden, Graduate Faculty at WSCU
Bruce Allen, Stockgrowers
Elijah Waters, BLM
Chris Parmeter, CPW
Kevin Alexander, Hunters and Anglers
Ben Breslauer, GOATS
Dave Ochs, Crested Butte Mountain Bike Association
Noel Durant, Crested Butte Land Trust
Christi Hicks, Crested Butte Nordic
Bruce Noble, National Park Service
Frank Kugel, Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District
Joellen Fonken, Gunnison Nordic
Tim Kugler, Gunnison Trails
Matt Feier, Crested Butte Mountain Resort
Paul Merck, Crested Butte Town Council

Others in Audience:

Nicole Branson, By phone, Sedona, Arizona USFS District Manager
Corey Wong, USFS
Aaron Drendel, USFS
Marlene Crosby, Gunnison County Assistant Manager
J. Wenum, CPW
Chris Haaver

Staff Members Present:

Cathie Pagano, Director of Community and Economic Development
Rachel Sabbato, Planner II
Rebecca Ricord, Administrative Assistant III

CALL TO ORDER: Messner called the July 12, 2018 meeting of the Gunnison Sustainable Tourism and Outdoor Tourism Committee to order at 2:00 P.M.

DETERMINATION OF QUORUM: Messner confirmed that a quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF JUNE 14, 2018 MEETING MINUTES: **Moved:** by Breslauer and seconded by Alexander to accept the June 14, 2018 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MAY 10, 2018 MEETING MINUTES: Moved: by Breslauer and seconded by Alexander to accept the May 10, 2018 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

PRESENTATION ON FEES ON NATIONAL FOREST LANDS

Nicole Branson gave the presentation on the preservation fees they have national forest lands in Sedona, Arizona, specifically in the Red Rocks Pass area. Currently they have seven fee sites and two fee area, 35 free sites, 1.5 million visitors and 200 miles of trails. They have a commitment to have a balance between both fee and free sites. Allow the high demand areas to have the funds but also allow free areas for other visitors. The big thing there is “driving for pleasure”, visitors taking pictures of the area, short term stops in the area. One of the unique things they have there are their heritage sites when they can see ancestral areas, pictographs etc. They have picnic areas that allow for visitors, families and people less mobile to be able to visit the area. Also helps with costs. They have hub trailheads and vistas where they have a parking area (free) for the visitors.

They added fee machines for hiking where they pay for day, weekly and annual passes.

With the fees they clean up trash, maintain the infrastructure in the area, maintain the interpretive areas (allow good accessibility for different mobility), toilets, tours and labor costs to pay volunteers.

McCombs explained that there is a huge opportunity to collect money here in Gunnison County too and allows for 95% of that money to stay here.

Parmeter asked if the fees were per person or per vehicle. She stated that it was per vehicle. If you are mountain biking or hiking in it is free if you didn't bring a car in.

Ochs asked if they work with the City of Sedona for the trails that go through neighborhoods. Branson explained that they work very closely with the City and have grant relationships with them.

Noble asked if the fee revenue was used to fund permanent full time positions in the agency. Branson explained that they do. They have different authorities and can do that.

Messner asked who prioritizes the use of the funds. The Forest Service determines the use of the funds. The collaborative is more of how they approach things, grants etc. Messner asked if they have an advisory group that works together with the Forest Service for determining use of funds. They do not have a specific group but have a lot of strategic planning efforts together with the partners to approach different challenges; traffic, trash and water quality, etc.

Merck asked if they have trash facilities at both free and fee sites and who maintains it. They have trash facilities at their areas that they collect and dispose of but isn't sure how the City takes care of theirs but assumes they use the Recreation Department.

Allen asked how they enforce payment, monitor the parking situation and how long they are there for. Branson explained that they use sticks to mark the tires. They have law enforcement officer that is paid for by the Red Rocks pass fees. The officer usually walks people over to have them pay the fee so she doesn't have to give tickets and gives them the opportunity to do the right thing. They offer 22 fee free days per year on average.

Fonken asked what the full time population of Sedona is, about 14,000. How many of the locals purchase the passes? Branson does not have those numbers. If she had to guess, the visitors are paying most of the fees. The median age there is 55, they can buy a lifetime senior pass to the area.

Messner asked how they created the initial funding for the fee areas. Branson stated that they started by working towards building things as the fees were accumulated. In the Fossil Creek area they put toilets in place. They usually do it as the money comes in, which they get through the grants. They are aggressive in applying for grants.

Alexander asked if people actually stay in the fee areas or if they displace to other areas. Branson explained that the fee areas are in high demand and fill up, people do get creative looking at places to go. More often they see their concessionaire sites tend to be more expensive and where people will try and find an adjacent area to get into those areas without paying the fees. They try to maintain the balance by making some sites have fees and some not.

McCombs would like to see implementation of fees in Gunnison County.

Further discussion followed with the board regarding fees and implementation in Gunnison County.

UPDATES FROM SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS/ACTION TO ACCOMPLISH TASKS/GOALS

Durant reported that the CB Land Trust, the County, Town of Crested Butte and CB Nordic got together to look at the Peanut Lake Road. They were looking at the five different parking areas along the route. They started at the end of the pavement. They were looking at how to designate people are entering n someplace different and they are trying to get people to enjoy the experience of Peanut Lake Road outside of their vehicle instead of driving all the way to the end. They are looking at resigning the entrance, with a trail kiosk at the first parking area with the intent of having as many people as possible park there. Looked at how they can add more spaces. They are looking at improving drainage in the parking areas, and looking at the lower loop parking area and designating that area with signs for those with disabilities, elderly or with young children. They are going to reconfigure the parking area so people will notice that's it's changed. Going to look for funding, possibly through all the different departments involved.

Feier gave the update on Crested Butte South rec paths. They met last month and discussed rec path alignments along the highway and the character of what they think would fit. They discussed grant opportunities and matching funds that might be available. They are hoping to meet again this month. They have looked at the GOCO planning grant and will start there.

Haaver reported that they are sending out a survey to evaluate different activities. There are eight questions for each activity, so it's a long survey. It should take about 10 minutes to do the survey. Pagano explained that she will send it out tomorrow. It is only for this committee. Haaver explained that it's important for them to rate the activities and then be able to correlate them as a starting point.

Noble reported that they are looking at expanding the river access point at McCabe's so it's not so jammed up. Initially he told John at the next meeting that he thought they may be able to work on it this year, but doesn't think it's the case because of site disturbance and thinks that they should continue to look at it and talk about it in the future.

Messner gave update that John Norton, Chris Parmeter and him got together and talked about messaging principles, stewardship principles, general branding and a way of finding information as far as what can happen in different information kiosks and whether it's possible to move forward for a specific

set and feel for each trailheads and if they should expand it to river access points and lake amenities and what those would look like. Parmeter explained that they came up with the “three Rs”, Respect, Responsibility and Resource of Stewardship. Gave update on the information that they have looked at adding to the pamphlets for the kiosks.

Pagano said that CB South is working on a grant. She reached out to CPW for the Colorado Beautiful grant for Signal Peak and that they are still working on it.

Adjourned at 4:09 P.M.

Minutes Prepared By: Rebecca Ricord, Administrative Assistant III