

**MINUTES
of the
ARIZONA STATE COMMITTEE ON TRAILS (ASCOT)
of
ARIZONA STATE PARKS (ASP)
Meeting of May 21, 2010**

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

ASCOT Members Present:

Kent Taylor, Chair	Mary McMullen
Maureen DeCindis	Anna Pfender
Tom Fitzgerald	Linda Slay
Lisa Marie Gerdl	Heather Wasgatt
Jim Horton	Bruce Weidenhamer
Nick Lund	

ASCOT Members Absent:

Don Applegate
Reba Grandrud
Brian Grube
Daye Halling

Arizona State Parks (ASP) Staff:

Annie McVay, Resource Planner

Guests:

Dan Gronseth, City of Phoenix

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Taylor called the meeting to order at 1:07 pm.

B. INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS AND STAFF

C. ACTION ITEMS

1. Approval of Minutes from the January 23, 2010 Meeting.

Ms. DeCindis moved to approve the minutes from the January 23, 2010 meeting. Mr. Horton seconded, motion passed.

2. Status Update on Arizona State Park Budget, Staffing and Trail Funds.

Ms. McVay indicated this agenda item was to allow ASCOT to finish any discussion from the earlier Joint Meeting of ASCOT and the Off-Highway Vehicle Advisory Group (OHVAG) that pertained specifically to non-motorized trails.

Ms. Wasgatt was interested in understanding how to make agencies more aware or responsible for completing the environmental requirements of the federal Recreational Trails Program (RTP). It would be beneficial to adapt the application to require some level of initial clearance or commitment to completing the clearances. Ms. McVay responded that there is some element of this on the current form. Often agencies do not fully understand what is required or the costs associated with environmental or archaeological clearances if they have not done them. There is always room to improve

the application form or initial communication process. Ms. Wasgatt indicated that she was interested in the possibility of RTP grants including new trail construction or reroutes.

Mr. Weidenhamer agreed reroutes of existing trails is a large need for trails. He stated there is often energy and support behind new trail projects but this same energy is lacking in the maintenance of existing trails. Maintenance is often less funded or not funded. In addition, in many cases maintaining an existing trail route will only last until a season. A reroute is the most effective way to help maintain certain sections of trails.

Ms. McVay said the current RTP Maintenance Program does allow for reroutes to existing trails. These reroutes do have limitations and must generally follow the route of the original trail and all environmental compliance work must be completed.

Mr. Lund asked about the 6 Heritage Fund Grants that never began and were cancelled. He wanted to know if ASCOT was going to consider these grants in its recommendation. Chair Taylor stated recommending funding of the grants that had started work was a good enough step.

3. Determine the ASCOT 2010 State Trails System Subcommittee. The Committee identified members who are interested in serving:

Maureen DeCindis
Lisa Marie Gerdl
Mary McMullen
Linda Slay
Heather Wasgatt

Motion passed.

4. Review of ASCOT Subcommittee Goals for 2010 and Effective Methods of Reaching Goals.

The Committee reviewed the goals determined for the ASCOT's Subcommittees:

Workshop

Ms. Pfender gave an update on the status of the Trails and Volunteering workshop. The workshop is tomorrow (Saturday, May 22nd). There is an impressive list of presenters. The attendance is about 60 people; this is a good turnout for a Saturday in May.

Mr. Taylor thanked the members of the Planning Team: Anna Pfender, Mary McMullen, Jim Horton, Daye Halling and Linda Slay.

Outreach/Website/Communications

Mr. Weidenhamer said he has given the organization of the ASCOT website some thought. He has drafted a document that can help evaluate the existing site. In his experience, a website is a representation of what your organization does, some dynamic organizations need to change. Before ASCOT can put

together a website of what we do and what we want to accomplish, we should step back and think about what that really is or can become. Mr. Weidenhamer outlined the three things he sees for ASCOT's activities:

1. The mandated role of advising State Parks Board – Funding, State Trails Nominations. He clarified that this arena does not include people external to the group.
2. Workshops – the committee's ability and State Parks coordinating events. He felt this aspect could go away at anytime the time availability of the group changes.
3. An area we can aspire to – to be a central touch point for the trails community in the state. Where people contact ASCOT on trail needs and we can get them to the right contact. With this structure, we could start pulling in a larger group of volunteers beyond what is on the ASCOT committee.

