

Grand County Motorized Trails Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 18, 2024

APPROVED May 9, 2024

The meeting was held at the Grand Center and called to order by Clif Koontz at 12:37 pm with introductions by those in attendance.

In attendance:

Reid Bakken, eBike Rep

Peyton Blasco, BLM

Dave Cozens (arrived at 1:20 pm)

Bill Jackson, Grand County Road Department

Clif Koontz, Chair

Keri Nelson, BLM (arrived at 1:27 pm)

Keltain Reece-Sullivan, GCATT

Anna Sprout, GCATT

Jeff Stevens, Vice Chair

Mark Thornberry, Utah Division of Outdoor Recreation, Trail Crew Foreman

Kathy Tustanowski, Secretary

Bill Winfield, Grand County Commission Liaison

Guests in attendance:

Brian Clark, Moab Friends For Wheelin'

Molly Taylor

Mike Thomas, Utah Division of Outdoor Recreation, Trail Crew Operations Supervisor (arrived at 1:18 pm)

A. Approval of Minutes

Bill Winfield made a motion to approve the March 14, 2024 minutes, Reid Bakken seconded, motion passed unanimously.

B. Citizens to be Heard

None

C. Scheduling Trail Projects

Clif asked if we should plan Save The Dates for the next 3 months. Discussion ensued about potential projects and locations. Peyton said there is nothing pressing from BLM's perspective. Thornberry shared that his crew will be available mid to late May to work on small to large projects, their schedule is Monday - Thursday working four, ten hour days on a 2 week cycle. They currently have two crew cab trucks and will be getting ATVs but will need operator training on them. He also stated that the crew members hired are former firefighters and hotshot team members. The crew will provide labor and hand tools but no materials. Jeff said he can coordinate seats in

appropriate vehicles if the crew needs transportation. Reid suggested developing a routine for jeep routes to include taking downed trees to be used for blocking unauthorized routes. Thornberry requested that any project suggestions they can work on pass his way.

Keltain shared that there is work to be done on Poison Spider where it intersects with Golden Spike due to a large number of false trails. Needed items will be logs and natural features, chainsaw, rocks, signs and paint. A scouting trip to include Keltain, Peyton, Anna and Thornberry will be done with a report made to Clif.

Reid mentioned that work is needed on the entrance to Brian's Trail with painting being needed.

The following was agreed upon:

April - Spring Spruce Up which has been completed

May 25 - Poison Spider Mesa, meet at 8am at the trailhead, should be done by noon

June - to be determined at next meeting

E. Updates from MTC Stakeholder Representatives and Executive Subcommittee members

Peyton stated the Spring Spruce Up went superbly with 100 feet of range fence installed next to the high bank at Determination Towers. The Easter Jeep Safari projects also went well including buck and rail fencing work at Determination Towers. An offer has been made for the Supervisory Park Ranger position with a target entrance on duty date the end of May. He also shared that implementation of the Labyrinth Rims and Gemini Bridges TMP is taking place. Also there are several events this weekend: Tread Lightly project, Green River Dirt Bike Rally and Cruise Moab.

Reid did not have any news for eBike activities but he did share the Moab Hard Enduro event at Area BFE, a national caliber event, went well and he was a participant. He also shared that the Mud Springs project development is on a short hold for now.

Mike Thomas, Utah Division of Outdoor Recreation, Trails Crew Operations Supervisor gave an overview of his past and is currently coordinating regional trail crews.

Jeff shared that the project at White Knuckle will require more work because, while the cut (top of ramp) is holding up fine, the fill (bottom of ramp) is already eroding. Recommends more cutting (top of ramp) in early fall. He also shared that the creek crossing on Cliffhanger needs work and could be coordinated with Red Rock 4-Wheelers as it is a Jeep Safari trail. It also impacts mountain bikers. Jeff, Peyton, Keri and Thornberry will scout it out.

Keri shared that the process has started for updating the Dolores TMP.

Brian Clark shared that there are many signs missing on routes and there is a funding source for replacement and/or other trail work through Ford's Bronco Wild Fund. He will be working with Peyton on mapping signs that are needed for Jeep Safari routes. Clif asked about the funding source and program requirements. Brian indicated it is available for materials and labor.

Bill shared that he is a responsible motorized enthusiast like many in the room, but as County Roads Supervisor he experiences first hand that not everyone is responsible. He gave examples of motorists spinning wheels and not following speed limits on public roads to trailheads which creates unsafe conditions and deterioration of the road surface, suggests education on appropriate and responsible use of Class B roads - dirt and gravel. Discussion followed with Clif commenting on the need for education, enforcement and planning. Mike Thomas indicated the problem is not isolated to Moab area, it is a statewide issue. Anna asked who needs to be at the table to create change and solve the problem. Collaboration will be necessary amongst many agencies. She will reach out to Mike and start formulating ideas and plans.

Anna shared they are working on unified message about waste disposal with signage. The recent interagency training and Spring Spruce up went well. The Motorized Trail Ambassadors are getting out there with over 1500 users being seen and 938 individuals being talked to. Fins and Things, Poison Spider and Hells Revenge are targeted areas. The Wander App is ready for round 2 BETA testing and she needs more feedback from motorized users specific to jeep trails. She will send information to Clif for him to distribute to MTC.

Speaking as a property owner, Dave said that he doesn't appreciate when routes are put on maps without consulting property owners, as was recently proposed by Grand County with the support of Trail Mix. Dave said his family has graciously allowed people to cross their property, so it's disappointing if those same people aren't respecting property rights. Clif clarified that the routes in question were proposed amendments to the Grand County Non-Motorized Trails Master Plan.

Thornberry reiterated the UDOR trail crew will be open for business a month from now. He is scouting for projects and open to suggestions. Will be in the Abajos and LaSals during summer months. He is concerned about level of operator training for UTVs and is working with Nick at High Point Hummer. Bill asked how his crew would acquire materials and he said the host agency will need to provide them.

Bill Winfield shared that he has heard the UDOR trail crew is looking for space and he thinks he can be of help. He has been receiving questions about the bulldozer work done by the NPS on Willow Springs Road and why it was done and why a mess was left behind. Keri provided names of who he can contact in the NPS and Clif suggested contacting the manager for Utah Raptor State Park as well.

Keltain stated he has completed his UTV training. He will be giving some Responsible Recreation interviews for YouTube channels. He has received positive feedback on Trail Ambassador interactions and he has observed a large discrepancy in the types of trail etiquette actions by users.

Clif shared that the Spring Spruce Up had 10 volunteers participate, plus Peyton, with new volunteers in the mix. It was a valuable experience for all involved.

F. Adjournment

Clif adjourned the meeting at 2:34 pm.