

MINUTES
PWV BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING
July 15, 2021 – 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Conference Call due to Covid-19 concerns

ATTENDANCE

Board Members: Mike Corbin, Jeanne Corbin, Elaine Green, Mark Snyder, Sandy Sticken, Sean Orner, Jim Branch, Karen Roth, Janis Brady, Bruce Williams, Pete Ramirez, Mike Shearer, Matt Cowan (USFS Liaison)

Board Members absent: Bob Hansen, Katina Mallon

Advisory Board Members: Tom Adams, Fred Allen, Janet Caille, Jerry Hanley, Alan Meyer

PWV Members, Other: Jeff Randa

Guests:

ESTABLISHING QUORUM AND MEETING GROUND RULES.

Mike Corbin welcomed everyone in attendance and confirmed with Sean Orner that a quorum was present.

AGENDA.

The July 2021 agenda was approved after adding Bruce Williams' presentation of the StreamTracker project be added to the agenda.

MINUTES.

The June 2021 meeting minutes were adopted with no changes.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

(A) CHAIR REPORT.

- Mike Corbin mentioned that he was interviewed by a reporter for a major French newspaper today. We should receive a copy of the article once it's completed in a few weeks. She was interested in the fire because the French do not understand the impacts, primarily for the rivers. Mike discussed river impacts, restoration, and fires in general. Jeff Randa was also interviewed to discuss our fundraising, as the reporter was curious about why people donated money.

(B) CHAIR ELECT REPORT.

- Bruce Williams notified the Board that he has begun to form an ad hoc strategic planning committee to begin preparing for a streamlined planning process. Jerry Hanley and Jeff Randa have already agreed to participate, and additional volunteers who are interested in serving on the ad hoc committee can reach out to Bruce.

(C) IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR REPORT.

- Elaine Green did not have anything to report.

(D) USFS STAFF REPORT.

- Matt Cowan discussed the latest closure order; trail openings include Bulwark Ridge, Signal Mountain, South Signal, Indian, Donner Pass, Lookout Mountain. Donner and

Lookout are usually single track motorized trails but are being opened to non-motorized traffic only.

- Matt mentioned that this is the most trail work completed than he's ever seen in any other ranger district that he's served in. Today he visited the new reroute for the Elkhorn Creek trail. WRV is working there with the LICCC crew.
- The Rocky Mountain Conservancy crew has been working on the Blue Lake trail. Folks from OMBA will be working there this weekend and will hopefully be able to cut that open to completion. Matt hopes to open that up to the public at the end of this month, as well as the rest of the Rawah wilderness.
- Our LICCC crew has been working hard in the Comanche Peak wilderness on the Flowers and Little Beaver trails that had quite a bit of damage.
- WRV is having a public work weekend next week on those trails, specifically going up from Flowers Lake from the end of Jack's Gulch up to Beaver Park. They will put a reroute to create a solid trail from Beaver Park that goes through that area.
- Yesterday, Matt participated in a small projects day with the interdisciplinary team that approved a few reroutes on the Roaring Creek trail. Matt hopes they will get the signatures needed for that project by the end of the month, and a few partners including OMBA will be ready to get started on sustainable trail that's accessible to everyone.
- The Rocky Mountain Youth Corp crew will be coming out a week from Monday from Steamboat for two weeks and will probably be working up in the Comanche Peak wilderness doing trail stabilization work.
- Matt thanked everyone from PWV who has contributed to trail clearing and trail work.
- Starting today, they will begin doing some heli-mulching up on Long Draw road. The gates have been closed there since the fire, but people have been allowed up on foot, bike, or horseback. However, the area will be under an official closure order as of today as they complete that work. Matt is unsure how long it will take, but he'll update us once he has a timeline.

(E) SECRETARY REPORT.

- Sean Orner did not have anything to report.

(F) TREASURER'S REPORT.

- Sandy Sticken explained that she will send out updated 2nd quarter financials once the Community Foundation of Northern Colorado's have been updated, hopefully by the end of the month.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES.

