

**MINUTES**  
**PWV BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING**  
**August 20, 2020 – 6:30-8:00 p.m.**  
**Conference Call due to Covid-19 concerns**

**ATTENDANCE**

**Board Members:** Tom Adams, Janet Caille, Mike Corbin, Elaine Green, Janis Kloster, Jack Morgan, Karen Roth, Mike Shearer, Sandy Sticken, Bruce Williams, Jim Zakely, and Kristy Wumkes (USFS Liaison).

**Board Members absent:** Bob Hansen, Karina Mallon, and Linda Reiter.

**Advisory Board Members:** Fred Allen, Kevin Cannon, Dave Cantrell, Gerry Cashman, Jerry Hanley, Alan Meyer, Randy Ratliff, Karl Ritters, Mark Snyder and Celia Walker.

**PWV Members, Other:** Sean Orner.

**Guests:** Jeff Randa, USFS Recreation Use Staff Jane Gordon & Acting District Ranger Leslie McFadden

**ESTABLISHING QUORUM AND MEETING GROUND RULES.** Elaine reminded everyone to please mute their sound when not speaking. Elaine welcomed USFS personnel Jane Gordon and Leslie McFadden, joining our USFS Liaison, Kristy Wumkes. Elaine also welcomed Jeff Randa. Quorum was confirmed with 11 Board members present.

**AGENDA.** Elaine Green asked if there were any other additions or corrections to the agenda. Seeing none, the agenda was adopted.

**MINUTES.** Elaine asked if there were any additions or corrections to the July minutes. Seeing none, the minutes were adopted.

**REPORTS OF OFFICERS**

**(A) CHAIR REPORT.** Elaine Green thanked Mark Turner and Janet Caille for quick response when the fire broke out in trying to contact PWV members. She also thanked Alan Meyer for putting together a draft for fire response procedures to be covered more later in the meeting.

**(B) CHAIR ELECT REPORT.** Mike Corbin said it is the time of the year to begin to look for new prospective Board of Director members. Mike will form a small **nominating committee** and asked that anyone willing to serve on this committee to please contact him.

**(C) IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR.** Tom Adams had no report.

**(D) USFS REPORT.** Kristy Wumkes, USFS Liaison, reported first on the **Stage 2 Fire Restrictions** that are currently in effect. With stage 2, for the Canyon Lakes Ranger District (CLRD) and the Pawnee Grasslands, no open fires can be built anywhere, including campgrounds and picnic areas, even in the permanent fire rings. Outdoor smoking is not allowed and no off-road parking in a motor vehicle unless in a 10-foot vegetation free area. Chain saws must have spark arresters. Firearm use is fine, but no incendiary or explosive ammunition is allowed.

Kristy asked the **map of the fire** be displayed. Per a late report, the fire grew about 1000 acres overnight, so the Cameron Peak fire is now at 16,451 acres with no containment. Currently, there is no report of damage to structures or facilities. The fire fighters are doing a

pretty amazing job protecting our campgrounds and picnic areas. There is a fire weather watch today (Aug. 19<sup>th</sup>), but Kristy is hoping for better weather conditions on Friday. There is a lot of indirect line building going on now as the fire is spreading in all different directions. Heavy equipment is being used to create fire breaks along Laramie River Road, for structure protection at Stub Creek. The fire fighters have prepped Manhattan Road, and the Boy Scout Road, and Pingree Park Road has been widened in some areas. Water lines have been put along Long Draw Road and Highway 14. Fire fighters are installing pumps and hoses near houses. If a fire jumps a line and fire fighter have to leave an area, they can turn on the sprinklers to try and keep the home wet so the fire doesn't catch. The fire fighters are being very proactive. The fire closure order was expanded today, so that if the fire continues to grow or makes a big run, the County Sheriff and other personnel won't need to go hunting for people in the endangered area. Kristy recommended going to the Inciweb site for the Cameron Peak fire for fire information and the Larimer County Emergency site for evacuation information. The USFS is also looking at how the fire started and has requested that anyone with early photos of the fire on August 13<sup>th</sup> when the fire started to please share that information with authorities. Several media posts have been sent out requesting information and informing how to send in photos.

