

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
GOLD COUNTRY TRAILS COUNCIL, INC.
Tuesday, April 14, 2020, 7:00 p.m.
Teleconference

Officers:

President Bernie Molloy
Vice President Susan Donnelly
Secretary Cathy Chase
Treasurer Cathy Scott
Past President Helen Harvey

Board Members:

Jamie Canon
Helen Crawford McDermott
Karen Hayden

Administrative Members:

Laura Duncan, Past President
Mary Johnson, Forest Service Liaison

A. Call to Order and Welcome

Meeting was called to order by President Bernie Molloy at 7:07 p.m.

B. Changes or additions to agenda

Helen Crawford asked about signage on trails. To be covered by Mary during Forest Service Report.

C. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

February 11, 2020 Board of Directors minutes – Karen Hayden motioned to approve and Susan Donnelly seconded. Motion passed.

D. Approval of Treasurer’s Report - Cathy Scott

Checkbook balance of \$41,374.55 as of April 14, 2020. Holding \$3,571 in reserves for Pines to Mines. CS provided full financial report, copy of checking and credit card account statements, reconciliation and activity reports, and membership PayPal report (total 18 pages). Also, summary page of balances, anticipated spending, and membership and donation income.

Anticipated Spending total = \$9,630 for: Skillman corrals and gravel, trail machine rental, dumpster; port-a-potty at Lone Grave trailhead; work day and meeting refreshments and supplies; meeting hall rental. Discussion of various items. CS made a motion to send check for \$50 donation to the Grange to help with overhead costs as Grange is closed due to pandemic restrictions. Helen Crawford seconded. Motion passed.

Regarding income reported, membership dues limited to end of fiscal year 2020. Membership dues down approximately \$1,000 from previous year, however, donations up \$800. Helen Harvey said some online membership payments may have been submitted incorrectly on the donation page. She noted we have not had a Membership Chair since beginning of March, and she and Cathy Scott will check Excel spreadsheet from JotForm to investigate. Bernie will contact Heidi Hansen for hand-off of membership records and materials.

Fundraising impossible due to pandemic.

Discussed purchase of cargo trailer, which is not included in Anticipated Spending as board has not yet voted. Helen Harvey reported that per Elicia Kamberg, we will need 7x10 or 7x12 trailer to accommodate tools, tables, etc. Budget for used trailer should be about \$3,000 per Helen’s CraigsList research. Bernie will talk to Barry Vaccaro to get his feedback and whether trailer can be stored at Vaccaros’ house.

Susan Donnelly motioned and Cathy Chase seconded to approve treasurer’s report. Motion passed.

E. Forest Service - Mary Johnson (Mary's full written reports attached; following include comments from board meeting)

1. February 13, 2020: Helen, Mary, and Elicia held a field work hike on the Pioneer and Hallelujah trails out of Skillman to identify areas of needed work.
2. March 5, 2020 Helen and Mary met with Heather Newell and Cecelia Reed (TNF) at Skillman campground to discuss changes and improvements. TNF is improving the two culverts where the camp road crosses the creek. Day parking will be allowed in Sites 1 and 2 at no fee when the campground is open. 2 horse corrals (pens) to be placed in Site 11. Improvements to web site; elimination of group site 2-6; all sites are individual except for Site 4 which is a double fee site (4 pens); paragraphs in the overview section were updated to describe the camp accurately.
3. Lone Grave Map: Trail descriptions and trail lengths were submitted to Paul Hart. Before leaving on temporary assignment at another park, Paul said Joe Chavez and Heather Newell will take care of map by the end of the year.
4. Earbud sign: Mary emailed Heather last week but no response received to date. Helen Harvey said Forest Service personnel working remotely. Karen noted all the in boxes are full of COVID-19 info and suggested checking in next week.
5. GCTC Trail Work Projects: Most on hold. Lone Grave area trails need a lot of work. Sue Brusin and Suzanne Vaccaro said that after the big snow there are lots of trees down including some big oaks. Mary and Helen Harvey will hike to assess. Mary will compose email to ask for volunteers for small groups for chain saw work and brush clearing and report hours to Mary. HH will hike tomorrow, take pictures, report GPS coordinates. Karen suggested talking to Heather Newell. Fire crews and new training underway. Some trees are big and technical. She has Heather's cell number and can follow up if Mary does not hear back.
6. Waste Management – Cathy Scott said we are up to date with billing. Not sure why the dumpster is still at Skillman. WM has not billed and issued \$9.18 pro rated refund for September.

