

**GUNNISON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND OUTDOOR TOURISM COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
October 27, 2022**

The October 27, 2022 Gunnison Sustainable Tourism and Outdoor Tourism Committee (STORC) meeting was conducted by Zoom virtual online meeting, Gunnison, CO, 81230.

**Committee Members Present:**

Kimberly Schappert, Vice Chair, At-Large  
Community Member  
Dave Ochs, At Large Member  
Jake Jones, Crested Butte Land Trust  
John Norton, TAPP  
Gabi Prochaska  
Scott Borden, WCU  
Ian Billick, Town of Crested Butte  
Brandon Diamond, CPW  
Roman Kolodziej, Town of Mount Crested Butte  
Derek Nehrenberg, MetRec

Matt Reed, High Country Conservation  
Advocates  
Tim Kugler, At-Large Member  
James Lovelace, BLM  
Jonathan Houck, BOCC  
Dayle Funka, USFS  
Mallory Logan, City of Gunnison  
Steve Guerrieri, Stockgrowers  
Sonja Chavez, UGRWCD

**Others in Audience:**

Kevin Blecha  
Cindy Williams  
Bob Goettge  
Janna Hansen  
Joey Carpenter, Town of Crested Butte  
Marco White  
Emily Olsen  
Laura Puckett Daniels  
Matthew Whiting  
Kevin Alexander

**Staff:**

Joe Lavorini, Gunnison County Stewardship Coordinator-National Forest Foundation  
Cathie Pagano, Community and Economic Development Director

**CALL TO ORDER:** Joe Lavorini called the October 27, 2002 meeting to order at 2:06 PM.

**AGENDA APPROVAL:** Agenda approved as presented.

The next meeting will be November 17, 2022

### **STOR Committee Chair Appointment – Cathie Pagano, Gunnison County – Community and Economic Development**

Joe explained to the committee the Charter outlines the process once there is transition that the committee votes a new chair. It does state that it is to take place at the first meeting of the new calendar year. It was decided to vote for a chair now so STOR is not chair less for the rest of the year and that a new chair could be voted for on the first meeting of the year. John Norton nominated Jake Jones. Jonathan Houck seconded the nomination. Jake Jones asked what the interaction and time commitment is. There were no other nominations. Jonathan Houck moved that they close the nominations and elect Jake Jones the chair by acclamation. No one opposed the nomination. Jake Jones accepted the nomination for the annual term. Jake Jones began to chair the STOR meeting at 2:24 pm.

### **Town of Crested Butte: RV Dump Station – Joey Carpenter, Town of Crested Butte**

Joey Carpenter explained that the town is interested to hear from the entities about the status of the Crested Butte RV dump station. On May 21 Crested Butte Town Council reopened the dump station. A STOR sub- committee did not identify an alternative to relocate the dump station. The Town Council plans to make a decision on the future of the dump station at the November 21<sup>st</sup> meeting. The facility requirements are that the station must be serviced by big water flows. There is no alternative location available with big water flows. Options are close it or reconfigure it. Carpenter shared data from the STOR subcommittee, staff and a community survey. Next step is the Town Council discussion and decision on November 21<sup>st</sup>. If an entity has interest and comments they can contact Joey Carpenter or Town Council. Roman Kolodziei asked what kind of feedback are they looking for from municipalities and other entities? Carpenter stated that they are looking for the agency's that they partner with regularly, up and down valley, what they want to see happen to this dump station, their opinions. Ian Billick shared that it is a classic situation where there is a neighborhood that is impacted and they have to weigh that against the larger good. They are looking for any ideas or comparisons to help council members. Carpenter stated that there isn't a perfect answer. Schappert asked how long the dump station has been there? The dump station in its current figuration has been there since 2015. Houck commented that he is working on draft letter to BOCC and a public meeting, the spirit of the letter is to keep the station open with total support to the Town of Crested Butte to handle the impacts. Ian Billick stated there are 2 things people can do they can express an opinion, either independently or from an organization and they can provide any analysis on why they think it is important. Comments need to be made before November 21<sup>st</sup> meeting. The 4 options are close it and decommission it, close it and monitor environmental impacts, keep open and access possible relocation, or keep open and mitigate neighborhood impacts. Houck made a motion that STOR offer a high-level letter of support for the need to have recreational infrastructure that supports a significant part of the economy of this community and STOR encourage the individual's member and the organizations in government they represent members weigh in as individuals. Mallory Logan seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Ian Billick abstained from the vote.

### **Snodgrass Trail Closure- Dave Ochs, CBMBA**

Ochs shared that they want to facilitate or get to the point of discussion with all the stakeholders of Snodgrass, including the private landowners and the Forest Service. Ability to get to the point to mitigate to prevent future conflict. Ochs shared the background. Snodgrass is the number 1 commented on trail. Also, the most concerned comments. Ochs shared a map that included Snodgrass.