Kristy said per **PWV patrol reports**, from July 1st through August 20<sup>th</sup>, PWV members have completed 292 patrols and PWV has 254 active members. Because of concern for over-use of our backcountry areas, she also did a comparison with 2019 reports on violations. We have experienced a decrease in violations in three major areas, littering, dogs off leash and littering at campsites. Visitors are being respectful and PWV members are doing a great job.

Kristy asked the **two USFS guests** to introduce themselves. Laura Shaffer no longer works in this area and Kristy is now the Acting Recreation Staff Officer while still doing her other duties. Kristy introduced Jane Gordon, Recreation Special Use Administrator and Leslie McFadden, Acting District Ranger.

**Jane Gordon** said she took over for John Halverson, and she covers Recreation Special Uses, i.e., guiding, hiking, climbing, hunting, fishing, etc., and she manages recreation residences. Jane came from the Fire unit where she has worked 14 years. Before that, Jane worked in Law Enforcement for 10 years for the USFS. Prior to that she was in the Park service, and in Rocky Mountain National Park and Longs Peak. She has been around since 1993. Jane has worked with some PWV members and loves what PWV does.

**Leslie McFadden** said she probably saw many of those present on the call at the retirement party for Kevin Cannon, which was wonderful and deeply appreciated by the USFS. Leslie's day job is in Lands and Minerals for the CLRD, including mining claims, land exchanges, acquisitions, etc., and an array of uses, roads, power lines and water, including reservoirs down to ditches. Katie Donohue, the District Ranger, is currently assigned to the fire as Administrator. So, Leslie is acting District Ranger for the next 2.5 weeks, as Katie is on fire duties. Leslie has been on this forest since 1992. She was working for district way back when USFS staffing bottomed out and PWV started. She expressed thanks for being invited to the meeting.

Elaine expressed thanks to Jane and Leslie for joining. Kristy was asked if any of the campgrounds had been impacted, which they currently have not been. When asked about which trails have been damaged, Kristy said it is assumed Blue Lake and likely Big South have been damaged, but personnel have not been able to look at particular trails due to the danger of the fire; the fire is too hot. When asked if the USFS will just let the fire burn, Kristy explained they won't be letting the fire burn, but right now they can't do a direct attack because the fire is too dangerous and too hot and that is why all the indirect work is being done.

**(E) TREASURER'S REPORT.** Sandy Sticken was on the call but was not audible. Sandy had submitted the financials via email for information.

**(F) SECRETARY.** Janet Caille thanked **Janis Kloster** for taking the minutes for the July Board of Directors meeting.

Janet said PWV will not be using the National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance (NWSA) Wilderness Stewardship Performance (WSP) **grant** for \$1200 after all. Janet talked with Photo/Video Chair Peter Skiba this past Tuesday. The Photo/Video committee had planned a photo shoot day for this Saturday up at Stub Creek. The Committee was going to work on a Stock Video and also one on Safety on the Trails. The PWV season stopped March 15<sup>th</sup> and didn't resume until July 1<sup>st</sup> due to Covid-19. The session planned for this weekend has been cancelled due to the fire and between the fire and Covid-19, Peter had talked to committee members. The committee doesn't feel it is prudent to go ahead and use the funds at this time. The committee will continue working on a stock video and also on the George Wallace video to get that finished. Janet called NWSA Executive Director, Randy Welsh on Aug. 20<sup>th</sup>, and Randy asked if there were other ways that PWV could use the funds. If so, to please submit a proposal, so PWV could still use the funds. Janet has talked to Fred Allen and intends to ask Mike Corbin about potentially using the funds. Janet asked that anyone knowing a good use for spending the \$1200, to please contact her.

At this point, Elaine talked about donating lip balm to the fire fighters. Alan Meyer had mentioned donating lip balm to the fire fighters, and items are being collected at the drive-in theater. Celia Walker said lip balm could be taken to that location but was concerned about the impact of heat on the lip balm. Celia was hoping to take the lip balm to the USFS office if someone there could receive it. Kristy explained that the USFS building is currently off limits and even the lip balm currently stored there is buried under many other supplies.