(A) RESTORATION COMMITTEE.

- Mike Corbin said that the data shows we have no cleared over 2,000 trees of trails.
- He noted that this weekend we have another public work day on Big South doing tread work on the first 3 miles of the trail. He explained that there is a fair amount of rock work necessary, although he doesn't believe any of it is a direct result of the fire, the trail is several decades old and has worn in some places. They'll be doing a lot of rock work and cleaning up, with good planned attendance he expects a fair amount will be completed.
 - There are two work weekends coming up in August, Mike will determine what needs to be done at that time. There are two small groups (a church and a women's college club) that also want to help with restoration who Mike will be finding projects for.
- Bruce Williams asked to clarify if 2,000 trees was just on the public work days or total year-to-date. Mike replied that it is the total number. He estimates that 300-350 were

completed on the public work days so far. Mike added that the 2,000 were not all in burned areas, as there has been work done in the Rawah also.

- Alan Meyer added that he recalled a past season's record was about 2,400 trees, which was considered to be a high total then, so we're on a very high trajectory with tree clearing. Mike Corbin agreed and said that was the highest for any season, and a typical number is more like 1,500.
- Alan followed up with a question asking what the trigger would be to open Big South to the public. Matt Cowan explained that a factor has to do with the interconnectedness of individual trails—most in Comanche Peak connect with other trails. The largest challenge to reopening are the status of travel zones and designated campsites. Matt has designated Fred the task of assessing how many hazard trees are in the designated campsites. The Forest Service has to ensure that the locations where they are designating campers are free of hazards due to liability concerns. Fred was up at Big South the day before yesterday and assessed campsites 1-6 and found at least 30 hazard trees within those sites. Using this as an indicator to consider the 50 campsites across the wilderness, it's clear that a significant amount of work needs to be done before opening to the public.
 - Matt is considering workaround options that could include temporarily suspending travel zones or having volunteers handle the hazard trees. Matt and one seasonal employee are currently the only two staff members who are able to clear these hazard trees, so capacity is a major challenge considering all of the trail work that's being done this year.
 - Alan asked to confirm if clearing these trees requires a fellers license, which Matt acknowledged. Matt explained that they did not get someone available this year to certify others, which will be a priority next year. Alan asked how many felling certifications we have within PWV, which Mike Corbin answered saying that he believes we have 5 or 6. He added that there is a plan for PWV to start working on Big South hazard trees after next weekend.
 - Mike Corbin asked Matt if an option would be relocating the designated campsites to areas without hazard trees would be an option. Matt said it could be, as long as it didn't need to be done on a large scale. He added that he'll be sharing the results of what Fred finds once he finishes evaluating all of the sites, then a decision can be made about how to proceed.
 - Mike noted that in Brown Lake many of the campsites are out in the open, but several are rarely used and hard to find—he inquired as to whether just some campsites could be closed while others are allowed to remain open. Matt said this could be an option, but he needs all of the data before really discussing options.

NEW BUSINESS.

(A) SPRING TRAINING DATE FOR 2022.

- Mike Shearer explained that he's responsible for recertification. Members who need to recertify have just the single training day during Spring Training to ensure they are able to remain patrolling members—otherwise their status is dropped to non-patrolling. There are currently 6 members who are overdue for recertification. There are 12 members who were due in 2021 to recertify, but this was not available to them due to Covid. There are 10 additional members who are due to recertify in 2022. Mike is concerned that not

providing these members with a date early enough to ensure their availability, that we could have a large number of members whose patrolling status will be revoked.