F. Old Business

1. Skillman Improvements (see Mary's full March 5 meeting report following minutes) – Helen Harvey said equestrian sites should be located away from streambed. A question was raised about whether there would be restrictions on day parking, and Mary said they would be open if park open. Permission received to remove trees in that area.
2. Helen Crawford questioned the longevity of Skillman especially in conjunction with the straightening of Highway 20 and volume of traffic; do we want to continue to put in resources for a campground with significant noise? HH stated that there is a lot of noise on Pioneer Trail but not much traffic noise in the Skillman campground. Mary agreed that HC had good point, but we do not want to give up. Skillman is the only equestrian campground in the area. Main revenue is from events not camp fees. Cathy Scott asked if Skillman were closed for camping, what we would be lose? Day use? HH does not believe this would happen although everything could change with any staff changes at USFS (Heather leaving in a year).
3. Skillman water issues and making more accessible – GCTC to put in new lines to corrals. HH said we are checking State rules that might apply to re-doing water lines. Cathy Scott questioned what would prevent someone coming in with tank and stealing water. Mary said there are special spigots that you must physically hold to get flow.
4. Use of OHV green funds for Skillman improvements. ATVs not likely to use Skillman because Burlington is the only road they can legally use.
5. Poker Ride Update – If postponed versus cancelled, it is hard to imagine asking local businesses for donations considering the economic impact of pandemic closures. GCTC members may also have fewer resources. Karen said the question is whether to cancel or reschedule. After discussion, board decided to cancel the Poker Ride for 2020.
6. Helen Crawford suggested, if safe to do so, having a fall membership ride with raffles and prizes that GCTC could purchase from local businesses.

G. New Business

1. Effect of COVID-19 on upcoming events – Bernie said we cannot plan anything for next few months. HH said we should follow the lead of State of California. Metrics show closed through May. Then

resurgence so we need to take a “wait and see” approach. Can be creative about how to get trail work done.

2. Helen Crawford commented on the trail adoption program – people ride but do not take pictures and locate issues with GPS. Need to hike. Cathy Scott said those not comfortable with GPS could mark on paper map and take pictures. Mary noted that any reporting or information is beneficial as we can always send someone else out for more detailed report. When dealing with USFS, need to have GPS coordinates.
3. Lone Grave port-a-potty – Cathy Scott said we will wait until State opens parks before commissioning.
4. Membership Chair – Helen Harvey stated most important requirement is computer skills. Working on fixing JotForm to simplify reporting.
5. Sunshine – Cheryl and Jim (new members) possibility. Bernie will send out email asking for volunteer for this position.
6. Volunteer Hub – HH suggested saying we are interested once the stay-at-home orders are lifted. Mary said need to send out synopsis of Volunteer Hub; Bernie will send to board.
7. GCTC blasts to members – Bernie said GCTC should not encourage/facilitate by describing places to go. Post closures only. Cathy Scott said do not post as locals know where to go; also, staying home means limiting possible horse related or traffic injuries which would add to burden of health care and emergency providers. Board agreed – no posting either way.
8. Camera for Lone Grave – Cathy Scott said she has the camera at her house but has not been to Lone Grave to install. The idea was to monitor usage, garbage, port-a-potty. Retrieval of data requires physically removing card from camera which is an issue. Will re-address after shelter-in-place lifted.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Submitted by Cathy Chase, Secretary

Attachments:

1. March 5, 2020 Meeting at Skillman Campground prepared by Mary Johnson
2. March 10, 2020 GCTC/USFS Report prepared by Mary Johnson

Location Meeting at Skillman Campground

March 5, 2020

Heather Newell, Cecelia Reed TNF

Mary Johnson, Helen Harvey GCTC

Recreation.gov Web site changes for Skillman page:

Group designation of sites 2 – 6 has been eliminated.

