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**MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING
of
THE ARIZONA STATE COMMITTEE ON TRAILS (ASCOT)
of
THE ARIZONA STATE PARKS BOARD**

ASCOT held a meeting open to the public on **April 18th, 2014, at Carnegie Library, 1101 W. Washington St, Phoenix, Arizona beginning at 2:30 pm. Attendance at this meeting was available via teleconference by calling 1.877.820.7831 and entering the participant passcode 522515.** Items on the Agenda may be discussed out of order, unless they have been specifically set for a time certain. Public comment will be taken. The Committee will discuss and may take action on the following matters:

AGENDA

(The Chair reserves the right to set the order of the agenda.)

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL- 3:19 PM [Recording starts while meeting is in progress.]

Members Present: Nick Lund, Laddie Cox, Richard Kesselman, Jackie Keller, Claire Miller, Patrick Kell, Craig Alden Stevens, Bill Gibson, Bernadine McCollum, Linda Slay, Angela Villa, Connie Lane, Laurel Arndt (via phone)

Staff Present: Paul Katz (Counsel), Kent Ennis, Robert Baldwin, and Katie Valeros

B. INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS, GUESTS, AND STAFF

C. CALL TO THE PUBLIC – The Chair will recognize those wishing to address the Committee. It is probable that each presentation will be limited to one person per organization and the time allotted by the Chair. Action taken as a result of acknowledgment of comments and suggestions from the public will be limited to directing staff to study or reschedule the matter for further consideration at a later time.

Notes: No public wished to comment

D. ASCOT ACTION ITEMS

1. ASCOT Will Review and Approve Minutes from the February 7, 2014 Meeting.

Notes: Postponed until future meeting

- 2. ASCOT Will Receive an Update from Staff Regarding the AZ State Trail System (STS) and Discuss Options** – At the suggestion of legal counsel staff will ask the STS Subcommittee to develop criteria for a new trail system. A description of this process and expected timeline will be included in the 2015 Arizona Trails Plan. After this new system is implemented, the current system will be “frozen” as requested.

Notes: Paul Katz discussed with ASCOT the status of the State Trails System

[Previous agenda items not captured on tape. Recording started while meeting is in progress.]

Katz continues . . . it talks about the Parks Board shall prepare an updated trails system ultimately prepared by State Parks staff, approved by ASCOT and presented to the Parks Board before the deadline. It will identify on a statewide basis the general location and extent of significant trail routes, areas and complementary facilities. State Parks staff didn't want to just freeze or pull the existing listing of significant trails out of public view, even though it's outdated, to ensure the Parks Board remains in compliance.

Keller asked whether submissions can be continually accepted and reviewed until the deadline.

Valeros responded that she would have to check with Bob, but didn't believe that option was still available on the website. She continued stating that if staff still wanted to pull the option down, she would check with Paul first. It might be something the State Trails System Subcommittee should place on its agenda to meet and talk about, once the subcommittee gets proper direction from legal counsel to move forward.

Katz added it's a work in progress and State Parks staff didn't want to remove access to information that's already there, unless there's something that could lead to serious accident or injury.

Chair summarized and indicated agenda items D-2 states, “ASCOT approves the proposed action plan to establish the new State Trail System.” That's what's being requested. “When criteria have been created to select trails of significance to the state of Arizona, a nomination process identified and approved, and the process made available to the public, the current State Trails System will be ‘frozen and archived.’” People can still access the information, it will still be there, but the current State Trails System would be archived during the process of moving toward the new State Trails System. The subcommittee is being asked to come back to the full committee with a set of criteria to be used in selecting the trails for the State Trails System, help define the significance of the trails and identify a nomination and approval process.

Gibson added that was his understanding, too. He also wondered whether that process might cause the subcommittee to run afoul of the statute.

Katz responded he didn't think so, and said he wanted to make sure current data was not deleted. Then the subcommittee and ultimately ASCOT would come up with a

recommendation as to how to define the system and what methodology to use in adopting the new system to allow the significant trails to be identified.