### **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES.**

**(A) PUBLIC OUTREACH COMMITTEE.** Elaine said Kasha Karol has resigned as Chair of the **Public Outreach Committee**. Elaine asked if anyone had any objections to the following motion. Hearing none, the motion was approved.

*Move to appoint Sean Orner as Chair of the Public Outreach Committee.*

**(B) SUPPLEMENTAL TRAINING COMMITTEE.** Next Elaine brought up the motion below, explaining that Linda Reiter has agreed to take Jackie Picard's place as Chair of **Supplemental Training**. Elaine asked if anyone had any objections to the following motion. Hearing none, the motion was approved.

*Move to appoint Linda Reiter as Chair of the Supplemental Training Committee.*

**(C) YEAR END EVENT.** Elaine Green said the **Year End Event** will be handled by video since we can't meet in person. Elaine said since we can't feed people this year, a small token will be given to everyone via mail. Alan Meyer asked if the video would be a pre-recorded video which Elaine confirmed. Alan also mentioned that Member Relations needs to define service awards and will also have some things to mail out. Concern was expressed about possible mailing expense. Elaine explained the Year End budget is \$2000. After discussion, and estimating that mailing expense might be about \$1000, concern was resolved. Elaine and Chair

Elect, Mike Corbin, need to meet to decide how to handle the annual meeting when members can ask questions of the Board. It will be different than the Year End Event.

**(D) TRAIL RESTORATION.** Trail Restoration Chair, Mike Corbin, said he was ready to talk trails. PWV had a **Rocky Mountain Conservancy** trail crew for 4 days this week, Monday thru Thursday. The first 2 days were spent on Bulwark Ridge, the first .4 mile was in very bad shape. The crew did a lot of work, putting in a many steps and drains. The first .4 mile of the trail is steep and degraded. The crew spent 1 day on Crozier Mountain Rainbow Trail, building steps, and drains and check dams. It is much better now, and erosion was helped. Today (Thursday, Aug. 20<sup>th</sup>), the crew worked on North Fork, on the first hill. Many drains and check dams which had blown out over the years, were repaired. All of this work required moving some pretty big rocks but fortunately the crew consisted of 6 young, strong people, plus Mark Snyder and Mike. It was a good week and a lot of good work done. This year the USFS doesn't have crews so hopefully next year PWV can get some of the Rocky Mountain Conservancy crews. We know next year there will be a lot of work to do in the Rawahs on Blue Lake, Big South, and winter trails like Sawmill and Joe Wright. Mike said to the USFS personnel on the call to please let him know if there's anything PWV can do. Mike said his team would like to know about restoration needed as soon as possible so planning can be done.

Kevin Cannon said the USFS is trying to bring Kevin on and one of the things the District Ranger has asked Kevin to do is to go with the **Great Outdoors Funding** for next year to try to help with some projects. For the Larimer county crew from Maelly Oropeza, Kevin is going to try to put together projects for 10 or 11 weeks for approximately \$100,000. Kevin said the crews could be worked anywhere in the county (for next year). Gerry Cashman mentioned that some of the winter trails will not likely have signs, as the signs are wooden and will have probably burned. Missing signage will need to be confirmed before we work on replacing. Fred Allen said in 2012 after the fires, we had advantages in that the trails impacted were relatively close to Ft. Collins. With this fire, we will need community help and many \$\$\$ will be needed.

Elaine mentioned that she has been invited to a Cameron Peak fire recovery planning meeting this next Monday. She asked if anyone knows who might be coordinating this meeting. Kristy Wumkes said it was likely the **Cache La Poudre Watershed Coalition** was organizing the meeting. Kristy said this is a coalition of many local entities that formed after the High Park fire in 2012 to do restoration projects. They have their act together after High Park restoration efforts. The coalition worked a lot with the USFS and other agencies. They work to prevent erosion and run off into our water supply. Kristy mentioned she is already receiving many 'how can I help' calls. Kristy said this coalition is a great group to work with.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS.**

**(A) AD HOC REVIEW OF EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS (Outgoing).** Alan Meyer has established an ad hoc committee and now has a paper ready to send out to this group. He will then circle back with Kristy to make sure the USFS is good with the plan as well. A few weeks ago, Alan sent out an email to all PWV members asking who had a personal communication device. Elaine thanked Alan for taking this project on.