All sites are listed as individual sites, with site 4 listed as a double (fee) site. (it has 4 pens)

Sites listed as equestrian sites are 4, 7, 9, 11, 13, & 15. These are the sites with horse pens. (new terminology is pens rather than corrals as suggested by Mary. The web site erroneously listed them as a corral at a given site, rather than 2 pens. They are designated by horse shoes on the web site map.

The other sites are listed as standard sites, designated by a tent.

There are no restrictions of who is allowed to camp at any of the sites.

Description paragraphs and fees were changed.

Web site map is still being worked on.

The map in the Print Facility Map location is to be updated. Mary offered to help with that if needed.

It was mentioned that the fee for a camp ground/site is determined by the availability of potable water. (\$18 vs \$24)

Changes at the campground:

Now: Culverts are being up graded. New fixed culvert in the camp road between site 6 & 7. New gravel ford instead of a culvert in the campground road past site 15. Grading of the road, possible barriers along creek to discourage cyclists in creating paths across the creek, filling in some low spots if dirt was available. Work was in progress at the time of our visit.

Future: eliminate site 1 and 2 as camping sites to allow for horse trailer (and other types) of day parking.

Bulletin board near camp site 11 near the trail along that site to the Pioneer and Hallelujah trails.

Other changes discussed:

Gravel on campground road and possibly into the camp sites (to designate the entrance and preferred parking area)

A set of 2 pens was authorized for site 11, towards the back but not into the recovering vegetation area.

Permanent pens not allowed on any sites that are on the creek side of the camp.

Discussion how to “divide” the camp standard vs equestrian sites. One possibility to make one side of the creek (sites 1-6) standard and the other side of the creek (sites 7-16) equestrian. It was decided to leave them interspersed for now.

Manure Dumpster provided by GCTC:

The dumpster was not removed at the end of the season. There is garbage in it and the plastic lids are damaged. WM won't talk to Cecelia about it because she does not have GCTC's WM account number.

Resolution ideas: Contact WM to have it removed. May need to locate dumpster outside the gate for pick up or coordinate leaving the gate unlocked for the day. Insist on dumpster having metal lids and be bear proof. (size of dumpster may be a factor). Another option is to buy a dumpster that meets WM specs and they will empty it. TNF has one campground that utilizes that arrangement.

Location: The dumpster for manure needs to be located on the side where there are the most horse pens. GCTC is tasked with selecting a location and building a gravel pad for it to sit on with proper signs. Coordinate with WM management in selecting that location.

Future Grant Improvements: Grant application in 2021, work to be done in 2022
Grants require matching “funds” as donations of materials and labor.
Discussion on future improvements with grants using OHV funding and matching grants.

Restrooms. Possibly 2 new single restrooms in similar locations as now. New types of restrooms require as much sunlight as possible to enhance the natural venting.

Improvements to water system using only non potable (spring) water). Improvement allowed if creating a wash station for motorcycles. Possible adding another tank, re-piping the main lines, adding lines nearer to the equestrian sites (matching funds). Indicating non potable is a MUST)
Improving the Trail Head parking area with grading, gravel, new bulletin board and small unloading ramp for motorcycles.

Gravel for the campground road with some extending into the sites to indicate entrance.
Gravel may be available outside of the grant. (easy to buy gravel but not to pay contractor)

Note regarding water:

GCTC is tasked with determining if the source (spring) is reliable for adequate for non potable water supply. Possibly by regular monitoring of the water level in the tank. Is the shortage due to leaks or an inadequate supply?

