

GUNNISON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND OUTDOOR TOURISM COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
May 9, 2019

The May 9, 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 WCU, Hunter & Anglers
John Messner, Gunnison County Board of County Commissioners
Paul Merck, Crested Butte Town Council
Dave Ochs, Crested Butte Mountain Bike Association
Matt Feier, Crested Butte Mountain Resort
Matt McCombs, USFS
Christie Hicks, Crested Butte Nordic
Ben Breslauer, GOATS
Frank Kugel, Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District
Sandy Snell, National Park Service
Joellen Fonken, Gunnison Nordic
Kristi Murphy, BLM
Steve Guerrieri, Stockgrowers' Association
Tim Kugler, Gunnison Trails
Noel Durant, CB Land Trust
Chris Parmeter, CPW
Roman Kolodziej, Town of Mr. Crested Butte, by phone

Others in Audience:

Marlene Crosby, Gunnison County Director of Public Works

Staff Members Present:

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

Alexander called the April 11, 2019 meeting to order at 2:05 PM.

APPROVAL of April 11, 2019 MEETING MINUTES: Moved: by Kugel and seconded by Feier to accept the April 11, 2019 meeting minutes as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

Project Prioritization:

Pagano reported that 16 out of 20 responded to the survey that she sent out. They are seeing a variety of responses and needs for each one. The original Google survey was sent out and she did her best to identify all of the recreation areas in the County and asked everyone to prioritize them. The top ten were identified as Signal Peak, West Maroon Pass, Judd Falls Trailhead, Peanut Lake/Lower Loop, Gothic Campground, Almont River Put-in, Nicholson Lake/Slate River, Taylor Park, Shady Island, and Rustler's Gulch.

Pagano would like to put it in narrative form that they could pass out to other entities. Discussion followed on the way the survey was put together and whether that actually helped figured out the items they wanted the priorities for each area. Pagano wanted to know if an action plan would be helpful. Ochs and McCombs thought it would be a good idea. McCombs though it would be good to narrow it down and have a checklist where items could be marked off. Messner wanted to know if it would work to have a couple for each site. Murphy believes they should be talking about camping and believes it is important. The committee decided to go through each site and pick a couple of priorities that are important. Fonken suggested adding seasonality.

Discussion followed on each site update:

Signal Peak: Kugler reported that everything on the list is already done.

West Maroon Pass: McCombs reported that last fall the bathroom was installed. They are working on doing parking improvements and expanding it. Funding allocated to harden the site and improve drainage. It was named as a leave no trace hotspot, where they will plan for future management of the site. White River Forest is funding an intern to work as a Field Ranger to keep the site clean and meet visitors. There is a new kiosk going in in the fall. They have funding to support any potential implementation that comes out of the leave no trace hotspot.

Judd Falls Trailhead: McCombs reported that they have been discussing parking in the area. The existing signage is in good shape. There will be abundant field presence for maintenance. Pagano stated it would be good to do a press release that talks about each of the sites. Guerrieri wanted to know if there would be a possibility to put trailer parking in also. McCombs stated that they are looking at all opportunities for the parking.

The committee will discuss the other sites at the next meeting.

FEE PROGRAM ON NATIONAL FOREST LANDS:

McCombs gave the presentation. They have been discussing fees for a while. The district keeps coming back to resources and this group has been open to having a fee program. The fee authority is under the Federal Land Recreation Enhancement Act (REA). The different types of fees authorized are standard amenity fees, expanded amenity fees and special recreation permit fees.

Standard Amenity Fees:

Requirements are: significant recreation opportunities, substantial federal investments and efficient fee collection. Six Amenities Required: Permanent toilet, permanent trash, picnic table, parking, security and interpretive sign.

Expanded Amenity Fees:

Examples include: Developed campgrounds, highly developed boat launches, cabin rentals, dump stations, swimming areas and reservation services

Special Recreation Permit Fees:

Fees charged where extra measures are needed for natural and cultural resource protection, the health and safety of visitors, to allocate capacity or disperse recreation use. Examples: wilderness use, shooting ranges, specialized trails (OHV, Mountain Bike), Outfitter/Guides and Special Recreation Events.