- Mike Corbin explained that he communicated with Buckhorn Camp to find out if we would be able to have the week after Memorial Day so we are less likely to be affected by weather. This date is sought after by paying groups, so we can either continue to have Spring Training the weekend before Memorial Day or we can pay several thousand dollars in order to reserve the preferred dates.
 - Mike Shearer asked what the cost specifically would be. Mike Corbin explained that he was not given a more specific answer but would be provided the figure soon; Buckhorn has not yet finalized their pricing for 2022.
 - Alan Meyer clarified that we're considering between the weekend of Saturday, May 21st, or the weekend of Saturday, June 4th.
 - Jeanne Corbin noted that an advantage of the later date is that the earlier weekend often conflicts with graduations.
- Mike Shearer expressed that it could be worth it to spend some thousands of dollars to book the weekend that allows for more members to recertify so we don't risk their ability to patrol, and it could also be looked at a positive to support a business that has helped our organization.
 - Mike Shearer added that he took over this role in 2019, and he make sure to reach out to members coming due for recertification in advance, so they have the option of recertifying the year before it is due in order to ensure that it gets done. Mike does not feel that it is fair to request that those who need to recertify keep a window of May 21st through June 4th available indefinitely while waiting for the training dates to be set.
- Janis Brady noted that recent emails were discussing the possibility for alternatives to Spring Training and to using Buckhorn Camp. She asked to clarify if Buckhorn is still the expected venue.
 - Mike Corbin explained that Buckhorn is the venue that we know and generally AGLs have liked using that trail. While Spring Training was done differently this year due to Covid, the AGLs felt that some things went well with the modified structure, but some things could be done better. He added that he doesn't know of a venue that would be better than Buckhorn, and it is generally at no cost to us to use (though we have donated \$500 in the past). He does agree that there is merit to Mike Shearer's request to lock in a date and asked Mike if waiting until next month to finalize the date would be sufficient.
 - Mike Shearer pointed out that he doesn't really know, it's a matter of considering how far in advance people want to schedule things like international travel. He suggested that we try to negotiate with Buckhorn for the dates that we want. Mike Corbin agreed that he could follow up with Austin to at least get a cost range that we could use to make an informed decision.
 - Janet Caille said she had rates from 2017-2018 for lodging, which was \$25/person/night (with no meals). Mike added that the rate is different if you rent the whole camp (presumably cheaper). Janet added that the rate could potentially be \$5,000 for just lodging.
 - Alan Meyer pointed out that there's a possibility for much more flexibility with recertification that could mean it could be broken out from Spring Training.
 - Mike Shearer said the only essential piece is the training trail.
 - Karen Roth questioned whether the training trail is necessary and could possibly be replaced with a mentor system to ensure that recertifying members have the necessary information.

- Mike Shearer pointed out that for active members, Karen's suggestion could be effective. However, some members become less and less active over time and could use a more thorough refresher on current standards and practices. He added that feedback from past recertifying members indicate that they enjoy the training and feel that they get benefit from it.
- Elaine Green suggested that a motion be made to set the date for June 4th as long as the Buckhorn pricing doesn't go over \$5,000 so that a decision can be made now.
 - Fred Allen asked if we really want to spend \$5,000 on Spring Training. Janet Caille pointed out that the cost was only for lodging and wouldn't include food. Fred added that it would be an \$8,000 to \$10,000 event with those figures.
 - Elaine noted that PWV's budget is healthy right now. Fred suggested that most donations were for restoration. Sandy Sticken reiterated Fred's point, saying that most budget funds available are for restoration.
- Sandy followed up to ask if there are Forest Service regulations for the recertification process requiring it be on a training trail.
 - Mike Corbin explained that when the recertification process was designed several years ago, there was negotiating back and forth with the Forest Service as to how long of a trail recertifying members needed to complete. He added that another advantage of using a training trail is it allows for a certain amount of consistency, so the recerts cover the learning objectives that have been planned. Mentor hikes alternatively can be very inconsistent since you never know what's going to happen on the trail. He added that having recertifications work in groups on the training trail is also beneficial to their participation and learning. He deferred to the Recertification Committee, suggesting it would be up to them to consider alternative options to Spring Training and to confer with the Forest Service to ensure we're meeting any requirements they may have.
 - Fred Allen noted that as far as he's aware, we're one of the very few organizations in the country that have a recertification. He asked Matt Cowan if he's aware of any requirements for recertification.
 - Matt suggested that input should come from Kevin Cannon regarding PWV's recertification but explained that there's no federal requirement.
 - Mike Corbin explained that PWV as an organization had been considering some sort of retraining process to keep members actively trained long before the recertification process was developed with Kevin.
 - Mike Shearer agreed that he could speak with Matt to get a better understanding of any requirements we must meet with recertification. He reiterated that the primary concern right now is the members who are due to recertify based on current requirements so they won't be dropped.
 - Mike Corbin replied that we wouldn't allow for members who want to stay current to be dropped. Mike Shearer pointed out that depending on Forest Service requirements, that may not be entirely our call.

