

GUNNISON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND OUTDOOR TOURISM COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
January 10, 2019

The January 10th, 2019 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:

Kevin Alexander, Professor of Biology WSU
John Norton, Gunnison Crested Butte Tourism Association
Noel Durant, Crested Butte Land Trust
Paul Merck, Crested Butte Town Council
Dave Ochs, Crested Butte Mountain Bike Association
Matt Feier, Crested Butte Mountain Resort
Christie Hicks, Crested Butte Nordic
Ben Breslauer, GOATS
Navid Navidi, Gunnison Community member and business owner
Scott Borden, Graduate Faculty at WSU
Shane Cox, Gunnison Stockgrowers Association
Roman Kolodziej, Mt. Crested Butte Town Council
Chris Parmeter, Colorado Parks and Wildlife
Frank Kugel, Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District

Others in Audience:

Laura Puckett Daniels, Crested Butte Mountain Bike Association
Marlene Crosby, Gunnison County Director of Public Works
Matt Reed, High Country Conservation Advocates, Public Lands Program Director
Michelle Wilk, High Country Conservation Advocates, Administrator and Outreach Coordinator
Sue Wallace, Mountain Manners
Chris Rourke, Gunnison Times

Staff Members Present:

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

Alexander called the meeting to order, beginning with the approval of the December, 2018 minutes.

No changes were made to the December, 2018 meeting minutes.

Gunnison Stewardship Selection Committee:

Pagano provided an update to the committee on the development of the Gunnison Stewardship Fund. Working as partners, Gunnison County and the National Forest Foundation (NFF), signed a MOU in December to formally establish the relationship. As part of this, a sub-committee of folks met with Emily Olsen (of NFF) to discuss how to structure the selection committee. Pagano reminded the committee that this is the fund that NFF is working to establish with outfitters and guides to create a revenue source for stewardship of National Forest lands and lands with a nexus to National Forest lands. As part of this, a committee would be established to review applications for NFF funding from the Gunnison Stewardship Fund. Pagano added that projects must relate to forest health or outdoor recreation.

As a first step, a selection committee needs to be established. Pagano explained that there is potential to include three to five STOR members. It would also consist of representatives from NFF, the USFS, and guides/outfitters. Mike Schumacher from Three Rivers Resorts has expressed interest. Olsen is working on identifying additional participants as well.

Pagano provided overview of the program and selection committee to STOR members. The time commitment would consist of two to three meetings in the first year. After that, there would likely only be one meeting per year. Pagano noted that if you represent an entity that would likely apply for funds from the Gunnison Stewardship Fund, you should probably not be on the committee. Norton asked why it's called a Ski Conservation Fund. Pagano noted that it's just an example and the Gunnison fund would be named the Gunnison Stewardship Fund. The Ski Conservation Fund is what's been established in Vail. A committee member asked if the funding mechanism is opt-out. Pagano confirmed that it would be.

The committee briefly discussed how to navigate the fact that most STOR committee members would likely be applying for funds. Durant referenced the GOCO grant review committee and explained that if you're not actively applying you can be on the review committee. He suggested that perhaps we consider revolving seats on this committee. Pagano explained that the selection committee must commit to help select projects fairly and equitably. She added that projects must be a priority for the land managing entity, align with STOR and community values, and be shelf-ready.

Norton volunteered Alexander, Parmeter and Borden as selection committee STOR representatives. Pagano will pass their names along to Olsen, who plans to schedule a meeting once the government re-opens. Olen's goal is to have a meeting in early February and shed' like to begin with criteria and potential 2019 projects.

Hicks asked whether Met Rec will have representation on the selection committee, as it was mentioned in the MOU. Pagano noted that she will reach back out to see how to make that possible.

Pagano emphasized that Eagle County is pulling in close to \$1 million with the ski area through their NFF partnership. Alexander asked if there has been any follow-up with Vail regarding their partnership in this program. As Pagano understands, NFF is continuing conversations with Vail. Hicks asked if for the Ski Conservation Fund there is a foundation match and whether there would be a match for the Gunnison

Stewardship Fund. Pagano responded that there's not a direct match, but they will be contributing a specific amount that is still to be determined.

Durant asked, just to clarify, if projects have to be on publicly owned property to be eligible. Pagano said it needs to be on National Forest lands, or, have a nexus to National Forest lands. She added that based off their conversations, there is likely a strong argument for Land Trust lands to qualify. Again, she added that this is a new type of fund and program and they're likely going to have more flexibility. If it helps, she added that McCombs is also pushing for that.

Shane Cox offered that he's willing to join the selection committee. Pagano was uncertain when applications would be made public, but thought it could be as soon as this March, in time for summer projects.

