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ITEM D 1

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 November 1, 2014, at Oracle State Park, 3820 E Wildlife Dr., Oracle, Arizona 85623 beginning at 10am.

AGENDA

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Members present at roll call: 10 am

Craig Stevens, Back Country Horseman of Central AZ,
Laddie Cox, Representative at Large,
Rick Kesselman, Volunteers for Outdoor Arizona,
Lisa Gerdl, Representative at Large,
Linda Slay, AZ Horse Council,
Angela Villa, Representative at Large,
Connie Lane, National Forest of Arizona,
Claire Miller, City of Scottsdale,
Bernadine Wickenburg, Conservation Foundation (phone),
Laurel Arndt, Mountain Bike Association of Arizona (phone),
Nick Lund, TRACKS and chairman.
Bill Gibson, Bureau of Land Management joined on phone later.

A quorum was established.

Staff in attendance: Mickey Rogers, Grants Coordinator, Arizona State Parks

B. INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS, GUESTS, AND STAFF

Mickey Rogers, the new ASP Grants Coordinator, introduced himself to the committee, including a brief description of his background which included working for Maine State Parks for 42 years, 7 of which were spent as the Recreational Trails Program Manager.

C. CALL TO THE PUBLIC –No one from public was at the meeting or on the phone.

D. ASCOT ACTION ITEMS

1. **ASCOT Will Review and Approve Minutes from the August 2, 2014 Meeting.** Approved with minor typographical errors to be corrected Vote: 12-0
2. **ASCOT Will Review the Nominating Committee Recommendation for 2015 New Members and Make a Recommendation for Parks Board Approval**

Bill Gibson, met with the Nominating Committee in September and reviewed 4 candidates. All were approved with no objections from anyone on Committee. All were excellent candidates. Bill Gibson made a motion to accept all new members: Laddie Cox seconded, all approved. New members voted in. Vote: 12-0

3. **State Trail System Subcommittee Will Update ASCOT on the Status of the Arizona Premier Trails System** – The STS Subcommittee has been meeting to develop criteria and a selection process to showcase exceptional Arizona trails. They will recommend the approval of nomination forms and correlated point systems. Their suggestions will be discussed and adopted.

Rick Kessleman discussed the process used to create this document and stated that there were a few things that needed to be discussed with ASCOT in regards to this document.

- a. *Should the Premier Trails represent all counties/areas of the state and should the Premier Trails include equal numbers in each of the categories i.e. water, historic etc.* The consensus of the committee was they all should stand on their own merits regardless of geographic area or category. Vote: 12-0
- b. *Should a National Trail that submits a request to be a Premier Trail be automatically added?* Bill Gibson stated that National Trails go through a rigorous process to be on this National list and should be automatically added. The consensus of the group was that National Trails need to compete with all other trails and not be added automatically. They should be scored on the same merits. Vote 11-1
- c. *Length of time on the Premier Trail list:* All agreed they should not be on forever and would have to reapply. Question of who would contact a sponsor when the trail would have to reapply when it was time to come off the list. Linda said State Parks should send out a yearly request for Premier trails. Most talked about 5-8 years. Laddie said it should be 5-year period to have same time period as trails plan. Consensus was 5 years to be on list until they have to reapply. Will have to discuss at future, how to contact sponsors when their trail will be dropped off list and have to reapply. Vote: 12-0
- d. *The Subcommittee made a recommendation that Land Managers would have to have a pre-submittal meeting with members of ASCOT or ASP.* All agreed should be required. Vote: 12-0

- e. *Start standard at 85 points for getting on Premier Trail?* Consensus was that they would try setting initial standard at 85 points and adjust up or down if needed and evaluate how this works for the next couple of years. Vote: 12-0

Attachment D3. A. – Criteria

Changes:

Page 40 #15. Minimum 200' buffer, what does this mean? Some trails do not have that buffer. Consensus is to delete the 200' requirement? Also what does the form mean by road when a section of trail crosses or follows a road for a certain distance? Discussion about if it should remain as is and part of the trail being on a road does not mean it cannot be a Premier Trail. Consensus was to delete question 15 from the criteria.

Page 39 # 6-Question was about points being geo-referenced on a map. Would this keep a trail from being qualified to be a Premier Trail? All agreed, this information is required as part of the criteria.

Page 39 #10—change everything to 75% from 80%

Page 40 #11—Question was asked - should we change this to best management practices instead of trail standards of the nominating agency? Consensus was to change this to BMP.

Page 40 #19—Question must have signage/wayfinding and how would this affect wilderness trails? This criteria would need to be relevant to the type of trail. Question was asked – what if there was a trail with signage at the trailhead but not on the trail. Would this mean the trail could not qualify? It would qualify but it would not score well in this category. The question will be changed to say “signage and/or wayfinding” to not confuse the land manager.

Delete #20 since it is the same as #11.

Question, should economic development be put into the criteria? The answer was it should be in special attributes and can help nominated trails score better and will not be a separate criteria.

#22—Question was are we taking out level of difficulty? Discussion was that is the first thing a new user would look for. Doesn't affect the scoring, just information. Does it apply to water trails? Yes, there are rapids and fast currents. Historic trails could be on a difficult trail so could also apply to these. The standards would be up to the land manager, not ASCOT. Will leave as is.

Page 41 Paragraph 1. Delete riding with pack stock. Will fix typo.

Section A: National Trails—change from “will be included” to “will be considered” and complete the application.

Page 43: F #1 take out “non-motorized” access since trails can accessed with a motorized vehicle.

Page 44: G. 2.change the “a” at the beginning to “At”.

Page 44: G3—would some of the trails that have broken segments be applicable. These would qualify since 75% of the trail system would be continuous.

Page 44: IV #3. Should add ‘trail’ after ‘nominated’.

