

**MINUTES**  
**of the**  
**ARIZONA STATE COMMITTEE ON TRAILS (ASCOT)**  
**of**  
**ARIZONA STATE PARKS (ASP)**  
**MEETING OF FEBRUARY 2, 2008**  
**Covenant Presbyterian Church Annex**  
**24 Howell St., Bisbee, Arizona**

**A. NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION**

Chair Winslow and Ms. McVay opened the orientation by having participants introduce themselves. New members were provided with an ASCOT manual containing information on the State Trails System, the Trails Heritage Fund grant program, the Recreational Trails Program fund, an ASCOT roster and other documents denoting ASCOT's history and role with the ASP Board. Chair Winslow and Ms. McVay discussed the mission of ASCOT and its past accomplishments. Ms. McVay discussed the structure of ASP, and programs for both motorized and non-motorized trails. Ms. Shulman introduced the role of the advisory committee coordinator and the Arizona Open Meeting Law with emphasis on setting quorums, inter-ASCOT communications and the agenda.

**B. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Chair Winslow called the meeting to order at 11:00am. Ms. Shulman called the roll and advised the Chair of a quorum. Chair Winslow greeted the members and thanked them for attending.

**ASCOT Members Present:**

Bonnie Winslow, Chair  
Don Applegate  
Cate Bradley  
Maureen DeCindis  
Anne Ellis  
Reba Grandrud  
Daye Halling  
Jim Horton  
Chris Hosking  
Doug Potts  
Stephen Saway  
Paul Schilke  
Linda Slay  
Irene Smith  
John Vuolo

**ASCOT Members Absent:**

Mark Gullo  
Sonia Overholser  
Charles Scully  
Kent Taylor  
Erik Wilson

**Arizona State Parks (ASP) Staff:**

Annie McVay, State Trails Coordinator  
Bob Baldwin, Grants Coordinator  
Ruth Shulman, Advisory Committee Coordinator

**Guests:** Jim Mahoney, Bureau of Land Management (BLM)  
Tom Fitzgerald, past ASCOT member

### **C. INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS AND STAFF**

Members and staff introduced themselves.

### **D. BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT PRESENTATION**

Jim Mahoney of the BLM, San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area (“SPRNCA”) is the recreation coordinator for that area. SPRNCA runs from the border with Mexico toward the town of St. David. The BLM has been working closely with the Cochise Trails Association (CTA) to ensure trails opportunities. The CTA is currently conducting a trails inventory in southeastern Arizona. Mr. Mahoney noted that there are many opportunities to develop trails connecting public lands as well as communities in the SE Arizona area. He also mentioned the Rails-to-Trails project involving the San Pedro Railroad abandonment. It represents 76 miles not including spurs in widely separated communities. The portion under consideration for abandonment will be decided on in mid-July. That portion is currently under a Notice of Temporary Trail Use, which allowed for the railway trestles to remain standing. There are three possibilities for final disposition: the Railroad could donate the corridor to the BLM, the BLM could obtain the right to purchase the property or to purchase the right to Rail Bank in agreement with the Railroad, or the Railroad could elect to retain its rights. Mr. Potts asked about a potential third-party purchaser. Mr. Mahoney noted that this purchaser was primarily motivated by his ownership of property the trains would cross, but he has not gotten far along with the process. A lot still depends on the Railroad’s ultimate decision whether to keep the line or not.

Mr. Mahoney also noted that the trails within the SPRNCA have been cleared with the help of some RTP funds, and many miles of trails are now usable. He is more familiar with the trails on the SPRNCA and offered Steve Saway as a knowledgeable guide to activities outside SPRNCA. Mr. Saway congratulated Mr. Mahoney on his good work on the SPRNCA trails system, which is a multi-use, non-motorized system accessible from many points.

Ms. McVay thanked Mr. Mahoney for working on setting up the hikes and the meeting space.

### **E. CONSENT AGENDA**

Reba Grandrud moved to accept the Consent Agenda. Cate Bradley seconded the motion, which carried with no further discussion. The minutes of the October 4, 2007 meeting are approved as presented.

