

**GUNNISON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND OUTDOOR TOURISM COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
April 27, 2023**

The April 27, 2023 Gunnison Sustainable Tourism and Outdoor Tourism Committee (STORC) meeting was conducted in person and by Zoom virtual online meeting, Gunnison, CO, 81230.

Committee Members Present:

Jake Jones, Chair, Crested Butte Land Trust
Gabi Prochaska, Town of Crested Butte
Celeste Helminski, At-Large Member
James Lovelace, BLM
Roman Kolodziej, Town of Mount Crested Butte
Matt Reed, At-Large Member
Jennifer DeBoer, WCU
Jeremy Johndrow, At-Large Member

Mark Voegli, CBMR
Tim Kugler, At-Large Member
Derrick Nehrenberg, MetRec
Chris Parmeter, At-Large Member
Brandon Diamond, CPW
Ian Billick, Town of Crested Butte

Others in Audience:

Scott Clarkson
Beverly Richards
Len Mason
Leyla Erickson
Paul Rivera
Matt Quinn

Staff:

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

CALL TO ORDER: Jake Jones called the April 27, 2023 meeting to order at 2:04 PM.

MINUTE APPROVAL: Moved to approve by Ian Billick seconded by Jennifer DeBoer to approve the March 23 2023 minutes as amended. Passed unanimously.

AGENDA APPROVAL: Agenda approved as presented.

The next meeting will be May 25, 2023

Brief Updates:

Innovative Finance for National Forest (Len Mason) –

Len Mason shared with the committee campsite management as the project comes to an end. It was a continuation of using finance mechanisms investments and what needs to be done to enact a fee. Made model more robust. They developed an occupancy rate model. Integrating sales to help generate revenue. Created a 10-year income statement. They looked at if a fee is needed now. How to get Western involved. Cost share, in kind donations. Hopefully develop a training pathway. Integrate the student internship with the community. They were invited to speak in front of the executive board at Western. It generated a lot of interest. Stalling point happened in the Spring because of turnover. There is a new director at the Center for Public Lands. They have reached out to the new director.

Leyla Erickson added that they did a site visit and they are completing a final report and will share with Joe Lavorini for the STOR committee.

Wildlife Tools Teams & Public Survey (Joe Lavorini)-

Joe Lavorini shared that there were some questions about the wildlife tools teams and public survey. Lavorini shared the Gunnison County Wildlife Modeling Project. That they will be setting up a couple teams to help drive this. Lead team and tech team made up of agency staff, support service, CPW, BLM, Park Service. A kickoff meeting will take place in early June. They will look at the leads team using the survey. Identify stakeholders contact list, 2 community engagement meetings, FAQ document. Forecasted finish line is 12.31.23. End of summer for creating the map and data. The fall will be used to figure out how we use the data. Ian Billick asked if there are ways to integrate the ranching community and get their perspective concerning the map and data.

STOR Committee Strategic Plan:

Cathie Pagano started with the draft of the strategic plan. Pagano asked if anyone had any anything to add or any concerns. Jake Jones asked about D-1. An idea that come out of a discussion with Kim Schappert and Joe Lavorini is 2 ideas, end the sentence after recreation infrastructure needs and add seek opportunities for high use areas. Are people comfortable with the wording? Pagano had a suggestion of moving the word funding around as follows:

1. By December 31, 2023, identify and prioritize additional recreation infrastructure funding needs for high use areas for funding to support a fee proposal on federal and other public lands.

Jones stated that there is still interpretation of the “federal and other public lands”. Pagano added “on high use lands” before federal and other public lands. Jones stated that the message you don’t want to send is that STOR is interested in fee structure across public lands. Kolodziej stated that they don’t actually mention capacity in any number under D. Kolodziej asked if it should be stated as need and demand rather than identifying caring capacity. Pagano responded that it has not been discussed in STOR Strategic Plan. Kolodziej asked if it is the job of the area to accommodate every single person who wants to use the area?

Pagano suggested that the committee not dive into the details of how they will execute each item. There is a lot to unpack with each item.

Moved by Ian Billick and seconded by Derrick Nehrenberg to approve the Strategic Plan as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

Strategic Plan Task Force Survey Results -

Pagano shared the potential groups and added that it would be beneficial to add people who are not on the STOR committee. Pagano asked the group to let her or Joe Lavorini know who might be a good fit from other organizations/agencies and they can reach out to them.

Pagano stated the challenge may be seeing how the groups work. Staff support may be needed. Lavorini and Pagano will spend the next few weeks working through how the groups will work and drafting a plan. Staff does not have the bandwidth to lead all groups, they will be looking for others to lead.

Parking Lot: Winter Trailhead Restrooms (all), Gold Medal Designation (invited Guest – Dan Brauch)

Jones announced that they will be celebrating an event on the 19th of May at the IBAR. Fundraising and celebrating public lands. Kugler included that they will have a band and camping will be available. They plan on a 5-hour workday on Saturday, May 20th, pulling 6 miles of fence at Hartman's and then return to the IBar to celebrate. Kugler will get the website out. They are thinking of including the spring cleanup day at Hartman's on the same day. It hasn't been finalized. It is Colorado Public Lands Day.

Kolodziej thought they could discuss STOR's influence in making recommendations or marketing for the certain events/topics. Jones stated that that mostly aligns with strategic plan goal B1.

Kolodziej shared trip to Sedona. Dispersed camping had shifted some. North and West of Sedona is Forest Service land. The Forest Service corralled certain areas. You can't camp outside of the corralled area and can't have a campfire. They showed up late and the northern dispersed campground was packed. They received information from long term locals that other areas were just big parking lots for RV's etc. Conversation was controlling capacity vs eliminating entire user groups. They eliminated a user group. To camp in the area, you had to leave the area. Kolodziej wants this kept in mind when making decisions about user groups.

ADJOURN: The April 27, 2023 meeting of the Sustainable Tourism and Outdoor Recreation Committee adjourned at 3:17 PM.

Prepared by Shannon Frias, Community Development, Administrative Assistant III