- Jeff Randa presented on an opportunity to engage with a start up who we were introduced to through the American Trail Running Association. The start up began in 2019 and launched in April of this year. Their goal is to make it easy to connect outdoor enthusiasts with outdoor-focused non-profits. Jeff has been in touch with them to learn more.
 - Other organizations involved with Bevara include VOC, Boulder Climbing Community, Rocky Mountain Field Institute, and the Boulder Mountain Bike Alliance.
 - Participation would allow us to share our events for public volunteers which could be helpful for Recruiting, Fundraising, and Trail Restoration. Bevara is asking for a 6-month commitment to engage actively with them, which would include social media, and there is no cost to us.
 - Jeff recommends that PWV engage, and volunteers to be the primary point of contact to coordinate with the various committees to provide input that Bevara would share.
 - Mike Corbin asked what it means to be involved with them. Jeff explained that it means we would actively post events and updates for their site.
 - Bruce Williams asked if there are any unexpected obligations that we may encounter by participating. Jeff suggested that it could be possible they would expect cross-marketing of their product. He noted that there is a risk of competing with other organizations in the state for volunteers or donations, but currently there is not much crossover with the other organizations that are active on the site.
 - Bruce followed up to ask for clarification on the entity type, since Jeff referred to them as a “start up”. Are they commercial or non-profit? Jeff said he believed they are a non-profit. Bruce asked if they are a 501(c)3. Jeff said he would follow up to find out.
 - Sandy Sticken explained that it can take a while for an organization to be approved for 501(c)3 status.
 - Bruce added that he’d like for clarification as to whether they plan to be a for-profit entity or not, to help make the decision as to whether we want to participate.
 - Karen Roth suggested that she’d like more information about the two people running the site, since that’s not really an organization and puts them at risk of burnout. If the site quality drops due to low management and users get frustrated, it could reflect poorly on PWV. She doesn’t see any conflict with being listed next to other organizations, but she’s left with questions about Bevara, including how they drive traffic to their site.
 - Jeff suggested that one option would be to wait a year to see what kind of traction they get.
 - Elaine Green pointed out that we should be aware if they participate in any kind of advocacy.
 - Mike Corbin suggested that we are limited in risk since they are only asking for a 6-month initial commitment. He added that VOC is one of the larger organizations in Colorado that’s decided to be involved—that gives him some amount of confidence.
 - Jeff explained that he thought the 6-month period could really line up with PWV’s Colorado Gives campaign and Recruiting season, so it seemed like a timely risk.
 - Karen Roth reiterated that we need more information. How are they planning to market it? How does it line up with our own web site?
 - Jeff agreed and said he would ask about marketing strategy, advocacy, sustainability, and entity type to report back.

- Bruce added that he thinks it could be a good opportunity but agreed a bit more information was needed to make a decision.
- Janis Brady asked if the outdoor users are individuals, which Jeff replied they are (at least for now). He speculated it could be possible in the future for companies to want to participate also.

(C) STREAMTRACKER.

