

Recreation Working Group
Meeting Notes
December 6, 2021
Via Zoom

Participants: Rebecca Antle, Deana Bindley, Lisa Bolton, Michaela Gold, Heather Green, Patrice Horstman, Tim Holt, Liz Krug, Kit Metzger, Nicholas Mustoe, Rob Nelson, Ellen Parish, Nate Ragan, Becki Ross, Tempy Wessel, Dave Wessel, Nat White, Julian Wolff

Ellen opened the meeting at 11:00 with a welcome to the participants.

Focus Committee Updates from various sub-groups:

Ambassadorship committee:

Tempy reported that the last meeting was with Diana, Lisa, Ellen, and Heather. We were going to invite people from Aireona's group (from the Recreation Summit) after the holidays, in mid-January or February. The purpose is to show them Diablo Trust lands and issues as well as summer photos.

Ellen: Does the Ambassador group need any support or resources?

Tempy: Not at this time. We should all get together and share photos and make a plan for working with Aireona. We will reach out later regarding that

Dave Wessel:

David shared a table that he had been working on with the Technology Group. In this table, they imagined activities engaged in on trust lands, how activities could be measured, and what technologies could be used for measurements. Also looked at what strategies could be used with the various technologies.

Lisa recommended contacting Sasha Schultz of the National Forest Foundation. Dave also wants to talk with Brian Poturalski and the ranches then talk with the board about the resulting recommendations. Timeline will be after 1st of year.

Nat White: what area are we talking about? All of Coconino County, Diablo Trust, state lands, private? Coconino National Forest?

Dave: We are talking about the area south and east of Flagstaff bordered by Lake Mary Road and I-40 to Twin Arrows, down to Apache Maid. The two ranches.

Nat: Yes, the Metzger and Prosser ranches. Monitoring: I spend a lot of time running that area, along with many others. Maybe there is foot base such as runners or hunters that could also provide information.

Dave: could get counts from video data, trail cameras.

Nat: Most of us have phones where we could collect and send data as we are out there doing our own recreation.

Dave: like crowdsourcing data. I can look into this.

Tempey: if you do see something of interest, we want to expose area for its beauty and we want to be good stewards, so take a picture and we can use it in the future perhaps.

Lisa: Dave, have you seen any examples of geofencing apps for recreation management or anything similar?

Dave: No, but can look into it. Geofencing has applicability across different breakout groups. Acoustical technology has been used to track bats but don't see why it can't be applied here.

Ellen: Geofencing is mostly used for advertising and marketing rather than monitoring... but it was suggested that companies could modify it for other uses if there is a need...could be a promising direction.

Lisa: NFF has started discussions with Forest Service about a geofencing pilot project..... does anyone from FS know current status? If you have any information we would love to hear it. I'd like to sit in on conversation with NFF and the FS if you set one up Dave.

Ellen: Dave, I noticed you had some soil and vegetation monitoring data. Perhaps you could get together with Molly McCormick. She is interested in past impact studies – non-motorized as well as vehicle impacts.

Dave: We could cross-reference resource and recreation monitoring information.

Becki: Carol Harder asked me to share information re: policy group. We have the SCORP public survey that Ellen shared with group in early November. This is a statewide survey re: Outdoor Recreation Plan. See November 9 email from Ellen. There are some bullet points we developed that people may want to review and see if they agree with them. Carol reached out to AZ Trail Foundation and was connected with Kirk Astroth of SCORE. They are working on forming an Office of Outdoor Recreation. He will speak at DT's annual Feb meeting unless it conflicts with his presence at Arizona Senate session. Lisa hopes to connect with another speaker for meeting in next couple of weeks. Carol is asking group to compile information to see what other states have done re: OHV impacts.. specifically Utah and Idaho. If people come up with information from other states, could they share with policy group?

Lisa posted in chat some SCORP info and the bullet points:

SCORP – Statewide
Comprehensive Outdoor
Recreation Plan Public Survey
– Open until the end of
December 2021 • Manage
our public lands for multiple
use and natural resource
conservation

- Promote ethical and
responsible recreation
- Support law
enforcement agencies to aid
in natural resource protection
and keep our public lands
safe for all
- Maintain partnerships
with working land stewards to
continue economic, social
and environmental
sustainability
- Encourage
appropriate recreation for
appropriate locations

Funding group

Rob: Waste management group has some possible funding needs that we will discuss on Friday. Does anybody from the group have information on their funding needs?