Slay emphasized that they were freezing the nomination process in order not to add to the old body of trails. The new body of trails would be going forward. The data would not go away; it just would not be actively managed.

Chair asked whether there were additional issues the subcommittee should consider.

Valeros responded, no, but wanted to point out that during ASCOT's June meeting last year, a motion passed stating that ASCOT would no longer be accepting new nominations.

Chair clarified and said ASCOT was going to freeze nominations until the new criteria were developed.

Gibson asked whether that directive was forwarded to the Parks Board for approval.

Katz asked whether the Parks Board would freeze the current system after the new system is implemented, because they didn't want to accept new nominations until the criteria is developed from either a hard file or website.

Chair clarified that the task of the subcommittee is to develop a good set of criteria for people who apply to have their trails included in the new system, and the approval process.

Kesselman suggested the mandate to the subcommittee be that they proceed to develop a new State Trails System consistent with the requirement of the statute.

Chair asked whether a timeline should be applied to the task.

Keller responded that the initial discussion indicated that new criteria should be established by the end of this year. She continued and indicated the confusion has been caused by the wording, "when the criteria's been created, the trail system will be frozen and archived." She said the subcommittee intended and brought forth to ASCOT that the current state trails system information always be there, but archived. So the intent was to separate frozen and archived. Frozen meaning that the nomination process will stop and no new trails will be added to the current system. Chair asked the group to keep in mind the objective is to incorporate this into the 2015 State Trails Plan.

Arndt indicated that rough drafts need to be out this summer and that the ASU data that will be used to synthesize and write the trails plan just arrived. In light of the number of meetings necessary to figure out all the components of the plan for the 2015 State Trails Plan, it was decided it would be more expedient to reference the current system, state that the new criteria is currently being developed to appear in the next State Trails Plan. That the wording of the proposed, recommended motion goes back to the legislation and the way the legislation is written.

Lund asked if the plan is to have the draft of the plan indicate that the current plan will continue to be used until the new trails plan criteria is developed and approved.

Valeros responded that it will not be possible to have the new criteria ready to be included in the 2015 trails plan. The current trail system will be referenced in the 2015 Trails Plan and the development of a new system will be announced.

Chair concluded he did not feel a formal vote is needed on this process and asked if any other members would like to serve on the subcommittee.

Keller explained that she is currently serving as the committee chair with Bill, Linda, Laddie, and Richard serving as members. She asked if there are others wishing to join.

Chair indicated that if someone is unable to serve on the committee but had significant points to contribute, send an email to State Parks staff.

- 3. ASCOT will select members to serve on the Public Outreach Committee** – At the February 7th meeting Connie Lane agreed to serve as our Public Outreach Chair. ASCOT needs to select members to serve on this committee and set up a time for the subcommittee to meet.

[Katz interjected Laurie had to leave early and he was going to see what's going on at the OHVAG meeting.]

Valeros addressed this agenda item and said at the first meeting of the Public Outreach Committee, Connie Lane agreed to serve as its chair. The bylaws of the Arizona State Committee on Trails describes the purpose of the organization is to promote, develop and preserve non-motorized trails opportunities throughout the state; advise the State Parks Board and staff on planning, development, funding, maintenance and promotion of non-motorized trails in Arizona; to assist staff with development and coordination of trail workshops and conferences; and serve as a non-motorized committee for federal recreational trails programs purposes. The Public Outreach vice-chair is a standing position on the executive committee. Connie Lane accepted the position at the February 7 ASCOT meeting. The committee coordinates workshops and conferences, supports National Trails Day and disseminates important trail information. The committee will formulate a plan to accomplish its goals and report its progress at ASCOT meetings. Participation on this committee will require attendance at meetings to be called by the chair, with times and locations convenient to the committee members. As far as additional information, the speaker added that since its last meeting the committee has been trying to figure out how ASCOT would like to move forward with promoting trails in the state. She added that she had conversation with Ellen Bilbrey, the head of public information at AZ State Parks, who shared ideas on things the committee could do. The committee wants to promote all legal trails discussed at previous ASCOT meetings on its Top Picks, and the fact that ASCOT Committee members routinely post pictures and write-ups of trails and trail numbers in the systems. The speaker said Ellen gave her other ideas and offered to train people wanting to take part in this program, other than serving on the Outreach Committee, suggesting they could share photos and small write-ups of their trails in hash-tags throughout social media. Ellen also said she could coordinate following up on these brief write-ups by State Parks twitter followers and land managers, whether it's on a Forest Service trail or a city trail. The City of Scottsdale uses social media to promote its various recreational