- Bruce Williams explained that Streamtracker is a project run by CSU in collaboration with CLRD to monitor intermittent streams.
 - PWV has been approached by the project manager to request our participation.
 - Bruce collaborated with 3 other Board members to evaluate the project and has decided to endorse PWV's voluntary participation to PWV members. He believes the project aligns very well with PWV's mission and will be easy for us to do because of our activity outdoors.
 - Member participation would be voluntary.
 - This would not be run by PWV in any way. The data goes directly to the Streamtracker project organization.
 - The goal of the project is to improve mapping and monitoring of flow patterns of intermittent streams.
 - The data requires entirely on volunteer data. There's currently over 650 volunteer trackers nationwide.
 - The data is relatively simple to report, and is done through a smartphone app.
 - Volunteers record observation of streamflow presence or absence (if/when they are able). It takes 1-2 minutes and observations include:
 - Streamflow presence or absence
 - Existing or new location
 - Photo (optional)
 - Additional comments (optional)
 - Observations can be uploaded once you are in cell signal range
 - The information is being used to improve understanding of intermittent streams, improve streamflow forecasting for water supply and flood risk. It will help with better maps and can aid with better land management decisions made on the forest.
 - Matt Cowan said he fully supports the project and explained it will give the Forest Service a lot of useful data, not just for hydrology and fishery, but for recreation, trails, wilderness, and general. If PWV feels they have the capacity and desire to participate, he is 100% in support.
 - Bruce addressed the concern about whether the project dilutes PWV's mission, explaining that it aligns with our mission to assist CLRD in managing and protecting wilderness and backcountry areas. PWV has a lot of volunteers on trails with the ability to collect the data.
 - Bruce does not think it needs to be mandated to members, it should be discretionary and based on opportunity. A member who is on a busy patrol can forgo attempting to make observations, but it should be a simple and quick data collection on a regular patrol.
 - Alan Meyer asked how he could find the phone app since he did not find it in his app store. Bruce explained that finding it from the Streamtracker website would be the easiest way to locate it since it has an unrelated name. Alan followed up to ask if previous volunteer data is accessible, to see what's already been captured. Bruce explained that he wasn't sure, but that there wasn't a concern about redundant data points.

- Alan then asked for the definition of an intermittent stream, and if it was defined in the app. Bruce said it would be a stream that flows sometimes during the year and does not flow at other times.
- Karen Roth expressed concern about the suggestion that if we decided to endorse the project, that we would then “schedule a virtual training”. While she agrees that we should endorse the project, PWV should not be responsible for scheduling any training and should only forward interested members directly to the project for training and details.
 - Bruce replied that PWV would be completely divorced from the project. He confirmed with the project manager that they would be putting on the training. We would tell members when and where the training is and shuttle people towards that.
 - Karen said that even taking on the responsibility of getting members scheduled for training requires coordination and felt that should be CSU’s role. We should simply endorse the project and forward interested members to a project point of contact.
 - Sean Orner added that she agreed with Karen that we should make a full handoff and not do any coordinating on behalf of CSU.
- Mike Corbin explained that he agrees the project was well-matched to our purpose of supporting the Forest Service. He sees the potential for members to collect data even outside of PWV patrols. Mike added that CSU has a robust forestry department, and he thinks it would be a positive opportunity to collaborate with them on a project. He agrees that PWV should endorse the project but not be involved in training.
- Pete Ramirez explained that members would simply be responsible for collecting data.
 - Karen said she thought it was a wonderful project. She hopes that CSU would help us draft a message to send to our members informing them of the project. However, PWV should not be involved in training, how to use the app on their phones, etc.
 - Bruce said he agreed, and the message to members would just include information about how to attend the training that CSU would be hosting, rather than simply pointing them to a website to get information, since members may find that to be confusing.
 - Elaine Green added that we do not want to send members down a black hole and should provide them with details about when CSU is holding the training.
 - Karen said she agrees, but her concern is that PWV will become the intermediary coordinating with members to ensure they are able to attend the training.
 - Bruce asked if we could model our involvement based on what we recently did with COTrex.
 - Karen explained that COTrex was shared with members as a benefit to them, since it was an additional tool that they could use. Streamtracker is different because the benefit is to CSU and CLRD.
 - Mike Corbin added that our involvement would simply be one email that would go out to members informing them of the project and when the training is.