Mr. Weidenhamer concluded that the next steps are 1) to determine our goals are and 2) perhaps ASCOT can aspire to a larger role in the state.

Ms. McMullen asked if ASCOT could operate in this way being an advisory committee. Ms. McVay replied that Open Meeting Law would have to be followed for all activities but OML itself wouldn't necessarily stop these activities.

Mr. Taylor indicated that new projects taken on by ASCOT need to be driven by the group, ASP staff cannot take on this role. An ASCOT member would need to take on responsibility and work for activities

Mr. Weidenhamer stated that with electronic websites, the technology can do a lot of the work. You set a search engine so that ASCOT will come up when anyone searches for 'trails and grants in Arizona.' A website can do a lot to raise visibility and help ASCOT in terms of coordinating trail aspects in the state. We can start to have some of these broader functions.

Ms. McVay asked if this website was an ASCOT website or a site associated with the ASP State Trails Program. Mr. Weidenhamer said it could be set in search engines so that ASCOT comes up first and it appears that ASP is a small subset of ASCOT instead of the current status of ASCOT being buried on the website as a subset of ASP.

The Committee further discussed the current role of ASCOT, main themes of this discussion included:

- ASCOT often thrives for the bigger picture trail needs but is limited to the time available. 'It's eyes are bigger than it's stomach.' ASCOT has successes in taking on smaller focused projects and than dreaming big.
- ASCOT barely has the time to accomplish what it is doing now, so adding more responsibilities might be problematic.
- There are needs that ASCOT could focus on that might be more relevant to the trails community than it's current focus.

- The discussion of ASCOT and the role of a State Trails Association comes up every few years and has not yet been satisfied to differing audiences.

Member Recruitment

Mr. Horton explained the Member Recruitment Subcommittee works to identify potential applicants for ASCOT vacancies. The members identify missing representation on the Committee and contact colleagues in the trails community. There are often more applicants than vacancies, this Subcommittee recommends it's top candidates to the Parks Board.

Members interested in serving on this Subcommittee:

Jim Horton
Tom Fitzgerald
Nick Lund
Bruce Weidenhamer

D. REPORTS

a. Staff Reports

Potential Americorps Member to Assist Trail Education Efforts

Ms. McVay reported to the Committee that Arizona State Parks is pursuing an AmeriCorps grant in conjunction with the Coconino Rural Environment Corps and Southwest Conservation Corps to obtain AmeriCorps Members to work with State Parks. These members would primarily work at the parks as rangers but included in the request was a trails person. This person would be funded through Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Education Funds so this position would assist on educational efforts.

E. CALL TO THE PUBLIC -

Bill Gibson, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) gave an overview of how the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) a.k.a stimulus money has impacted trails on the BLM. The funds total almost \$15 million and about 170 miles of trails have positively benefited. There has been construction, maintenance and condition assessment along mainly the Black Canyon Trail, Arizona Trail and the Old Spanish Trail.

Mr. Gibson also endorsed using RTP funds for reroutes of existing trails.

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

G. TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

Saturday, August 7th. Somewhere 'cool'.

H. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:35 pm.

**Update on Funding Heritage Fund Trail Projects
With Recreational Trails Program Funds**

Background

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) provides funds to the States to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses. The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) was authorized in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) in 2005. SAFETEA-LU was extended through federal fiscal year 2010 at 2009 levels by continuing resolution.