Snodgrass is the blue. Right side is the Gothic trail head, left side is Washington Gulch Road where it hits 811. The issues that need to be addressed: Starting on the Gothic Side the trail goes up and that is Mount Crested Butte property. It is the parcel where Teddy's Trail is. It is a conservation easement, held by land trust, owned by Mount Crested Butte. The green is the Snodgrass road. The yellow is a random trail that has been there for a long time. The Snodgrass Trail dips down from the no name trail and on to private property. It is the Allen Ranch property. Then the trail turns back up into the forest. As the trail moves further west toward Washington Gulch it goes back on to private property, that is also Allen Ranches. The trail ends at Washington Gulch Road. The yellow pin, "USFS" is a mean shoulder, pertinent obstacle. That is why the trail, when created, dips down. Ochs shared an Onx map. It shows Snodgrass Road and Teddy's Trail. It has the Snodgrass Trail and shows where it goes on to private property. Off the top of the road Onx is showing a map of the trail being there in historical significance going back to 1930's. The trail is numbered and Onx has it listed as assessible to hike, bike and horse. Ochs shared a map with the proposed re-routes



The Allen's have a long history of running cattle. The trail is used by hikers and bikers. Some of the problems are: The Allen's run cattle the first few weekends of August and they will notify the public the trail is closed. People are trespassing and using the trail after it is posted closed. People don't know the boundaries, or where the trail goes across private property. What is out there for fences is not accurate. Fences do not align with boundaries. Signs are very confusing regarding closures and are not in the correct location. Ochs stated that the discussion today is to start the discussion to either better manage this and make people more aware. There is more and more conflict and trespassing on the trail. Ochs ask from STOR is the possibility of finding solutions. This could be better signage, direct people to the proper usage, properly sign private property boundaries and hard closures. The most common request is: Is

there a possibility for a re-route to get the trail off of private property. There is a proposal to develop North Village area of Mount Crested Butte with trails, recreation, bus service.

Matt Reed asked what is the lowest hanging fruit for a solution, moving signs and make sure they are correct? If yes, who is responsible for that? Ochs commented that people want their Snodgrass and do not want to be told they can't use the trail during certain seasons. Individuals are putting up signs. Chairman Jones stated that we are over time for this agenda item. Do we need to table this topic? Ochs stated that it might be more for the Forest Service to have a discussion with the Allen Ranch. Dayle Funka stated that the Forest Service does not have an easement on Snodgrass. Curtis gave Funka some background information on Snodgrass from the 90's. She is addressing it and she wants to take the right steps. There are a lot of things that are in play here. The Forest Service is addressing this. Steve Guerrieri stated that STOR has already agreed to they were not going to participate in providing more trail opportunities on Snodgrass. Ochs stated that the ask for STOR is open discussion. Jones asked if the topic can be tabled and added to the next agenda? No one opposed. The topic of Snodgrass user conflict will be added to next agenda. Diamond suggested Ochs, Funka, and Kolodziei should do some preliminary discussions and report back to STOR.

### **Gunnison Wildlife Data & Recreation Impacts to Wildlife – Kevin Blecha, CPW**

Kevin Blecha wildlife biologist with CPW presented to the committee the following: new Gunnison Wildlife Data, and intro to habitat prioritization. Wild animals are always moving through the landscapes. There are direct impacts including habitat loss, road kill, trails and roads. Indirect impacts are invasive plants, erosion light air and noise pollution. Spatial and Temporal Monitoring of Elk and Deer movements in Gunnison Basin has been ongoing for 5-7 years. Add GPS to animals. Distribution maps show migration behaviors. Elk migration corridor maps. There are 3 major populations of Elk, Powderhorn, West Elks, and East Gunnison Basin. In the East Gunnison Basin Corridor, the longest of the migration paths is approximately 75 miles one way. Species Activity Maps (SAMs) were shared. The goal of the data sets is to combine the various maps and create a prioritization system that considers multiple wildlife values. The purpose of all of the maps to integrate the maps to determine construction impacts on the animals. There is already a habitat prioritization tool that is used for Sage Grouse. Nathan Seward CPW, Chair of the Gunnison Basin Sage Grouse Strategic Committee, joined the group to present on the habitat prioritization tool. Seward informed the committee that 88% of the global population of Gunnison Sage Grouse inhabits the Gunnison Basin. That is roughly 3400 birds. There is a Technical subcommittee that met with all entities to develop this tool. It is a general GIS layer system, developed tier 1 (the highest populated habitat that the goal is to decrease fragmentation) and tier 2 to guide land use proposals. Goal is to decrease habitat fragmentation. The tool is revised every 3-5 years. Biologic/habitat layers are used and non-habitat areas are also used.