### **F. ACTION ITEMS**

#### **1. Consider Changes to the State Trails System (STS) Criteria**

Ms. DeCindis opened the conversation by noting the STS Criteria pages in the agenda packet (Attachment A). The changes as discussed by the subcommittee were highlighted in yellow; deletions were shown in crosshatch. Ms. DeCindis asked for concerns and comments. Ms. Grandrud noted that the “automatic” inclusion of National Historic Trails into the STS had been deleted. Ms. McVay said that she had instituted this change for several reasons including some unclear language, and issues of land ownership/management along National Historic Trails. She gave the example of the Anza Trail, the length of which primarily crosses

private lands. The STS cannot designate a trail into the system without the approval of all landowners.

Mr. Saway asked for clarification of the Urban Trail category. He wondered whether urban trails currently in the system would have been approved for inclusion under the new rules. Ms. McVay noted that they probably would not have been approved. However, a new category of Trails Systems has been added to alleviate some of the special considerations of urban areas. The new category allows for a 20% maximum of trails within a “system” do not need to meet STS requirements. The remaining 80% must meet the usual requirements for acceptance into the STS. The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) manages a Transportation Enhancement fund of \$16 million that can better serve roadway-associated trails in urban areas. An ADOT representative will speak to ASCOT at a future meeting. The ADOT fund also represents a more appropriate funding source for urban trails.

Ms. Bradley asked about the 80/20 split in trail systems. She feels that allowing 20% of a system to fall outside the STS requirements opens the door to future “loopholes”. For example, if the 20% segment is the first part nominated by a land manager, by the time the following 80% is nominated, there has been a trail segment in the STS that meets no STS requirements, thereby allowing for arguments to permit any trail into the STS under those circumstances. Ms. DeCindis noted that in order to qualify as a trail system, the entire system must be nominated at one time. No more than 20% of the complete system can be outside the guidelines; the other 80% must meet the requirements of the STS as a recreational trail. Ms. McVay noted that this new system of rules represents a start toward treating trails systems. Ms. McVay noted that one issue is connectivity; the 20% segment deserves to be included because it will connect to a recreational trail meeting the STS criteria. Further discussion followed.

Ms. Slay noted that trails systems are a good category to include because, as represented by Thunderbird Park in Glendale, the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. Also, trails must be able to benefit a large number of user, and not simply small communities. Mr. Potts noted that the 80/20 split may also lead to more comprehensive trails planning on the part of communities. Mr. Baldwin also noted that there is a cap of \$100,000 under the Trails Heritage grant program, which doesn’t go far in constructing urban trails.

Mr. Saway noted that under the Urban Trails category, he feels that requiring urban trails to fall completely within a municipality’s boundaries may limit opportunities to connect with recreational trails in nearby National Forests or similar areas. He asked that ASCOT consider adding language to encourage connector trails. Ms. DeCindis noted that some of that language was included to prevent nominations presented by people who do not have ultimate responsibility for the trails. Ms. McVay noted that the language can be clarified to broaden the definitions if those definitions are too restrictive. The phrase “the majority of the nominated trail...” will be added to the municipality boundary language.

Ms. McVay noted that on page 13, #6 sets a length requirement, not in the sense of establishing a minimum length but rather setting a principal of very high quality for very short trails. Additionally, on page 14, #7 allows for greater enforcement of the rule requiring that the entire length of any trail (or trails segment) be nominated at one time. Ms. McVay also noted that ASCOT has the authority to admit exceptional trails at any time.

Mr. Horton moved that ASCOT accept the changes to the State Trails System Criteria (Attachment A) as set forth including the upgrade to the language in Section III(A)1

regarding Urban Trails and municipal boundaries. Ms. DeCindis seconded the motion, which carried with no further discussion.

Ms. McVay thanked Ms. DeCindis as chair of the subcommittee and all subcommittee members for developing these criteria. Mr. Potts noted the importance of the San Pedro as birding area, and Mr. Mahoney mentioned the anniversary of the dedication of the San Pedro Important Bird Area.