### **NEW BUSINESS.**

**A) EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS (Incoming).** Elaine introduced this topic saying this is really the question of how to get information out to people in the field during an

**emergency.** Elaine had asked Randy Ratliff to talk about his recent experience while he was backpacking when the fire started on August 13<sup>th</sup>. Randy said he and Steve Musial had hiked into Comanche Lake, Campsite 2, on August 13<sup>th</sup>. They set up their campsite and then proceeded to visit the other campsites. The first site visited was what Randy terms fake campsite 3. He considers it 'fake' because over the years, the actual campsite has been created at a campsite about 1500 yards away from the original site. At this site were 5 people packing up their gear because they had observed smoke in the area. Randy and Steve had also observed smoke but had no idea there was a fire getting nearer to their location or even in CLRD. They had assumed it was probably smoke from the western slope fires near Glenwood Springs. The group at site 3 decided to walk out. Campsite 1 had a family with a dog, two kids and a grandpa. Randy said they talked about the smoke, still assuming that it was from the western slope. Randy said that later a couple of elderly women camped at campsite 3. Randy let everyone know they were hiking out the next morning due to smoke concerns. Randy and Steve had sent an OK message to the USFS and also communicated with Steve Musial's wife via InReach and didn't find out until 9:30 p.m. that night from Steve's wife that there was a fire not too far away. Randy said PWV didn't shine very well since we didn't have current information. They had an unsettling evening talking with everyone. Randy and Steve did what they could based on what they knew. Elaine thanked Randy for his first-hand account.

The question is how can PWV do a better job alerting our members in the field when there is a similar emergency? Alan Meyer was also out on the trail when the fire started. Hearing from Randy about his experience, and from others, and learning more about communication with an InReach, Alan put together a presentation for the Board on this subject to start a discussion on what PWV might do better. Alan said some things went well but there's clearly room for improvement. Alan was in the Rawahs doing a solo backpack with a plan to come out late Friday afternoon. Luckily, he had made good progress and decided to come out a day early. Coming out Laramie River Road, Alan noticed smoke when he approached Chambers Lake. He stopped the car at Chambers Lake at about 2:45 pm, about an hour after the fire started. The smoke cloud looked like it was just over the ridge, in the direction of the Blue Lake Trail. This experience has been part of Alan's motivation in putting this presentation together. As near as he can determine, there is no real PWV plan on how to deal with our volunteers in this situation. On the positive side of things, Alan was contacted by 3 different PWV members, which was good, and took a lot of initiative. Mark Turner and Celia Walker made a big effort to reach out to Alan. As a data point, despite getting good contacts from PWV, Alan had no contact from CLRD, which was disappointing but Alan felt there are reasons he completely understands.

To communicate better with members in the field, it makes sense to look at our communication devices. From the Straw poll Alan had taken regarding communication devices, of our 241 members, 55 members have a **2-way device**, mostly InReaches, although 3 have SpotX, and one member with a different 2-way device. Fourteen members have old Spots that don't have 2-way capability. The USFS has a handful of SpotX units which members may check out. Any time members are on a hazardous trail, PWV members are supposed to have a device. Alan was curious about how many of our patrols went out with at least one person with a device. In 2019, there were 1015 patrol reports, 106 of them had a device checkout. There were 531 unique patrols where at least one of our members had a device, so 62% of the patrols were with a device. Alan thought this was good coverage of our patrols, especially since this includes the hazardous trails where emergency situations like fire are more likely to occur.

As Alan thought about how he used the device and 2-way communication, like many of our members, he leaves the device off until the end of the day when he sends an "I'm OK" message. At that point, the recipient can respond and have a 2-way exchange. So, the problem is, what if someone at home needs to send the patroller a message, ie., fire in the area, or a family

emergency? Many of the members Alan has talked to, haven't thought about this issue. As an organization PWV hasn't done anything about potentially doing a reverse 911 message.

