

**MINUTES
of the
ARIZONA STATE COMMITTEE ON TRAILS
of
ARIZONA STATE PARKS
MEETING OF JANUARY 27, 2007
WATER SAFETY CENTER
LAKE HAVASU CITY, ARIZONA**

A. NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

New members Anne Ellis, Carrie Miracle-Jordan, Stephen Saway, Charlie Scully, Irene Smith, and Erik Wilson received administrative information on the history, make up, function, and procedures pertaining to the work of ASCOT and membership in a State Parks advisory group.

B. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL – General Business Meeting

Chair Grandrud called the meeting to order at 11:10am. Ruth Shulman called the roll and advised Chair Grandrud that there was a quorum.

ASCOT Members Present:

Reba Grandrud, Chair
Don Applegate
Bonnie Bariola
Cate Bradley
Maureen DeCindis
Anne Ellis
Andrew Fish
Russell Freeman
Dan Gruber
Jim Horton
Carrie Miracle-Jordan
Vince Murray
Sonia Overholser
Doug Potts
Stephen Saway
Charlie Scully
Linda Slay
Eric Smith
Irene Smith
John Vuolo
Erik Wilson

ASCOT Members Absent:

Tom Fitzgerald
Kent Taylor
David Troutner
Bonnie Winslow

Arizona State Parks Staff:

Annie McVay, State Trails Coordinator

Joy Hernbrode, Assistant Attorney General for Arizona State Parks

Ruth Shulman, Advisory Group Coordinator

Guest: Don Ziegler, ASCOT Contributor

C. INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS AND STAFF

This item was combined with Item J. Members introduced themselves and discussed current events, projects and constituent-group related information. No ASCOT business was discussed. Don Ziegler discussed his volunteer experience and how he fits into ASCOT as a “non-member volunteer”.

D. PRESENTATION BY THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT (BLM), LAKE HAVASU FIELD OFFICE, ON TRAIL AND RECREATION RELATED ACTIVITIES IN THE AREA.

Field Officer Tim Smith spoke on a number of items relating to trails, outdoor recreation in general, and the BLM Lake Havasu Field Office (LHFO). He particularly touched on the “Crack In The Wall” trail, which ASCOT members had hiked the day before. This trail is located in the Special Activity and Recreation Area (SARA) Park, which was developed in partnership with the City of Lake Havasu.

The Lake Havasu Field Office included approximately 1.3 million acres of public land, including a swatch on the California side of the Colorado River. The LHFO has been working for several years on a Resource Management Plan (RMP), which should be completed approximately April 12, 2007. They should be the first FO in the state to be completed.

The RMP includes many trail opportunities within the LHFO area of responsibility. One such is the proposed Colorado River Heritage Trail, which would connect the Colorado River Nature Center and points south to Lake Havasu.

One major concern is the sale of state lands around the City of Lake Havasu. There are a lot of cultural, natural and recreational resources to be protected, and the growth in Lake Havasu is phenomenal. One way to protect the land is to form a network of trails that allow residents and visitors alike to experience the urban/wilderness interface. Tim Smith continued to point out various outdoor recreational facilities and trails, and proposed connections, especially along the Lakeshore Trail. Many if not all of these opportunities are addressed in the RMP.

In addition, Tim Smith spoke about what’s being called the Tri-State Waterways group. This is a group of approximately forty collaborating entities from Arizona, California and

Nevada looking at opportunities to work together in four “theme” areas. Those areas are: Health and Safety, Tourism and Recreation, Economics and Natural Resources, as pertain to various State Parks, BLM, Fish and Game Departments, and more. The collaboration will help bring cohesion to the various resource management issues that affect all three states.

Dan Gruber asked for recommendations on hiking and backpacking, especially challenging hikes. Tim Smith said that he recommended the Bill Williams River. Although there is not a trail there, but there are some challenges relating to river wildernesses and wetlands in the Bill Williams Wilderness Area. The BLM manages seven wilderness areas throughout.

Sonia Overholser asked what the vision was for trail biking into the nearby mountains. Tim Smith pointed out the Mohave Mountains, with Crossman Peak. He noted that there are in the planning stages only as far as specific trails. He hopes that most of the linkages and connections will happen in conjunction with Lake Havasu City.

Cate Bradley asked if the city had responded well to the trails plans, and were supportive of the BLM. Tim Smith replied that the BLM and the City of Lake Havasu enjoy a good relationship. The City has a trails plan and are very supportive of the linkages plan. The draft RMP contains a copy of a front-page article noting the City’s support of the RMP. Cate asked if that support might become a resolution regarding development.