## **2. Consider Recommending Trails Heritage Fund Match Decrease**

Mr. Fitzgerald led the conversation in lieu of Kent Taylor who could not attend the meeting. In 2004, a Task Force on the Trails Heritage Fund Grant criteria gathered to discuss those criteria and coordinate them with the Trails Plan 2005. One area noted as a barrier to applicants was the 50/50 match requirement. The Task Force recommended dropping the match to 65/35. ASCOT presented that recommendation to the Arizona Outdoor Recreation Coordinating Commission (AORCC, the umbrella group that oversees approving and recommending Heritage Fund grants under the ASP Board.) AORCC declined to reduce the match at that time. Another proposal went to AORCC, who tabled the discussion in 2006. Mr. Fitzgerald noted that the history of grant awards tends to favor the larger, more densely populated areas of the state to the detriment of smaller, less populated areas. Also, the Trails Heritage Fund remains under-subscribed each year. Reducing the match will help put more funds “on the ground” over a wider area while still maintaining the applicant’s dedication to completing the project by continuing to require a match. Mr. Fitzgerald also noted match decreases in other trails funding programs.

Today, ASCOT is being asked to recommend a match decrease from 50/50 to 75/25. Mr. Saway asked whether the match could be decreased to match the RTP level of 5.7%. Ms. McVay said that would be “a hard fight” at this time. She noted that the next AORCC meeting is scheduled for February 14, 2008 and this issue has a reserved space on the agenda for that meeting.

Mr. Potts asked about AORCC’s previous concerns with the match decrease. Ms. McVay said that the main concern was lessening the “on the ground” funding, as well as the fact that the match can be made in either hard cash or in-kind donation. Ms. Bradley asked whether AORCC was aware that the fund is under-subscribed. Ms. McVay said they are aware. She also noted that a high level of support for the decrease would be of great assistance, and asked that everyone who could possibly attend the AORCC meeting please do so. Mr. Fitzgerald also noted that an advantage of decreasing the match allows for greater competition among grant applicants.

Mr. Vuolo moved that ASCOT recommend that the match for Trails Heritage Fund grants be decreased from 50/50 to 75/25 and to forward this recommendation to AORCC for their decision at their meeting on February 14, 2008. Ms. DeCindis seconded the motion, which carried with no further discussion.

Mr. Baldwin noted that letters of support could be sent to the ASP Board c/o Mr. Baldwin at the offices of ASP in Phoenix.

## **3. Trails Preservation Training Update**

Ms. Grandrud said that the Trails Preservation workshop will take place March 14-15, 2008 at the BLM National Training Center in Phoenix. This workshop will be a great opportunity to learn how to identify and preserve historic trails. Recreational trails often contain segments

of historic trails within them. There is a small cost for the workshop itself, in order to provide lunches. The first day is classroom training, and the second day will involve a field trip, probably to the Sonoran Desert National Monument. The workshop teachers are knowledgeable in the area of identification and preservation of historic trails, or segments. Mr. Horton noted that the history of trails in Arizona encompasses everyone from the Spanish explorers through the expansion of the US.

Chair Winslow asked about the limit on participants. Ms. Grandrud noted that the classroom segment is limited to 50 participants, and the BLM is not expecting all 50 attendees to continue to the field portion. She also asked ASCOT to spread news of this workshop to their constituents.

Chair Winslow noted that the reservation form for this event is available from Ms. Grandrud's information packet already sent and on the ASP website. Ms. Grandrud noted that the workshop leader is Dave Welch, the Preservation Officer for the California-Oregon Trail Association.

Ms. Grandrud also noted that the Partnership for the National Trails System will be having their national meeting in Phoenix on May 8-11, 2008. One section will be on historic trails preservation strategies as well.

(At this point ASCOT adjourned for lunch at 12:30pm and reconvened at 1:00pm.)

#### **4. Trails 2010 Plan Update**

Ms. McVay distributed copies of the Trails 2005 Plan, and ASP is mandated to complete a new plan every five years. The next plan is due to be approved by the ASP Board by 2010. The process is underway now, and will begin with random telephone surveys on trails usage in the state. Next, the same survey is given to a "targeted sample" of trails users across the state. The third survey is given to land managers to identify their issues in trails management. This information is correlated into the trails plan.

