

Grand County Motorized Trails Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 21, 2024

APPROVED December 12, 2024

The meeting was held at the Grand Center and called to order by Clif Koontz at 12:34 pm.

In attendance:

Clif Koontz, Chair

Payton Blasco, BLM

Bill Jackson, Grand County Roads Supervisor

Keltain Reece-Sullivan, GCATT

Bill Winfield, Grand County Commission Liaison

Jeff Stevens, Vice Chair

Molly Taylor sitting in for Zane Taylor, Motorcycle Rep

Kathy Tustanowski, Secretary

Guests in attendance:

Anthony Ash, Utah Division of Outdoor Recreation, SE Region Trail Crew Supervisor

Introductions were done. The group welcomed Anthony Ash, the new Utah Department of Natural Resources Trail Crew Supervisor for the Southeast Region. Anthony shared there will be a new trail work request form next season to help diversify work being done on trails. The crews spent 70% of their time in the first year on USFS trails.

A. Approval of Minutes

Kathy Tustanowski made a motion to approve the October 23, 2024 minutes, Jeff Stevens seconded, motion passed unanimously.

B. Citizens to be Heard

None

C. Scheduling Trail Projects

The October project at Top of the World went well with the installation of fiberglass signs and fencing. Buck and rail fencing is needed at the beginning of Top of the World for parking and emphasizing a management presence in this remote location.

11/23 Pritchett Rake and Ride, meet at parking lot at 10 am. Fiberglass signs will be installed.

12/7 Cliffhanger/Amasaback to install gate with cattle guard ramp for bikes and motorcycles.

D. Updates from MTC Stakeholder Representatives and Executive Subcommittee members

Anthony Ash and Clif shared information on the state funded trail crew. It will be comprised of 8 instead of 4 individuals next year. There are issues with housing and storage, the County may be asked for assistance. The crew is scheduled to start beginning of May. It was suggested they start in March or April. Suggestions were made on scouting locations for work so Anthony can define projects for 2025 and seek parity with where work is done, not just focus on USFS trails. The crew currently has ATVs but they are looking at getting UTVs and a rock crawler as well as other necessary tools and equipment. The crew will be working from the Bookcliffs to Bears Ears including the Swell. Work on OHV and Non-OHV routes will be evaluated and determined on a case by case basis. The MTC will facilitate with involved managers as necessary.

Payton Blasco reported the Dolores River TMP alternatives will be released in December with the comment period set for 2025. He will be on furlough from Thanksgiving to the end of January. Other BLM Recreation Rangers will be on furlough mid December to mid February.

Bill Jackson reported that he has restarted the standing meeting with BLM Managers and Roads Supervisors. He asked that if anyone is aware of safety issues on Class B and D roads to let him know. His crews are still wrapping up work from flood damage. Long Canyon has reopened, it is passable but more work to be completed. Courthouse Wash will require a group effort to do the repair work on the bridge abutments and asphalt as well as clean out the wash. Recent road closures in Mineral Canyon have caused issues with being able to turn equipment around. He anticipates the general public will have the same issues, so he suggests designating a turn-around.

Bill Winfield reported that he was informed by Tyson Swasey the windmill at Dubinky Well has come apart. Funds will be needed for repair. He is involved in the Dolores River TMP comments. There will be turnover with two new county commissioners next year.

Keltain has nothing to report but he does have two questions: 1) We are hosting the Moab Guide Summit on March 13, 2025. Last year there were 300 guides who participated. Does the MTC want to have a table at the event? The event is organized by GCATT and includes funding and participation from the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management and the Canyonlands Natural History Association. An outline of what is covered is available. 2) GCATT is evaluating various mapping apps and asks if there are any ideas on how he can involve the companies to support the MTC. Example: Trails Off-Road in Grand Junction films videos for every trail, referencing features, that they share on Youtube. Onyx has reviews for trails that are

current and provide updated conditions. How can these companies help? Clif stated that making their products as educational as possible would be beneficial. As for the schedule for the Trail Ambassadors they are off for the winter. He will be looking to hire another motorized Trail Ambassador mid-March to end of June, then back on again end of August to end of October, possibly longer.

Jeff Stevens shared that he has talked with Andy about possibly installing signs at Behind the Rocks before end of December.

Molly Taylor asked about process to follow up with BLM on a sign needed at an intersection to identify motorized and non-motorized route; specifically in the area of the Halfway Stage Station in Mill Canyon. It was recommended to contact Payton with specifics.

Clif shared that he heard from Lena Pace, Superintendent of Southeast Utah Group, National Park Service, and she plans to attend next month's meeting. The Ride With Respect excavator is being stored at Dave Hellman's business location along with the rock-crawling pickup truck and trailer. The list of trails needing work needs to be updated to remove what has been completed, add new ones, then provide to Anthony Ash and others so work can be scheduled. The letter to the Grand County Commission from the MTC regarding eBike use was submitted. Clif spoke at the Citizens To Be Heard segment of the recent Commissioners meeting. BLM needs to realize follow up plans are needed to incorporate other classes of eBikes and electric motorcycles. Trail Mix recommended Moab Brands trails on a trial basis. Clif reiterated more alternatives should be considered and his final point was to acknowledge enforcement will be an issue, specifically distinguishing types of eBikes and that they haven't been tampered with. Working with the industry will be important to solving the problems. Overall it is a good place to start with the process and an emerging technology, it's a "meeting in the middle." Bill Winfield stated that it's coming and we can't stop it. We need to minimize conflicts and make it work for everyone. Clif thanked GCATT and Trail Mix for the recent Volunteer Recognition event. A Trail Service Award was given to the MTC that Clif will forward to Michael and Mary Wakely for their efforts contributing to at least fourteen MTC-hosted trail projects.

E. Adjournment

Clif thanked everyone for participating and adjourned the meeting at 1:55 pm.