Chair Grandrud asked about the town of Swansea and the preservation/protection of the ruins. Tim Smith noted that the bachelor apartments are being slowly restored and have been for the past six years. There are picnic ramadas, and interpretive signage as well. The Swansea Centennial is coming up in 2008, and there will be some sort of celebration if support comes through. Cate asked for a bit of history of Swansea and its relation to trails. Tim Smith said that it was an old mining town, which at one time had 5,000-10,000 people. There are sightseeing opportunities, but not many hiking opportunities per se.

Doug Potts asked about how the RMP is addressing what parameters are in place for critical habitat and sensitive species management. He also asked if the towns along the river are looking into eco-tourism at this time. Tim Smith said that little eco-tourism is being offered at this time. La Paz County is looking into bird-watching tours and there is also a place called Monkeyhead, which BLM is investigating designating as a watchable wildlife area. As for sensitive species, there are several fish species in the river as well Big Horn Sheep, rare birds, Sonoran Desert Tortoise and the Mohave Desert Tortoise on the California side. The Tri-State Waterways has undertaken a study showing that tourism is a \$9 billion business, and eco-tourism would be attractive if it helped maintain that level of economic support.

E. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes from the December 1, 2006 meeting.

2. Approval of Changes to the ASCOT Bylaws.

Maureen DeCindis moved to accept both items under the Consent Agenda as presented. John Vuolo seconded the motion. Sonia Overholser asked that the change to the Bylaws be “pulled” for discussion. This would have required a new motion, and Chair Grandrud reminded the group that the motion currently on the floor required resolution before a new motion could be introduced. The motion passed with 15 ayes, and 4 nays.

F. ACTION ITEMS

1. Discussion and Action Planning for ASCOT Activities and Goals for 2007.

Annie McVay discussed the previous plans laid out at the December 2006 ASCOT meeting and provided handouts to the Committee (copies available). At the December meeting, there was a planning process discussed to help ASCOT determine a focus and goals for the year. One handout was a review of volunteers for the various subcommittees and task forces of ASCOT. Annie McVay referred to that handout.

Nominations for the State Trails System (STS) are due July first and Sonia Overholser and Kent Taylor are co-chairs. Nominations to the STS come in on July first every year and copies are distributed to members of the subcommittee. The criteria for election to the STS are reviewed, and subcommittee members are encouraged to make site visits to the nominated trails. Applications are reviewed for approximately a month, and then the subcommittee comes together again to vote on the applications. The goal is to review and recommend trails to the ASP Board, after first bringing the nominations to the full ASCOT membership.

Next is the member recruitment task force. Their primary focus is to ensure that ASCOT remains representative of the various trail-user constituencies, and geographically diverse across the state. This year may possibly be the most difficult, as there will be only four vacant slots, and more than four ASCOT members whose terms expire, along with encouraging new members. Cate Bradley noted that her name should be included on the list of task force members.

Every year, one ASCOT member is chosen to be the Heritage Fund liaison. This person sits on the grant rating and scoring team as a non-voting member, reviewing and commenting on the grant applications, and providing the ASCOT point of view and expertise. This is limited to one person by mandate of the ASP Board, and that person will be chosen at the May meeting. Three members have already expressed interest in serving in this capacity. If any other member (including the new members) is interested, please let Annie McVay know.

Another task force is the Historic Trails task force. Jim Horton spoke about the ongoing project to document and produce a map/brochure of trails important to different Indian Tribes in Arizona.

Another task force is the Trails Conference task force, which will be discussed at length shortly. Finally, a smaller group has been formed to handle Trails Research and expanding on the 2005 Trails Plan for the State of Arizona.

Dan Gruber noted that the list reflected the discussion of where ASCOT's emphasis should be for the coming year and the next few years. One development was that Trails Monitoring should be the major focus. This is one of the core tasks of ASCOT as mandated by the ASP Board, and should perhaps be the emphasis for the next two years.

2. Trails Conference Planning Discussion

Annie McVay passed out a working document outlining the various subgroups in the Trails Conference Planning task force, their focus, and some of their deadlines throughout the months until the Conference is held. The Trails Conference will be held October 4-6, 2007 at the Prescott Pines Camp. This is a joint conference with the motorized community and is also be planned and sponsored by the Off-Highway Vehicle Advisory Group (OHVAG). The camp is being reserved exclusively for the Conference those three days. The cost of the Conference is being kept down through various "sponsorships", especially from the BLM and Arizona State Parks. For the full conference, two nights lodging and meals, the registration price will be \$95. The "day program", without lodging, will be \$65. The goal is 200 participants.