Ms. McVay said that they survey to the general public will be conducted through Arizona State University (ASU) through an Inter-Governmental Agreement. She is asking ASCOT to review the survey, as comments from the last Trails Plan noted that the survey as difficult. The survey should be both comprehensive and less than 15 minutes start-to-finish. There should be a draft to review by the end of February. Mr. Vuolo asked that previous surveys be included with the draft for comparison.

Ms. McVay noted ASP held meeting with land managers in Phoenix, Tucson and Flagstaff during December to discuss the Trails Plan. These meetings were to develop questions land managers would want to ask the general public regarding trails. Those questions covered a staggering variety of areas, but will be helpful in developing the surveys.

Ms. DeCindis noted that an electronic survey held recently by the Maricopa Association of Governments generated 2,000 responses through a marketing strategy of survey-takers passing along the survey to other interested parties. Ms. McVay noted that the ASU survey of the general public conforms to the need for it to be completely random and follow certain statistical research methods. However, for the target audience, there may be two different versions, links to each could be forwarded as Ms. DeCindis described.

Ms. McVay noted that the plan is to complete the bulk of the surveys by the end of March. Following the surveys, ASP is planning workshops in communities across the state to take some of the data and make it “real-world”. There are some interesting new elements to the Trails Plan this year, such as gap analysis and mapping, and adding a library of trails plans across the state to educate trails planners.

##### **5. Discussion and Action Planning for ASCOT Activities and Goals for 2008**

Chair Winslow began asking ASCOT to recall the discussion at the July 2007 meeting, noting that ASCOT should take into account the mandatory functions of ASCOT, and those activities ASCOT chooses to add. She said ASCOT should also take into account the need for the members to enjoy themselves while serving on ASCOT.

She then noted that if a member proposes an idea for a project, they should be prepared to take the lead on that project as well. Ms. McVay noted that the largest mandatory activity of ASCOT is nominating trails to the State Trails System. The standing committee for review of the applications is usually a minimum of five people. The number of applications fluctuates from year to year; last year’s submissions numbered in the high double digits. Applications are due every year on July 1, and are discussed at the October ASCOT meeting. Mr. Potts also noted that the joint meeting with the Off-Highway Vehicle Advisory Group (OHVAG) is mandatory to maintain federal funding through RTP.

Chair Winslow said that one item ASCOT chooses to take on is to appoint a liaison to the Trails Heritage Fund grant rating team for the grant applications. The liaison is a non-voting member of the rating team, but take part fully in the evaluation process. This process is unsurpassed to provide the liaison with a “bird’s-eye” view of the criteria in action.

Ms. Bradley noted that recruitment of new members each year is required, though not as a statutory mandate. The recruitment committee is another opportunity for members to serve.

Chair Winslow noted that there are two subcommittees under ASCOT, which are the Outreach subcommittee, chaired by Irene Smith, and the State Trails System subcommittee, chaired by Maureen DeCindis. Depending on ASCOT’s chosen focus in any year, these subcommittees are either busy or very busy.

Under the STS subcommittee is the Historic Trails committee, led by Reba Grandrud. She noted the committee had produced a brochure of historic trails in Arizona. The committee maintains an active membership that includes both ASCOT members and others outside ASCOT with an interest in historic trails. The current project is to develop another publication on historic Native American trails, with the help of the various tribes across the state. This project is ongoing while gathering the input of the tribes. Mr. Vuolo asked how the tribes are about allowing the public to hike trails located on the reservations. Ms. Grandrud said that the focus is to create a catalog of sorts for the Native American historic trails. Ms. Smith said that she had been working closely with tribes in Pinal County and could provide some input on the issue to whoever needs it. Ms. Grandrud also asked that the STS subcommittee include a historic trails representative.

Chair Winslow said that the Executive Committee had put forth the idea of having some sort of trails event in the autumn. This event would be part of the duties of the Outreach subcommittee this year. National Trails Day is in the spring every year, however the local climates in Arizona don’t always make spring participation in outdoor events pleasant or feasible. National Public Lands Day takes place over a three-month period in the autumn,

which would provide a convenient “hook” for a trails event. There is a possibility that funds could be obtained by ASCOT or a partnering land management agency to help pay for the event. She also asked members to provide other ideas for activities during the year.