Attachment D3. B. – Nomination Form

Changes to nomination form:

Page 46-allowable trail uses. Replace ‘road bikes’ with ‘mountain bikes.’ Add ‘Equestrian’ to this. All agreed. Suggested Bill and Connie look at these to make them easier to fill out from Land Manager’s point of view.

Point system: Bernadine questioned how the points would work, with different point values for each area. Some would get from 0 to maximum number of possible points depending on how they met that criteria. It is not all or nothing but sliding scale up to maximum. It is up to committee to determine scores.

What about trails that go through several jurisdictions? Are they applying for their portion only or all portions? All land managers must sign off on the nomination form if the trail goes through several land managers properties.

Question was asked - should we revisit water trails in regards to scoring and the minimum required, since some of the scoring criteria does not apply to a water trail which makes it difficult to get the required 85 points to be a Premier Trail. Rick stated it was an oversight on his part and would be adjusted to give them equal footing with land trails.

Lisa asked do we need to have a “Legendary Trail” designation”. Consensus was that it would add to National Trail criteria and follow the same procedures as all of the rest.

Committees’ next steps:

Create form letter asking for trail nominations.

Pre-meeting with staff or committee required, how will this work to guide potential sponsors to fill out the application.

Determine who and how many will be on the review committee.

Develop marketing approach to solicit applications.

Work with ASP IT to get this information on web.

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

1. Update from the Public Outreach Subcommittee (POS) and Discuss Their Goals – The POS may solicit suggestions from the entire committee.

Have only met twice. They have reviewed the Subcommittee’s responsibilities. Discussed were:

- How members want to use public outreach.
- A Google Calendar to show events around the state
- Make assignments for deadlines for projects going around the state.
- First day hikes. ASP will send information on the hikes. This has been sent out and the hikes have been posted on ASP's website.
- Two applications were considered for the American Trail award, which was the Flagstaff signage project, and the Dolan Springs trail project but the deadline had passed for submission. Claire will look at website to be ready for next award cycle.
- Bob Baldwin will send out list of projects approved this year to research for next year.
- Look at Premier Trails for next year and possible award for American Trails.
- Develop process to get information for social media for trail related events and ASP will help with template to get information out.
- Strategy for using various professional networks to get information
- Look at national data sites to help advise ASP on professional databases.
- Let ASP staff know about any National Trails Day hikes and they can help promote these hikes by March 1.
- ASP will send an outreach event template.
- Committee will research Arizona trail related conferences/workshops and work with ASCOT for collaboration.
- American Trails webinars could provide needed training. ASP needs information to send ASCOT members to conferences at least 6 months in advance. One in Tucson, first week of February would be a workshop and more to come.
- ASP will let people know about interagency workshops and get ASCOT involved with those.
- Would like recommendations for ideas for the POS subcommittee to work on from ASCOT.

Rick Kesselman stated the committee could help promote Premier Trails and could work with the Parks board and IT for ASP. POS' next meeting is November 19.

2. **ASCOT Will Receive an Update from the Education, Safety, Environmental Fund Subcommittee (ESEF) and Discuss Possible Uses of Available Funds** – The ESEF has met to identify possible uses for the \$5,100 in funds available to ASCOT. These funds were generated through registration fees for the last workshop sponsored by ASCOT. Staff has also informed ASCOT that some Recreational Trails Program Education Portion funds are available and must be spent by September 2015.

ASP staff stated there are some funds available for Safety and Environmental Education (SEE) for ASCOT, there is also \$5100 of

discretionary money from prior workshops. ASP said there was \$40,000 available from RTP SEE. Question was does ASCOT want to incorporate with other money for one project or keep money to put on workshops.

At this time, the Subcommittee recommends that the money not be committed until they find out how much is need for putting Premier Trails on-line and publicizing the information.

POS stated funds could go to signage related to safety for existing trails and the \$5100 could be put toward to website/IT work for Premier Trails. Are there strings on the \$40,000? This money can be used for a website as long as it relates to trails. Committee wants to obligate the money right away. Who is responsible for carrying the cost of the web for the Premier Trails? ASCOT members suggested they hold off until after the January meeting. Suggested a special ASCOT meeting first of the December. This did not happen.

- 3. Update on the 2015 State Trails Plan** – Staff will provide an update on the status of the 2015 State Trails Plan.

Draft is complete. It has been uploaded online and have 30 days for comments, which will be incorporated into a new draft. It is on the Arizona State Parks website.

- 4. Staff Will Provide a Verbal Update on State Parks Board Action on ASCOT Items** – The State Parks Board has not reviewed any ASCOT items since the last ASCOT meeting.

F. OPEN FORUM

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. *Laddie gave a talk about the three years he was on the committee and how much it has meant to him. Helped build the Arizona trail. Urge ASCOT to talk about important issues. Hopefully to ensure the next generation still has the great benefits of the trails we build now. Critical to get this generation out on the trails. ASCOT thanked Laddie for all of his service and help with moving the committee forward.*

Rick Kesselman---Anthem are getting volunteers who are adopting Maricopa County trail sections of 3-mile lengths. December 6, they have a Trail Day.

Lisa Gerdl—anniversary of the Tucson territory.

Linda Slay-Black Canyon trails were cleared.

Connie Lane—Forest service is getting into teaching (Children Forest Trails) kids and trail building. Effort from National office and trying to get ASP involved with the program for educational opportunity.

Nick Lund—annual mountain bike event was recently held. Had over 600 registered riders with all sorts of rides. Include IMBA ride for kids and 50 children registered.

January meeting: January 30th, has been changed to January 16th. 10 am at Arizona State Parks.

G. TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETINGS AND CALL FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

A January date needs to be selected to review the trails plan and finalize state trails plan procedures.

H. ADJOURNMENT 12:50