Ellen: From reading their notes, they have looked at maps and placement for potential dumpsters in high traffic areas for trash. Ellen's opinion: some past concerns include: unattended dumpsters in high traffic areas turn into a trash pile, get overfilled, critters get in and spread trash, and lids are left open. Those locations are a no go for multiple reasons. The biggest concern is spread of trash. From funding perspective from State Parks, need to make these an OHV specific dumpster in an already established location and labeled with an OHV sign. Mormon Lake, Meteor Crater, Happy Jack Lodge are potential locations. Once filled, dumpsters could be locked.

Rob: Funding group thought they could focus on outreach. What format for outreach would be most valuable? An FAQ document on Diablo Trust website?

Lisa: Some sort of document that could be uploaded would be useful. A document that summarizes the amount and uses of funds, timelines... also funding opportunities. I can share links for funding opportunities.

Rob: We would like to see those.

Ellen: If everyone stays alert to funding opportunities and shares that information, then we can keep forward momentum.

Dave: We want to cross reference our efforts with other groups. Money comes from plans faster than plans come from money. During the 1st quarter next year we could develop a comprehensive plan so we are better positioned for grants.

Ellen: Drones have been mentioned as a potentially useful technology. The use of drones comes with legal issues depending on what land you are over. How can technology like drones be used for monitoring use in particular areas. Like areas that shouldn't be used by OHVs or for camping. Are drones being used by law enforcement?

Dave: I read that drones are not permitted on FS lands.

Nick: Drones are not permitted in designated wilderness. There is not a ban over FS lands.

Ellen: what about trail cams and privacy? What are privacy issues? Where do we find rules and regulations? Can they be used for traffic on road or hikers?

Tim Holt: As of January 1, trail cameras are going to be banned for the public for the taking of wildlife only. Putting them on FS lands is a federal regulation. In the past, there has been little to no enforcement on this because it is a passive activity and non-invasive. When property is left out, it becomes abandoned property. AZGFD uses webcams often for wildlife management and law enforcement. Trail cams can be placed on FS land without damaging vegetation. AZGFD uses trail cams for monitoring remote areas. Gathering info for law enforcement may need search warrant which are difficult to obtain, and require several signatures and a review.

Nick: Could add a column to Dave's table re: law enforcement.

Lisa: I pursued some opportunities for drones with Matt Reeves... the purpose is to see trends e.g. before and after aerial footage. We didn't pursue too much farther because this would be thousands of dollars. Matt can connect you (Dave) with a lot of resources... satellite photos etc.

Ellen: I have found trail cams to be very invasive from a privacy standpoint, from my own experiences although I can see how they are non-invasive from a habitat standpoint. How does 14 days in one place camping policy relate to abandoned property?

Tim: From a law enforcement perspective, abandonment is triggered at about 72 hours.

Becki: there are areas on our ranch heavily damaged by OHV. We have captured damage via trail cams. Can webcam damage taken by private citizen be used by law enforcement?

Tim: Yes. Can be very helpful especially if get facial recognition or other identifying information. Can make our job much easier.

Kit: I would be concerned about using drones and cameras. Could tick off a bunch of public users with drones and web cams. I'm not sure that is something I would want. Boots on ground are better.

Ellen: This sums up our discussions. Reminders: no more December meetings. Will send January update. Probably at a point to plan a meeting with all the committees in one spot.

Ellen: Any questions from anybody or anything to add?

Christmas party 5:30-8:30 White Dove Christmas party – potluck – all invited. DT will provide drinks.

Would love to see you all at DT annual meeting Feb 25th and stick it on your calendar.

Network for AZ Trails meeting starts at noon. They will discuss funding opportunities. SCORE public survey due at end of December. Rob, can you attend the 12:00 to 1:00 funding meeting? Rob is not available but Michaela could maybe stay instead, along with Ellen and Lisa.

Becki: Friday I am going to State Capitol to talk with legislators about OHVs.

Tim: I will see you there.

Patrice: Please keep me informed. Obviously something of major concern.

Ellen: I will try and make it, weather permitting.

Lisa: For those of you attending, it would be great to hear presentations from you at our next call.

Ellen: Patrice you may be able to listen via a recorded zoom call.

The meeting adjourned at 11:57.