Entrance Fee:

FS does not have authority under REA to charge entrance fees. Only NPS and FWS have entrance fee authority.

Can also have interagency passes to limit the costs you may pay if you are a local or frequent user.

Regional local passes. Examples: Adventure Pass, Northwest Forest Pass, Tonto Pass. Some are partnerships with others such as national parks.

Fee proposals process- goes to the National Forest, then the Regional Fee Board, after that the Washington Office and then back to the Regional Forester.

Political Environment: Realities- no-fee groups, court decisions and opinions, and annual reauthorization status. Opportunities: Positive media coverage, integration with regional resources, early outreach, strive for a simple, clean proposal/fee program.

Proposed Gunnison Process:

Upon STOR recommendation/approval district begins preliminary research data gathering (with MEM); Focus on Crested Butte Area; Integrate with comprehensive recreation planning (evaluate campgrounds, trailheads, designated dispersed, special trail ways); Engage broader community; Reengage with STOR for feedback at key checkpoints; Present STOR draft fee and recreation plan followed by engagement with broader public for feedback and recommended changes; Advance final proposal into formal fee proposal process and/or NEPA; and Implement and monitor.

Discussion followed on the benefits of having a fee program. McCombs stated that it would be best to know if the committee wants to do this by next meeting. **Moved:** by Guerrieri and seconded by Messner for McCombs to start exploring the development of the fee program for Taylor Park and the Crested Butte area. Motion passed unanimously.

Sub-Committee Updates:

Messner reported that it was the first meeting for the review committee of the Gunnison Stewardship program on May 8, 2019. There was about \$90,000 available for funding. There were four proposals presented; West Maroon Trailhead, Cottonwood Pass Roads, CBC and the Wet Meadow Restoration project. They were able to fund all of the projects and give them what they were asking for, or at least close. McCombs reported that there will be a more competitive process in the future, after \$100,000 is grossed. Anderson said there was a lot of diversity in the proposals and the funding was spread out.

Anderson reported that he did a presentation at the Higher Ed Panel. They talked about what they were doing. They worked on the skilled workforce and determining what they need to do in higher education to get people for working outdoors, soft skill training was the most important (dealing with the public, presentations, etc.).

Sabbato gave an update on the STOR communication group and presented the STOR logo that they have put together. They have looked at doing coasters to give out too. They are putting together river language at existing kiosks and any new ones. They finalize the maps and handouts and bring them back to the Committee for review.

Hicks reported that the Peanut Lake Road sub-committee met and they are moving ahead with signage for the summer and having the trailhead closer to town and putting a flip able kiosk there for winter and summer seasons. They are working on making the last parking lot accessible for elderly, ADA and families with kids. They will probably bring drafts for the signs to the next STORC meeting. They are looking at adding flower boxes to the middle of the roads to help people slowdown in the pedestrian area. Pagano suggested that they do press releases.

This weekend is the Hartman Rocks cleanup North of Kill Hill, reconfiguring the loading ramp, trail work on Free Fall, and ride the edge of Evan's Loop, installing a kiosk, finishing the accessible campsite and clean campsites and at the shooting range. It disburse from Hartman Rocks at 9 am. The City and County are grilling at 1 p.m.

Kugel reported that the Colorado Conservation Board will be at Western on Wednesday and Thursday next week.

Ochs reported they had an open house on Tuesday at CBMR and wanted to thank everyone for coming and would like more feedback and comments.

Future Meetings: Meetings will change to the fourth Thursdays of the month and it was agreed to start June 27, 2019.

Adjourn: The May 9, 2019 meeting of the Sustainable Tourism and Outdoor Recreation Committee adjourned at 4:04 PM.

Minutes Prepared By: Rebecca Ricord, Administrative Assistant III