Other Notes:

The drainage, culverts and road, along Burlington Road below Skillman is scheduled for improvements this year. Funds were approved 1 to 2 years ago and are scheduled to be done this year.

Skillman workday tasks: May 20, 2020

- Pick up and stack fallen branches to be utilized as firewood, and other needed clean up.
- Establish and build location for manure dumpster with signs.
- Build bulletin board for map, etc. near site 11 and trail. (4x4 post, 2' x 4' board of marine grade plywood, brown paint)
- Clean and establish parking area for site 8.
- Remove several small trees along road between site 1 and 2 to facilitate day parking area.
- Repair existing horse pens (work and materials to be determined)
- Place two new horse pens in site 11.
- Review strength of tie posts near site 8 and fix or remove as needed.

Additional Notes:

There was a discussion of picnic tables and fire rings in the camp sites. Some of the sites have newer fire rings, some have none, and some have the older cement/iron grate type. The old cement grates are slowly being removed. The new fire rings are not permanently fastened into the ground, nor are the picnic tables. Usually they are permanently fastened to prevent theft. Historically, the tables and the fire rings have not been fastened down so that during the large events they can be moved as needed. There has been a difference of opinion of placement

between the large user groups and the day camping groups. It may become necessary to establish a reasonable placement of the tables and the fires rings in order to permanently fasten them to prevent theft. Fire rings and tables are costly and there is no “warehouse” inventory of them to draw from.

The amount of fire rings and tables in the campground will remain as is at this time.

Heather has given permission for GCTC to use a small tractor on the work day to level the area for the manure dumpster, and other needs.

GCTC Forest Service Report
March 10, 2020
Submitted by Mary Johnson

Meetings and Field Work:

January 27, 2020: Joint meeting with TNF, GCTC, BONC, NCWR.

Paul Hart from TNF outlined the forest service's trail projects for 2020, and asked for each group's area of interest. GCTC identified with these areas:

Cal-Ida, Chimney Rock to Halls Ranch: This area is comprised of 13 miles of non motorized trails. Three more miles are being worked on now to be completed by next summer. Dispersed camping is allowed in the area and there are areas to park horse rigs. We will get more information about this area.

Washington Feasibility Study: This will be multi use trails around the Washington area which could connect Hwy 20 trail system to the Town of Washington and possibly to Bowman area trails.

Pacific Crest Trail Re-alignment project near Pack Saddle Camp ground: The old Deer Lake trail is now the PCT and is being re worked to a less rocky trail bed. GCTC will also be working with TNF on improvements to the equestrian sites at Pack Saddle campground.

Also discussed at the meeting was additional collaboration with the user groups for joint work efforts in specific areas. NCWR already does a lot of tree removal on motorized as well as non motorized trails. They are granted TNF permission to travel on non motorized trails for tree removal work. GCTC and BONC will have a joint work day for the Hallelujah trail. United Trails Day will still be held each year in October.

February 13, 2020 Helen, Mary and Elicia held a field work hike on the Pioneer and Hallelujah trails out of Skillman to identify areas of needed work.

March 5, 2020 Helen and Mary met with Heather Newell and Cecelia Reed (TNF) at Skillman campground to discuss changes and improvements.

TNF is improving the two culverts where the camp road crosses the creek.

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2 horse corrals (pens) to be placed in site 11

Improvements to web site; elimination of group site 2-6; all sites are individual , except for site 4 which is a double fee site. (4 pens); paragraphs in the overview section were updated to describe the camp accurately.

Lone Grave Map:

Trail descriptions and trail lengths were submitted to Paul Hart.

GCTC Trail Work Projects:

Lone Grave area trails brushing and short reroute of Dascombe trail of an erosion area.

Hallelujah trail bed and brushing

Skillman campground maintenance work day

Pioneer trail west of Skillman, erosion area and culvert over drainage from Hwy 20

Pioneer trail between Upper Burlington and Chalk Bluff reroute (United Trails Day project)