activities. For those unfamiliar on how to use twitter or facebook, Ellen also offered to help with training in order to bring ASCOT into the 21st century.

Chair summarized and asked if there were volunteers interested in serving on the committee. Bernadine, Claire, Angela, Keller, and Connie volunteered.

Baldwin explained that the group should remember that when volunteering to serve on a committee, a quorum of the total number of volunteers is necessary at each meeting. Anyone can attend a meeting, but if you volunteer to serve, the total number of volunteers establishes your quorum.

Female speaker continued and said Bernadine, Claire and Angela have volunteered. Two additional members are needed. Connie agreed to serve as chair and Jackie volunteered. ASCOT needs to pass a motion to approve.

Lund moved to appoint Bernadine, Claire, Angela, Keller, and Connie to serve on the Public Outreach Committee effective immediately and to continue serving until the end of their ASCOT term.

Motion: Lund, Second: Gibson Motion Passed Unanimously

- 4. Staff will Report on the Selection of Projects for the 2014 State Parks RTP Trail Maintenance Program.** Ten project applications were received by the February 28th due date. Five project sponsors who have not previously received trail maintenance project funding were selected to receive a total of \$141,130 in this cycle. ASCOT will select from the remaining projects to determine the order for funding additional trail maintenance projects if funds become available.

Baldwin reported and said the Trails Maintenance Program was established in 2001. This program was in addition to the grant projects administered under the Heritage Fund. When the Heritage Fund was discontinued, the Trails Maintenance Program still existed for non-motorized trail uses. The way the program worked was that there was a simple application process. Applications were accepted and divided up into regions. Regional distributions are listed in the meeting packets on attachment D-4A. An application from each region was approved to assure statewide distribution of funds. Money was never an issue so we were able to fund each application. The last time trail maintenance applications were accepted was in 2012. This time ten applications were received; two are currently being funded; and five were new recipients. The five new recipients received the \$141,000 that's included in the money to be awarded after July 1, 2014. There are three projects remaining that are listed on page D-4C in the packet. Wickenburg Conservation Foundation, Chino Valley Ranger District, Catalina State Park, Douglas Ranger District, and Pinal County are the five applications that have never received trail maintenance money. Globe and Verde received money in the last funding cycle. Tonto Basin, Scottsdale and Flagstaff will be next in line to receive an award should one of the other projects fall through or is incomplete. The process now is to pick at random one of the remaining three applications should money become available: Flagstaff is listed number one; Scottsdale, number two; and Tonto Basin, number three. Criteria have not been established, nor has any rating system been put in place that would make

any significant difference in who will be selected. Baldwin continued saying a lot of the applications are repeats. They know how the process works and have been able to complete their projects. The alternates selected are Scottsdale, Flagstaff, and Tonto Basin.

E. REPORTS - May be verbal with handouts provided at the meeting.

1. Staff Will Report on Non-motorized Grant Funding Recommendations

Valeros reported and said that AORCC met yesterday and discussed the funding recommendations and passed the motion recommended by State Parks. Staff and a member of ASCOT, as well as a member of SHPO, met and scored the applications that came in for the non-motorized grant cycle. Unfortunately, only 13 of the applications were complete and they were scored based on established criteria. The ten applications approved for funding are listed in the report.

F. DISCUSSION

- 1. ASCOT** members will report on current events and/or recent experiences of interest to the trails community and/or the status of any trail projects with which they may be involved. Action will be limited to selecting individuals to do further research on the issue and directing staff to include the item on a future agenda for appropriate action.