A call has gone out for proposals for topics. Five responses have been returned so far: land management agencies' travel management plans, a trail restoration project, historic trails, trail layout and design. Once all the proposals are in, a subcommittee of the task force will meet to review the proposals, fill in any gaps in topics that should be covered, and solicit speakers and presentations. A meeting has been set up for late February, and it's a conference call for those who are interested in participating.

Andrew Fish offered to make a tailored presentation on one aspect of design and engineering of trails. Annie McVay said that the camp was willing to allow the Conference attendees build a trail. Andrew Fish asked if further financial support would be helpful, if he could arrange some. Annie McVay said that Arizona State Parks has a new "Arizona State Parks Foundation" that she is working with as far as the Conference. This is a new venture about which the Foundation is very excited, especially to go out and find sponsorships.

John Vuolo suggested a topic on urban trails, which should draw a different sector of participants. Dan Gruber also asked about a round-table on the tension between motorized and non-motorized, and how some of the issues might be dealt with. This is a multifaceted issue, including the urban/wilderness interface, the prospective closure of land traditionally used by motorized trails users. Chair Grandrud asked about the chair for this task force. Annie McVay said that she and Amy Racki, the Off-Highway Vehicle Coordinator, are jointly spearheading it, and they could use all the help that's willing. Andrew Fish asked whether a hands-on workshop would be helpful.

Annie McVay also noted that the next ASCOT meeting will be that Thursday in conjunction with the Conference. That Thursday evening will be a social mixer, with perhaps one educational session. Classroom based, and perhaps some outdoor programs will take up all day Friday. The half-day Saturday would be outdoor field programs.

Cate Bradley asked about bringing in some transportation experts, in order to consider trails as transportation modes. Maureen DeCindis asked about a program on growth issues and how to manage for them. Dan Gruber asked about a level, open, dark place where he might do an astronomical presentation one evening. Doug Potts asked about a program on health and trails, and tourism and trails. There might be a source of funding connected with either of those. Jim Horton suggested inviting area legislators to the Conference. Sonia Overholser suggested inviting the various mining combines, Central Arizona Project (CAP), and Arizona Public Service (APS) or perhaps soliciting them for sponsorships. Steve Saway suggested a session on success stories in preserving access and preservation of trails. Linda Slay suggested equestrian perspective programs. Eric Smith mentioned that there had at one time been a suggestion that users “trade” activities. Equestrians would try mountain-biking, ATV riders would take a hike and so on to broaden perspectives.

The Program subcommittee for the Conference has a conference call on February 15, 2007 at 9:30am. Interested ASCOT members can participate by dialing 602-542-9006. Other subcommittees of the task force are, besides Programs, Marketing, perhaps a Sponsorships subcommittee if ASCOT is interested in pursuing outside opportunities, Logistics, and Social Events. Annie McVay also mentioned that awards might be presented, perhaps at one of the social events. If anyone is interested in serving on any of the Conference subcommittees, should contact Annie McVay.

3. Trails Monitoring

Eric Smith spoke about the Trails Monitoring Subcommittee, which he is chairing along with Tom Fitzgerald. He provided a handout (available) on what the subcommittee come up with as a monitoring strategy. He noted that this is one task mandated by the ASP Board. Ensuring that trails still exist, are still “healthy” and not impassable, or are marked as strictly non-motorized use is a priority. The monitoring form is available online at the ASP website and will be further advertised. He suggested developing a network of trails-oriented websites to link to the trails

monitoring form, and thereby soliciting input from trails users and also promoting trails, or just providing current information.

There are also needs to be more members of the Subcommittee to help take on some of the tasks. Hopefully, the new members could help divide up the state geographically, and set up distribution points within various geographic subdivisions to help get the monitoring form in more hands. He suggested forming more partnerships with outdoor businesses such as REI and others to distribute the form.

Another major step is collating the information to distribute the form to user groups, and also providing them with the trails information as it comes in. Incentives could be available in the form of ASP merchandise to help make participation in the trail monitoring process desirable. Other incentive merchandise could also be available from the outdoor businesses. Incentives could be given out quarterly by drawing the name of someone who has submitted a trail monitoring form.

Eric Smith also suggested talking to the various land managers, especially in areas affected by wildfires. The land managers often have to do trails assessments after a fire, and that information could be usable.