Ms. Slay said that ASCOT had discussed merging the STS Nominating subcommittee with the Trails Monitoring committee to help promote trails monitoring. Chair Winslow noted that the Trails Monitoring committee is already under the STS Nominating umbrella. The task of monitoring trails in the STS is a huge undertaking, and consists of several “moving parts”. Further discussion on monitoring followed, including who would lead the monitoring efforts during calendar year 2008. One issue is how to use the information collected effectively.

Ms. McVay noted that the STS information is slowly but surely moving toward a user-friendly online format, with several different search functions. Ms. McVay said that the database would also include an online monitoring form to be used by the public. With this in mind, continuing to focus on changes to the current paper-based system may not be the best use of ASCOT’s time. One issue currently working on being resolved is housing a publicly available database on public-sector computers, which are governed by a number of regulations. Mr. Applegate provided more illumination on this particular aspect of the topic.

Mr. Vuolo noted that he provides completed monitoring forms to the offices of the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest, however there are issues with doing that as well. Trying to dictate how land managers maintain trails on their land is problematic at best. Ms. McVay said that the original intent of the monitoring form was to gather information from trails user regarding the trails they’ve visited. Ms. DeCindis asked if passing along monitoring forms to the land managers when there are potential issues or danger spots involved. That may be a possibility, however it has yet to come to fruition through ASCOT, rather than the Trails Liaison. Steve Saway suggested that trails user groups be recruited to help with monitoring, or at least design to survey to discover which trails the user groups find to be in the most trouble. Chair Winslow again iterated that any tasks must have a leader within ASCOT. Ms. McVay asked if it was ASCOT’s intent to focus on monitoring this year.

Ms. Bradley asked for a recap of the “work plan” so far. Chair Winslow said tasks were: the STS Nomination committee, Member Nomination committee, the liaison for the Trails Heritage Fund grant program, the Historic Trails committee, a proposed Outreach trail event in autumn, and discussion of proposing a monitoring committee. Ms. Bradley noted that this amounts to six task areas, two proposed and four standing. Chair Winslow asked for other ideas.

Ms. Grandrud asked how the Historic Trails committee could provide input to the ASCOT website. Ms. McVay said that a link provided to the ASCOT website could be uploaded. Ms. Bradley asked whether upgrading the website was a proposal for an ASCOT activity this year. Ms. McVay said it was not.

Chair Winslow said that the proposals for activities are the Outreach trails event in the autumn would be under the purview of Irene Smith, and the monitoring committee does not yet have a chair to take the lead. She then asked for motions on the proposals before the committee. Ms. McVay said that an informal vote would be sufficient. She asked for a count of hands for the autumn trails event. Mr. Horton asked for a definition of what the event would be. Ms. Smith noted that it would most likely be similar to a National Trails Day event and not a conference-style event. Ms. Smith described the sort of events held at the Pinal

County National Trails Day event during 2007. Ms. McVay noted that funds for education are available and suggested an event with an educational emphasis.

Mr. Horton moved that ASCOT sponsor a fall trail event. Ms. Grandrud seconded the motion, which carried with no further discussion. Ms. Smith said that she would chair the event; committee members would be Ms. Winslow, Ms. Ellis, Ms. Slay, and Mr. Halling.

Ms. Slay asked whether ASCOT might look at monitoring from the aspect of outreach to trails users and groups doing the “legwork”. Mr. Saway said that a committee to form a plan for monitoring might be more feasible. Mr. Vuolo moved that ASCOT form a committee to develop a concept plan for monitoring for trails in State Trails System. Mr. Saway seconded the motion. Following some clarification of the motion, it carried without further discussion. Members of that committee are: Ms. Slay, Mr. Vuolo, Mr. Saway, Mr. Potts, and Mr. Hosking. The chair will be determined at the first meeting of this committee. The committee could meet via teleconference to mitigate travel issues as long as the committee develops an agenda.