Brandon Diamond stated that he would suggest that the group re-schedule Cindy Williams to next month because of time constraints. The group with the availability of Cindy Williams, will add the "Planning for Wildlife tools to the November meeting.

Joe Lavorini reminded the committee why the committee is having this conversation and where the group is headed. Earlier this year STOR submitted a partnership with Chaffee County and Lake County Open Space Initiative and received a CPW and Great Outdoors Colorado grant to support the following, expand wildlife tools, Support STOR to advance recreation and conservative elements, and develop a plan and phase II funding request to create a Lake County collaborative.

### **Planning for Wildlife Tools – Cindy Williams**

Tabled to the November 17, 2022 meeting.

## Chat Text from ZOOM:

14:02:52 From Joe Lavorini : We'll be started in a minute!  
14:03:38 From Joe Lavorini : We need to restart because technology  
14:06:09 From Laura Puckett Daniels : Yes!  
14:06:35 From Kevin Alexander : Yes, I'm here.  
14:24:56 From Dayle Funka-USFS : Hi- as we corresponded earlier-USFS supports keeping this facility open.  
14:26:29 From Ian Billick : thanks Dayle! Any way to contextualize the importance of the facility will be helpful. Value of multiple facilities in county, redundancy, appropriate drive distances to facilities, etc.  
14:31:27 From Joe Lavorini : Hi all - In the room we have: Mark Voegeli, Dave Ochs, Jake Jones, Sonja Chavez, Derrick Nehrenberg, Mallory Logan, Tim Kugler, Steve Guerrieri, Brandon Diamond, Cathie Pagano, Joey Carpenter, and a few members of the public  
14:38:33 From Ian Billick : Does gabi have a comment?  
14:40:19 From Gabi : no, i think you summed it up well- Individual or organizational comment, with supporting argument as to why that opinion is held  
14:42:35 From Ian Billick : I think there are opportunities to significantly improve flow if we decide to keep open in that location.  
14:45:46 From Ian Billick : I will abstain from the vote just to keep things clean with the town.  
14:46:50 From Ian Billick : I really appreciate the discussion and consideration and will pass on a sense of the conversation, in addition to a formal letter/motion. thank you!!!!  
14:58:55 From Ian Billick : If we routed around private property, would there still be conflicts with ranching? wildlife?  
15:03:22 From Laura Puckett Daniels to Gunnison Com Dev(Direct Message) : Is the public allowed to ask questions?  
15:03:47 From Joe Lavorini : Thanks, Kevin and Cindy for your patience. We're running a little behind.  
15:07:47 From Laura Puckett Daniels : Can we type our questions into chat for further discussion? Give Dave and others some things to address in future?  
15:08:34 From Cathie Pagano, Gunnison County : Yes, Laura, we can include any questions in the chat in the minutes for Dave's reference.  
15:09:06 From Laura Puckett Daniels : Do the Allens have grazing permits on the USFS lands there? Is that part of the conflict? Not just grazing on private lands?  
15:09:27 From kimberly schappert : What about the wildlife concerns in this area that we talked about 2 yrs ago with Chris Parmenter?  
15:09:45 From Jake Jones : I believe their federal lease includes washington gulch  
15:10:41 From Laura Puckett Daniels : We've heard a lot of anecdotes about conflict, trespassing, comments, etc. What kind of data do we have on use during "closed" times? Can we collect that data with trail counters or other tools like that?  
15:14:07 From Ian Billick : I'm sensitive to ranching and wildlife impacts. I also don't think CBMA is asking for access to private property. Also, Snodgrass got pulled from the north valley trails, but it isn't like the trails that got through STOR survived into the USFS proposal.  
15:15:29 From Ian Billick : I don't think the issue is going away.  
15:18:32 From Ian Billick : I would love to create a paper trail on wildlife and ranching impacts so it is easier for people to catch up in future. If something was created last time would love to see it!  
15:49:16 From Ian Billick : I will be leaving in a few minutes  
15:54:58 From Laura Puckett Daniels : What's the best way to reach Kevin with questions? Email?  
15:55:10 From Kevin Blecha : kevin.blecha@state.co.us  
15:55:23 From Laura Puckett Daniels : Thanks, Kevin.  
15:59:48 From Laura Puckett Daniels : Thank you!

**ADJOURN:** The October 27, 2022 meeting of the Sustainable Tourism and Outdoor Recreation Committee adjourned at 4:00 pm

Prepared by Shannon Frias, Community Development, Administrative Assistant III