Kell offered an update from IMBA and said it was starting a section of the Prescott Circle Trail with the RTP funding that will be available July 1. The Prescott Circle Trail is going to be a 52-mile loop around the city of Prescott. About 40 miles have currently been built and with the grant IMBA plans to build another six miles or so this year using American Conservation Experience (ACE). IMBA conducted a volunteer trail weekend in conjunction with the Forest Service on the north rim of the Grand Canyon, May 23 through 25. At the last trail weekend, approximately 40 people showed up. IMBA is working with Flagstaff Biking Organization on a mountain bike park at the Fort Tuthill Site in Flagstaff near the airport. A couple trail designers submitted a design for the bike park last September. Currently, there's an online grant process sponsored by Bell Helmets awarding \$100,000 per year that's distributed to three different project areas, west coast, central and east coast. Currently in contention are four projects submitted from the west coast area. Voting takes place online. Flagstaff is currently the front runner. Final results will be announced Sunday after the online voting closes. The winner will be awarded \$33,000. Similarly, IMBA is working with the Tucson Chapter, Sonoran Desert Mountain Bikes, on a bike park at a site near Davis-Monthan Air Force Base. It's a hundred-acre site. They met with Mayor Rothschild and the Pima County Recreation Department. The trail designers from Tucson will be working on that project. About six months ago IMBA started a project with Resolution Copper out of Superior. They're interested in a legacy project for Superior to make a positive, lasting impact on its community. They're proposing a multi-use trail system in Superior for which IMBA submitted a proposal to LOST and to Resolution Copper to do the preliminary design. Gibson asked if the information just shared has been posted on the IMBA website. Kell responded there's a blog tab on IMBA's website that includes summaries and updates of all IMBA projects. He added that IMBA Southwest is the

name he uses on his facebook account where he posts all the updates on projects he's working on.

Steven reported that in the past six months, the Back Country Horsemen of Central Arizona in partnership with the Red Rock Ranger District, put in about six horse-friendly gates on various trails to allow horse people, hikers and mountain bikers to go through.

Kesselman said that VOAZ continues to do a number of projects in Tonto National Forest. They don't do much in the summer because it's too hot, but will start up again in the fall with new, additional project. He said that personally he's been involved with the Saving Daisy Mountain project out of Anthem and met with Phoenix, Maricopa and other connecting trails on outreach programs. In the past five months, they've done hikes on Daisy promoting public outreach. Gibson asked when he mentioned Maricopa whether he meant Maricopa County. He responded, yes, and said that if anyone wanted to participate there are corridor connections between BLM land and Daisy Mountain.

Lane added that June 7 is the kickoff between the Forest Service and the American Hiking Society for National Trails Day. Along with that is the Great Outdoors Month. They're encouraging the Forest Service to get with communities to get projects started and concentrate on engaging youths in those projects. There are 155,000 miles of trails to maintain. The Southwest Region is beginning a sustainable recreation planning process that will require all new projects to describe how they will be sustainable. The Tonto is the first Forest and they're moving statewide and then to New Mexico. She added that when projects are proposed for the Forest Service, they will ask if you have considered how to keep it sustainable. Criteria are being developed for sustainable facilities, including trails.

Miller from the city of Scottsdale reported that they officially dedicated the Jane Rau Trail a few weeks ago and it's still open.

Villa said she didn't have a lot to report, but is excited to finally have the new, proposed Pinal County Western Park and all of its trails. She added that she's participating in meetings again. She said it's been a while because the board meetings conflicted with another board she's serving on. She missed last month's meeting because she was in the Coronado National Forest.

Slay reported she's excited that the Forest Service is more actively looking for volunteers. The Black Canyon Trail had its last work day and trail work has been suspended for the summer.