GOCO Stewardship Impact Grant:

Pagano explained that she worked on developing the GOCO grant application with Ochs, Laura Puckett-Daniels and Hedda Peterson. She reminded the committee that about one year ago, the County submit a proposal for their Outdoor Stewardship Coalition to serve as a demonstration site for GOCO's Stewardship Impact projects. At that time, GOCO decided to hold off and refine their proposal, which turned into this Stewardship Impact Grant. In total, there is \$1 million that they're looking to award to three sites across Colorado to demonstrate how they're growing stewardship in the area in a collaborative manner.

With this in mind, they proposed the development of a Gunnison County Stewardship Program, with three prongs:

1. Outreach & Education
2. Restoration & Maintenance
3. Trail Improvements & Infrastructure

The second component of the application included the hiring of a Stewardship Coordinator. After Sally Wier's visit, there was consensus from the committee that we'd benefit from a similar position. Pagano explained that we requested \$350,000 from GOCO and that our application was strengthened by ample in-kind support. Pagano has been going on a tour of the County asking for funding support for this project. Overall, she's received a positive response, with the City of Gunnison contributing \$5,000, Mt. Crested Butte \$5,000 and smaller contributions from local stewardship organizations such as Gunnison Trails, the Land Trust and CBMBA. She emphasized that the aim is for this program and position not to replace existing stewardship groups but to provide support and act as an additive partner to help build their capacity. The grant is due on January 17th.

Kolodziej asked if we'd be taking an initiative that the USFS is attempting and expand it. Pagano answered yes, that this program is also focused on helping build the USFS's capacity. Additionally, it will focus on growing volunteer capacity. Feier asked what the timeframe is for hiring the coordinator. Pagano said she'd know more by March 31st, but that could change. Ideally, we'd know by spring, as it

would be best to hire someone by this summer. She continued that they're considering options for where to house the coordinator, including at the USFS or County. She noted that there are several details still to sort out, including the job description which is still in draft format.

Feier asked what the deadline is for spending the grant funds. Pagano noted it was three years. She added that Volunteers for Outdoors Colorado (VOC) will be writing a letter of support, as they are willing to partner on the project, including contributing \$5,000 a year to support the position. Pagano reminded the committee that they support Wier's position in the San Louis Valley. Pagano added that one concern is if after the three years funding the Stewardship Program will compete with organizations like CBMBA. She noted that it's the first time GOCO has done this, but she believes there is more funding to follow. GOCO is looking for community models to increase collaborative stewardship and that they're very excited by the STOR effort thus far.

Alexander asked if a draft of the proposal with a budget will be available. Pagano said she would be happy to share the draft proposal with the committee.

Sub-Committee Updates:

CB to CB South Trail: Feier explained that the sub-committee is still in the process of discussing the project with individual stakeholders and that they're starting to see traction.

Communications: Norton has offered TA resources to any STOR members and to STOR as a whole when there are press releases or things that need to be communicated to the community.

Messaging: Coming out with a winter, electronic trail map in the next month. It will include motorized, fat bike, and nordic trails. It will emphasize "rules of the road" and etiquette

Peanut Lake Road: Durant explained that an open house/community forum was hosted by the Land Trust, Town, County and CB Nordic. The goal was to collect community feedback on three planning elements; trails, parking and shared use on Peanut Lake Road. Since then, committee members met this week to discuss short and long-term opportunities within the key areas. Concerns that surfaced included, congestion of the Woods Walk, amenities drawing too many users, lack of signage, and the need to protect access from Woods Walk to the Lower Loop. Near-term improvements will likely include trail work and signage. Funding has been secured from the Town of Crested Butte (\$4,000) and the Land Trust Alliance (\$7,000) to go towards signage, based of this community feedback.

Pagano explained that if the governments has not re-opened by the February meeting, the next STOR meeting may be re-scheduled. Breslauer noted that he could arrange for a guest speaker to discuss UTV use/management in other areas. The committee was supportive of this.

In response to Chris Haver's survey, Parmeter expressed his concern with the fact that activities were categorized only as "promote" or "leave as is". He suggested adding a category for "re-directing" or "discouraging" certain forms of outdoor recreation. For example, Parmeter noted that we do not want

to promote snowmobiling in Gothic. Pagano noted that Haver would like to continue sharing the survey results with the committee and that could be a good time to discuss Parmeter's suggestion.

Kugel reminded the committee that the District is accepting grant applications for its current funding cycle through February, 2019.

Alexander noted that GPLI's semi-final report were made life this week and can now be viewed.

Kugel asked if there is a plan to work with Met Rec considering their expanding role into recreation. Pagano explained that she will be presenting at Met Rec's February meeting to share information about the STOR committee. Pagano encouraged STOR members to attend the meeting, which is scheduled for Wednesday, February 20th at 7:00 pm. She added that north and south valley recreation advisory committees are being formed and that those committees will likely be best suited for interacting with STOR.

Lastly, Parmeter noted that CPW unveiled their phone app map CORTEX, which is statewide.