InReach and SpotX do have the ability to receive a message. PWV members need to train their emergency contact on how to send an emergency message. To get an emergency message to someone in the field having an InReach, a message can either be sent from a different InReach, or a member's home contact can log on to the InReach account and send a message. Most InReach owners don't have a person at home who knows how to send a message. Even if everyone with a device trained someone at home, this is still not a good solution. The emergency contact, even if they know how to send, might not be at home, or might not be aware of the emergency situation (e.g. a fire). It's much easier on a SpotX to send an emergency message; the SpotX phone number is what is needed to send a message to the unit.

Another issue is that most of our PWV members whose significant other is also in PWV, lists that person as their emergency contact. And many of these couples patrol together, so they wouldn't have someone at home to respond to their messages and alert them of a fire. There are many couples within PWV.

Alan mentioned the following points in his presentation:

*Define a PWV "reverse 911" process for reaching members in the field*

- *Would be rarely used (hopefully!)*
- *Ideally CLRD would own this process – knows the emergency details, responsible for volunteers on the trail, multiple volunteer groups*
- *However, CLRD has limited staffing, folks on vacation, busy with the fire → PWV needs to own this*
- *2-way communication devices can be sent emergency messages*
- *SPOT X or InReach devices*
- *Basic SPOT devices don't support this*

Alan's initial thoughts on how to establish a reverse 911 process are:

- Collect contact information for member's InReach and SPOT X devices
  - Alan doing informally now. Should this be in the database, member profile?
- Collect "phone numbers" for all USFS SPOT X devices
  - Define a process to know which number is assigned to each device checkout
- Define a specific PWV team to handle emergency communications
  - Coordinate in this team and with CLRD to determine if message should be sent
  - Send text messages to all SPOT X units in the field
  - Send message from an InReach to all InReach in the field
  - Would need to have an least one InReach in town available to the team
  - These InReach(s) would have loaded contact info for other members' InReach(s)
- Encourage members to keep their devices powered-on
  - InReach & SPOT X should last 3+ days powered-on
    - Most members carry a battery pack for longer trips
- Set guidance that emergency contacts should include at least one person who is not another PWV member
- Members with 2-way devices should train a person at home in how to initiate a message to them

- Encourage members to provide the contact number for their 2-way devices.

Alan has made the assumption that the CLRD folks don't have the bandwidth to run a program like this. All the SpotX devices support 2-way communication. Alan wondered if PWV should do more to encourage our members to get a 2-way device, with more of a beefed-up incentive program for purchasing a device. Alan assumes that PWV would be able cost-wise to send out messages to everyone. Regarding keeping the units charged, Alan said currently he leaves his InReach on only for a short period of time. He thinks it would likely retain enough charge to be powered on for a 3-day backpack.

At this point, Alan asked for questions, comments, and asked if we should move forward with a program like this. Mike Corbin said this issue is good to think about. The process needs to be well thought out and documented with a team for implementation, even though it may be 10 years before it's needed again. PWV should be able to bear the cost of sending messages.

Elaine Green asked for the USFS response. When the fire began, our liaison, Kristy, was on vacation. Due to short staffing, USFS backup for Kristy is now more of an issue. Kristy said that Katie Donahue sent an email to Elaine and the Executive Committee. There was a scramble at that point. CLRD does respond in an emergency, working mostly with the Larimer County Sheriff's Office. In this particular case, it was all hands-on deck, using USFS personnel, the Sheriff's office, and even some personnel from Wyoming. USFS personnel and the Sheriff's office went to trailheads, and to wherever they thought people might be, extracting hikers and campers. Kristy recommended hitting the SOS button if a hiker is worried about personal safety.

Mike Shearer asked how the USFS people are extracted in such an emergency. Kristy said it was via the radio. The USFS has a fire dispatch center and it is up to individual departments to contact their employees to let them know of any developing situation. Mike commented that if PWV members are sending messages to the USFS, that perhaps the USFS should be sending back a message in the event of an emergency. Randy Ratliff commented that when they sent an OK message, they should have received a message back saying that there was a fire in the area. Because no message was received, Randy and Steve weren't able to do their job informing other campers when they were at Comanche Lake.