Since 2001 the non-motorized portion of this fund has been used to fund the State Parks RTP Trail Maintenance Program. At this year's ASCOT/OHVAG meeting the committee discussed the non-motorized trail projects that were left uncompleted when the Trails Heritage Fund grants were cancelled. They recommended State Parks staff contact these project sponsors to see if they could complete their projects using RTP funds in the amount of the unexpended balance remaining on the Heritage Fund project.

Current Status

Staff contacted the seven projects eligible for the funds. The sponsors for five of those projects have requested RTP funds to complete their projects.

The five projects total \$361,118. If fully funded, \$1,280,591 is available from the non-motorized portion of RTP allocations. Funds not awarded to the trail projects will be used to fund the next cycle of trail maintenance projects.

Projects Requesting RTP Funds for Cancelled Heritage Projects					
ELIGIBLE PROJECT SPONSOR	PROJECT NAME	% COMP	GRANT AMOUNT	AMOUNT EXPENDED	UNEXPENDED BALANCE/ REQUESTED RTP AMOUNT
Coconino NF	West Fork/Bell Rock Trails Interp/Ren	52	\$16,920	\$7,921	\$8,999
Coconino NF	Jim Thompson Trailhead Renovation	85	\$75,657	\$69,964	\$5,500
Flagstaff	FUTS Trail System Signage, Phase I	40	\$140,148	\$18,457	\$121,691
BLM-Hassayampa Field Office	Black Canyon Trail Phase III Development	25	\$118,842	\$0	\$118,842

Flagstaff	FUTS: System Signage, Phase II Dev	40	\$106,086	\$0	\$106,086
TOTAL RTP FUNDS REQUESTED					\$361,118

Projects Declining RTP Funds for Cancelled Heritage Projects					
PROJECT SPONSOR	PROJECT NAME	% COMP	GRANT AMOUNT	AMOUNT EXPENDED	UNEXPENDED BALANCE
Avondale	Agua Fria River Corridor Signage Dev	30	\$85,000	\$0	\$85,000
Prescott NF	Aspen Creek Trailhead/Trail Ext Dev	80	\$11,715	\$2,672	\$9,043

Staff presented the ASCOT/OHVAG recommendation to the Arizona Outdoor Recreation Coordinating Committee (AORCC) at its July 27, 2010 meeting. AORCC voted favorably. The recommendation will be forwarded to the Parks Board for final determination at its September 15, 2010 meeting.

Review of ASCOT Subcommittee Work and Goals for 2010
Membership Nominations

ASCOT 2010 Members

MEMBER	COUNTY	EXPIRATION	AFFILIATION
Don Applegate	Maricopa	December 31, 2010	Bureau of Land Management
Linda Slay	Maricopa	December 31, 2010	Arizona State Horsemen's Assn
Brian Grube	Coconino	December 31, 2010	City of Flagstaff
Jim Horton	Maricopa	December 31, 2010	Citizen at Large
Maureen DeCindis	Maricopa	December 31, 2010	Maricopa Assn of Govts
Daye Halling	Maricopa	December 31, 2011	Citizen at Large
Tom Fitzgerald	Maricopa	December 31, 2011	Central Arizona Project
Mary McMullen	Gila	December 31, 2011	Town of Payson
Kent Taylor	Pinal	December 31, 2011	Citizen at Large
Bruce Weidenhamer	Maricopa	December 31, 2011	Volunteers for Outdoor Arizona
Lisa Marie Gerdl	Maricopa	December 31, 2012	Take-A-Hike (hiking group)
Reba Grandrud	Maricopa	December 31, 2012	Old Spanish Trail Association
Nick Lund	Navajo	December 31, 2012	TRACKS - Pinetop - Lakeside
Anna Pfender	Maricopa	December 31, 2012	Arizona Trail Association
Heather Wasgatt	Maricopa	December 31, 2012	City of Phoenix

Highlighted members terms need to be filled for 2011

For the 7 openings in 2011 -

- Up to 2 (0-3) for citizen at large
- Up to 5 (0 - 5) for governmental agencies
- Up to 7 (0-7) for trail user groups