Ms. Bradley gave a brief overview of the Member Nominating committee. The committee convenes to what the needs of ASCOT are, and what geographic representation could be expanded. Members are encouraged to contact anyone they know interested in trails on a one-on-one basis to encourage applications. The applications, following the deadline for receipt, are forwarded to members of the committee for consideration. Nominations are made to fill the open slots in ASCOT, and Ms. McVay forwards the recommendation to the ASP Board for final appointment of new members. Appointed members receive an acknowledgment letters, those who are not appointed receive letters of decline. New members of the Member Nominating committee are: Mr. Horton, Ms. Bradley, and Mr. Schilke, with Ms. Grandrud as chair.

The Trails Heritage Fund liaison volunteers are: Ms. Bradley, Mr. Halling and Mr. Schilke. A determination will take place at the next ASCOT meeting to decide who will serve.

The State Trails System committee members are: Mr. Horton, Mr. Schilke, Ms. Slay, Ms. Smith and Mr. Potts, with Mr. Taylor as chair.

Ms. Grandrud noted that Mr. Horton from ASCOT is a member of the Historic Trails committee and there are members from outside of ASCOT.

Chair Winslow reiterated that any ASCOT member can participate in any committee, and ASCOT members are encouraged to participate in at least one committee.

#### **6. Consider Electing a Vice-Chair for 2008**

Vice-Chair Vince Murray submitted his resignation to ASCOT, as he can no longer represent his constituency. Following a brief discussion of the time commitment ASCOT elected Jim Horton as the new Vice-Chair for 2008.

#### **G. PRESENTATIONS**

Ms. Shulman introduced the new travel reimbursement procedures to ASCOT. The major difference in the new procedure is that reimbursement payments will be processed through the Human Resources Information System. Ms. Shulman provided members with forms necessary for



the HR computer system, and new travel claim forms, along with instructions and background on what necessitated the change.

In addition, Ms. Shulman discussed the major points of the Arizona Open Meeting law (A.R.S. § 38-431-02) with emphasis on setting quorum, internal ASCOT communications, and the meeting agenda. She also discussed the rules regarding Conflict of Interest and advised members who feel they have a conflict to discuss the matter with the Assistant Attorney General representing ASP, Ms. Joy Hernbrode.

## **H. REPORTS**

### **1. Staff Reports:**

#### **Proposed State Trails System Trails Update**

There are trails within the State Trails System that have not been built for a variety of reasons. In order to clean up the list, the proposal is to de-list any trail that has been listed as closed for five years with no forward motion. Any de-list must be approved by the ASP Board. The emphasis will be on “significant” progress, and the definition of significant will be up to ASCOT to determine.

#### **Meeting Dates and Places for 2008**

The next meeting will be Friday, May 2, 2008. The meeting venue will be announced as soon as it is determined. The following meeting is Saturday, July 19, 2008. Mr. Schilke asked what is required of a meeting host. Ms. McVay noted that arranging a meeting venue and setting up an event to familiarize ASCOT with the area would be sufficient. Mr. Schilke offered to host the meeting in Overgaard, though he will look into other places. Chair Winslow noted that lodging accommodations are a necessity. The meeting of Friday, October 3, 2008 will most likely be held at Horseshoe Ranch in the Agua Fria National Monument, five miles from I-17. The December planning meeting is always decided on closer to the date.

## **I. CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

No public comment.

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

The Member Roundtable was dispensed with in the interest of time. Current events include a Historic conference in April at the San Marcos Resort in Phoenix. The grand opening of the trailhead for the Black Canyon trail on Saturday, February 9, 2009. The trailhead has not been developed, but the land has been acquired. Ms. Slay will provide further information. Ms. Smith noted that March 15 will be second annual Pinal County National Trails Day event. This event is in conjunction with Maricopa County, at San Tan Regional Park. Mr. Applegate noted that the data dictionary to standardize language among land management agency has moved to the Department of the Interior. The DoI is promoting the data dictionary to be used throughout the entire Federal government. This document is in the public comment phase at the moment, and Mr. Applegate would appreciate any input. Ms. McVay will forward any information provided by Bill Gibson of the BLM on this topic.

## **K. TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING**

May 2, 2008 – Phoenix, venue to be determined.

**L. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Winslow adjourned the meeting at 3:05pm.