- Jeanne Corbin pointed out that the discrepancy comes from the phrase “schedule virtual training”, explaining that PWV would not be scheduling the training, CSU would.
 - Alan clarified for Bruce that COTrex was handled very differently because it was PWV that hosted the training (even though it was an outside speaker presenting). Karl Ritters spent many hours coordinating for that presentation. The difference here would be we would just direct members to the training, but CSU would be responsible for the scheduling and hosting of the material.
- Bruce modified his motion to say that the email to members would notify them of the training to be held by CSU. Elaine Green seconded the motion.
 - Karen expressed concern that it was still too much detail that we would be responsible for sharing and would prefer the email to be general, so CSU could handle direct logistics.
- The motion was again revised.
 - The board endorses the voluntary participation of the Streamtracker project to PWV members, to include:
 - Informing membership of the project through an email.
 - CSU will provide any necessary training for PWV members.
 - Elaine Green seconded the amended motion. The motion passed, with all members present in favor.

(D) MOVING TO IN PERSON MEETINGS.

- Mike Corbin made a motion to resume in-person Board meetings beginning in August. Bruce Williams seconded the motion.
 - Mike reminded us that meetings transitioned to Zoom due to Covid. He found two different church facilities that would allow us to use their space to meet in-person for the next few months until the Forest Service office is open. One is the Unitarian church and the other is a Methodist church. Members Jerry Hanley and Bill Whitaker have worked with the respective churches and recommended them as options. Mike added that he hasn’t yet selected one of the two locations, he has some follow up questions to get answered, however we can still decide on the motion whether to resume in-person or continue with Zoom.
 - Pete Ramirez asked how we should handle the decision if things change with Covid in the fall. Mike explained that we can only make a decision based on how things are currently, and that he’s very comfortable meeting in-person. We can adjust down the road if circumstances change.
 - Elaine Green said she was in favor of meeting in-person again and suggested that other venues such as the library could possibly allow for electronic display.
 - Mike Corbin said it can be hit or miss with the library to ensure the space is reserved. Fred Allen added that the library, in addition to local hospitals, Forest Service, and fire stations are all closed and unavailable to host meetings. Fred pointed out that in the past there had been some resistance to using churches for meetings, and that the NWSA is against using church facilities.
 - Karen Roth said she doesn’t have a problem with meeting in-person but asked what the advantages are. There are growing concerns about variants and added that the Zoom meetings allow for more scheduling flexibility.
 - Mike Corbin replied that there are more open and better quality of discussions during in-person meetings. People are able to speak

more naturally without talking over one another, as happens frequently on Zoom.

- Jeanne Corbin added that for the newer Board members, participation has felt strained because we still don't really know everyone and can't really see who they are talking to. She feels they would feel more comfortable adding to discussions once we're in-person.
- Alan Meyer brought up a point of discussion from last meeting, that in-person meetings will not have any remote or dial-in option or component. For members who are out of town, they will not be able to participate.
 - Mike Corbin said we can't have a hybrid meeting option without full teleconferencing technology, which we do not have. The Methodist church does have full AV setup, and Bill has offered to be present to assist with technology on-site since he's familiar with it, however, this does not provide for teleconferencing.
 - Pete Ramirez suggested that individual members who are out of town could possibly still participate remotely. Elaine Green explained that it wouldn't work unless all people who were present had microphones. Pete said he still thought it could work with the laptop audio or conference call. Mike Corbin said he didn't think it would work and would likely not be worth the effort to try and get an adequate system setup—relying on something like a laptop in the middle of the room leads to poor quality communication and doesn't really work well.
 - Karen Roth said she believed the Forest Service had the technology available for dial in. Alan said microphones would still be an issue for audio. Elaine added that for a group of our size, callers wouldn't be able to hear the discussion with a single-source microphone.
 - The motion passed with the majority of members present in favor.
 - Mike Corbin will let everyone know once the meeting location has been set.

The meeting adjourned at 8:16pm.

Sean Orner, Secretary

Next Board Meeting: **August 19, 2021, 6:30 p.m.**