He noted that the subcommittee could hold a meeting in February or March and regroup to start getting the information out. Then in June, the subcommittee and the full committee could sit down and make some decision as to what to do with the information. Would unusable or unsuitable trails be de-listed? This is an area that needs to be considered. Eric Smith also noted that there has been a suggestion to add a statement to the STS nomination form, notifying the land manager nominating a trail that status updates are required for any trail elected to the STS. Another suggested idea is to find students from the Arizona State University Recreation Program for volunteers to help with monitoring and/or administrative help with the forms.

Annie McVay noted that the ASP Board had approved removing proposed trails from the STS. Cate Bradley asked if a session on trails monitoring and training to monitor could be held at the Conference. John Vuolo asked if ASP could notify or does notify potential de-listed trails that they are in jeopardy. Annie McVay said that a strict policy has not yet been formed. Both Staff and ASCOT should develop a proactive communication system. Further discussion on this followed.

Stephen Saway said that trail monitoring could be a good outreach to trails clubs, who probably have a great deal of current information on the trails. John Vuolo recommended getting into clubs' newsletters and websites. Dan Gruber suggested offering the monitoring form and catalog of STS trails as a weblink to clubs and others to get the information out.

Stephen Saway also asked about the trails decals, and that posting of the decals is inconsistent. Annie McVay noted that decals should be on each STS trail, and getting them there has many moving parts, including getting land manager's permission.

Sonia Overholser said that getting the website user-friendly, searchable and downloadable is probably key to getting more monitoring forms out in the hands of trails users.

Stephen Saway asked about monitoring trails not in the STS. Eric Smith said that those were not a focus. At the most, information could be forwarded to land managers as a courtesy.

G. PRESENTATIONS

1. Advisory Group Coordinator – Ruth Shulman gave a brief presentation on the travel reimbursement claim forms, the W-9 form, and the travel reimbursement rules of the State of Arizona. Members were provided with blank forms, given instruction on the proper completion of the forms, and advised that assistance with completing forms is always available if needed by calling Ruth Shulman at ASP at 602-542-7822. Annie McVay noted also that Quorum Call is important because if a quorum is not reached one week before a meeting, the meeting will not occur. A note in the Quorum Call will ask members if they have specific agenda items to add.

2. Annie McVay gave a brief presentation on Conflict of Interest as well as the Open Meeting Law. This is an Arizona statute governing the conduct of public bodies. Because ASCOT is a public body, they are subject to this law. Basically it means that all business of the Committee must be conducted in public. Any and all notes taken within a meeting is a public record and can be requested. All meetings, including subcommittee meetings must have an agenda posted 24 business hours prior to the meeting being held. No Committee can meet in secret, which also includes communicating to a quorum of the Committee. In practical terms what this means is that any Staff will send messages via eMail or postal service to the Committee, and that members are prohibited from making a broad-scale response. (Do not use your eMail system's "reply all" feature.) With regards to Conflict of Interest, in a nutshell, members are asked to recuse themselves from any agenda items involving funding. Further information will be provided by Joy Hernbrode when she makes the formal presentation on these topics.

H. REPORTS

1. Staff Reports:

a. ASP Board Action on ASCOT Member Size – Annie McVay reported that the ASP Board approved the motion to reduce the size of ASCOT over the next few years.

b. Update on the 50th Anniversary Celebrations – 2007 is the 50th Anniversary of Arizona State Parks. Members discussed their experiences in attending events. Advisory group members are invited to each of the events held at State Parks.

I. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

None.

J. SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS, MATTERS OF BOARD PROCEDURE, REQUESTS AND ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS.

This item was combined with Item C. Members introduced themselves and discussed current events, projects and constituent-group related information. No ASCOT business was discussed. Don Ziegler discussed his volunteer experience and how he fits into ASCOT as a non-member volunteer.

Items for a future agenda requested were: Input for additional criteria for nomination to the Historic Trails List, continue the member round-table, discussion of a possible list-serv for the Trail Conference (this would have to be handled outside of official ASCOT activities to avoid a possible Open Meeting Law violation), election of the liaison to the grants rating team, a review of Annie McVay's eMail address list, suggestions for a presentation on trails design and engineering at the Conference. Chair Grandrud suggested that members look at their subcommittee and task force list and decide which to join.

K. TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

May 4, 2007 – the joint meeting with OHVAG, which constitutes the Recreation Trails Program Advisory Committee for the purposes of funding. This meeting will be held in Phoenix.

L. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Grandrud adjourned the meeting at 2:10pm.