McCollum from Wickenburg Conservation Foundation reported that they had their trail maintenance day in conjunction with BLM. There was a great turnout. They worked with the National Park Service under a grant it awarded to further develop the Wickenburg Conservation Foundation and encourage it moving toward more work with BLM. Maybe next year it will apply for a trails grant to expand the Sophie's Flat Trail. Also, they're seeking grants to do youth education on the trails.

Cox reported he's probably done the least amount of trail work in his life over the last six months. He said at the last meeting he mentioned a new gate design being

constructed by Arizona Trails Association. He sent a description of the design and a picture to Katie with contact information on the designers. The gate was designed by an artist welder named Rob Bauer. The Arizona Trails Association contact is Shawn Redfield. The gate is perfect in every way except it will not stop motor bikes, but will stop ATVs. You can stay mounted while opening and closing the gate. There's plenty room for pack animals. If anyone is interested in more information, email him and he will send more data and a picture. Cox continued and said that in like of Connie's attempts to attract more volunteers he found it surprising the number of people who used to help in the Coronado National Forest in the two major mountain ranges – the Santa Catalina and the Chirachua – aren't doing it anymore. It's just a handful of volunteers who keep those trails clear of deadfall. Both areas have suffered tremendous wildfires and a difficulty to overcome, periodically, is that every now and then you run into resistance from the Forest Service. Cox reiterated the importance of working with the Forest Service and said that one of the stumbling blocks they have is following through on chain saw certifications. The manpower and desire is there, but oftentimes they don't have the paperwork.

Lane asked to comment and said that she attended a sustainable recreation workshop yesterday and learned that Prescott is coming up with a program to train volunteers. They recognize the need for certifications and will include that as part of the training.

Lund added that another thing that could be done is they could form alliances with local agencies. His group got their certification from the Show Low Fire Department and that provided training for free.

Gibson reported that BLM had a National Trails Day event in the Kingman Field Office. It's an annual event where trails people and wildlife people get together with the Mount Tipton School in the Kingman Field Office country. They don't normally do the Trails Day in June because of the weather, so the event's going to be held April 23 at the Mount Tipton School in conjunction with BLM Wildlife personnel. He added that there's a write up online about the Black Canyon Trail explaining that about a century ago it was historically a sheep stock driveway and there's still a family or two who still drive sheep up that driveway now. Article at AZCentral.com.

Ennis reported that one more effort will be made this year to increase the RTP limit through ADOT. He added that the AZ legislative budget has been finalized and AZ State Parks was not hurt. A few years ago someone proposed a change in the statute, making State Parks director an appointee of the Governor. There's a proposed bill on the governor's desk regarding an income tax voluntary donation. In the past nine months, visitation in the AZ Park System has been up 10 percent and revenue is up 13 percent.

Keller reported that she has been focusing on urban trails where there's daily interface with the public. She encouraged everyone to look at the new NACTO guideline for bikeways in an urban environment. It contains a lot of details and suggestions for ways to integrate urban trails into street right-of-ways for more connectivity throughout communities in the state in order to open space trails.

Lund reiterated that he mentioned in a previous meeting that Red Rock Ranger District had contacted TRACKS about its project. A member of the search and rescue group in Red Rock Ranger District said that they have learned that the cell phone coordinates are often inaccurate and shared a story about a rescue attempt that was delayed because of it. Lund added that TRACKS has an annual mountain bike ride up in the White Mountains called, "Tour d' White Mountains." This past year the venue and routes were changed. The feedback from the riders was that it was the best ever. There were about 650 riders who could choose 35 or 50 miles on the trail system or a 30-mile forest road ride. One person, who has participated in hundreds of these type events, said the 35-mile trail ride was probably the best he's ever ridden. The hospital started this event 18 years ago. Epic Rides out of Tucson manages the event now and makes a donation to the hospital and TRACKS for its volunteer work in helping to put on the event.

G. TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETINGS AND CALL FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS – ASCOT will determine the dates and locations for meetings for the remainder of 2014.

Suggestions for high country on a Saturday.

Stevens will contact Red Rock Ranger District.

Subcommittees need to schedule meetings.

H. ADJOURNMENT – about 4:30 pm