Bruce Williams thanked Alan for taking this process on, saying that he was the right person for the job. The idea is very good and PWV needs to figure out a way to implement it. Randy Ratliff mentioned the question of liability. Other liability besides Workman's Comp could potentially be needed and that also needs to be checked out.

Karl Riters said he has had an InReach for 5 years which he has used extensively and that he wanted to share how he uses it. One thing Karl does when he starts a patrol is to send a message about his car, license plate and where it's parked. Once on the trail, Karl sends a message that he's on the trail and where he's headed. The third message he sends is where he is camped. When he sends a message, anyone receiving the message can reply at any time. Leaving the InReach on all day would likely work, but that should be verified. By sending 3 messages in a day, he has 3 times when he could also receive messages. In the past PWV has subsidized members buying InReaches and SpotX units. This year especially PWV may have extra funds. Alan thanked Karl for his input and mentioned that this might be a good way to use NWSA \$1200 grant, doing a safety program. When Alan sends a message on his InReach, the message receiver can send a return message. However, the same message handle cannot necessarily be used on each patrol. We need to have the ability to send out as an organization to all devices.

Karen Roth also thanked Alan. He had the experience to want to get something going. The USFS should have the responsibility for our safety. Karen said if the USFS doesn't have enough staff, they shouldn't have volunteer organizations working on this. The USFS and PWV need to work on how this will work. When Karen worked for the USFS, they had their own check-in/check-out procedures, and the USFS had individuals would be responsible for a week for being in charge of the process. This process needs to be coordinated with the USFS.

Fred Allen said our normal procedures are to report to a phone number with our messages. Fred suggested we set up a google number or google phone number that everyone sends their check-in messages to. We are going to need to figure out how to send out for multiple messages. SpotX units are easier than the InReach. We will have to administratively decide if USFS wants to share the phone number. Elaine commented that the issue this time was not in knowing who was on the trail, but on how to get in touch with them.

Gerry Cashman agreed that the USFS has the responsibility to make the call, the impetus resides with them. Gerry will help Alan in any way he can. The USFS will know if there is a fire, not the PWV members. The USFS should make the first call,

Jack Morgan agreed with what Gerry and Karen both said. The USFS needs to issue the contact. PWV will need to iron out the process on how to issue calls but the USFS are the ones who will know about an emergency first.

Kevin Cannon said that for almost 20 years, Kristy and Kevin backed each other up and were never gone at the same time. At that time, there were 5 people at the USFS office, there are now only 2. This process has to be both PWV and the USFS; they have to work together. Alan has the right process, we just need to work through it. Kevin thanked Alan for a good job.

Jane Gordon said the USFS didn't have anyone out in the field. All USFS personnel have radios. They have very few people out in the field as most staff are cleaning toilets. When evacuations began, Larimer County Sheriff's Office was going along trailheads, getting license plates, running the license plates and trying to make contact. There were folks out on stock trying to make contact and notify everyone possible. USFS all carry VHF radios. The USFS doesn't have a trail crew this year. The comment was made that we may need to go back to the radios. Kevin Cannon said the main problem here is inadequate staffing.

Alan said ideally CLRD should own the process but agrees this needs to be done jointly. We all have some learning here. Neither CLRD or PWV had the expertise. PWV needs to take the lead but needs to work with the USFS. One question Alan asked Kristy if she sees any problem with sharing the USFS SpotX phone numbers. Kristy said this would not be an issue. Elaine said a message should be sent to all SpotX units when there was an emergency.

Based on the discussion, Alan said it sounds like this is a good process to move forward on. Alan would love for someone else to take the lead on this but is willing to lead if no one else volunteers. Mike Corbin, Karl Ritters, Gerry Cashman, Bruce Williams, Elaine Green, and Fred Allen all volunteered to assist Alan.

Elaine asked what was done during the High Park fire. Mike Corbin said PWV members rarely carried radios at the time, the only way for 2-way communication. The issue didn't come up during High Park. Fred Allen mentioned that he contacted the county store in Glen Haven and they contacted Jim Shaklee and the weed crew during the High Park fire. PWV watched out for themselves in this scenario. Regarding the emergency contact, Alan felt like he had some direction.



The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Janet Caille, Secretary

Next Board Meeting: **September 17, 2020, 6:30 p.m.**