

Recreation User Group
Meeting 18
March 13, 2019
MEETING SUMMARY

Meeting Attendees

Representative	Organization
John Bricker	Tonto Recreation Alliance (TRAL)
Kevin Patterson	TRAL
Rich Smith	TRAL
Jim Schenck	LOST & Superior Community Working Group
Elizabeth Butler	Friends of the Tonto/equestrians
Greg Waterman	Sun City Hiking Club
Pete Casillas	Rebuild Superior
Todd Pryor	Manager, Town of Superior
Fred Gaudet	Arizona Trail Association
Mary Morissette	Resolution Copper Company
Paul Burghard	TNF Globe District, Trails
Adam Milnor	National Parks Service Trails and Conservation
Rick Schonfeld	Westland Resources
John Godec	Godec, Randall & Associates (GRA)
Debra Duerr	GRA

Welcome and Introductions

Paul Burghard told the group that he has retired from the U.S. Forest Service, but will continue to attend RUG meetings as a private citizen. The group wished him all the best.

John Godec pointed out copies of several letters that the group asked to be prepared, noting that we hope to review these today.

Adam Milnor from the National Park Service joined the group today. He is supporting the Town of Superior in developing an NPS Waters and Trails Plan grant assistance, which is a complementary process to what the RUG is doing. He's here to learn more.

Todd Pryor reported that he met with the chief geologist for Bronco Creek. He was surprised to find that many of the parcels the company is hoping to test are land exchange parcels that have been promised to the Town of Superior. He speculated, therefore, that Bronco Creek could lose their claims and compensation may not be available, and it will likely end up in court.

Status & Timing of Plan Finalization & Submission to FS

Mary Morissette reported that the Forest Service expects to see the recreation plan from Resolution by next week, March 25. She is working to finalize the plan for submission and hopes

to have at least a couple of days for the RUG to review it before it's submitted. She would like comments by Tuesday, March 19. Rick Schonfeld pointed out that a number of minor adjustments have been made based on cultural resource surveys. Parking and staging areas will be shown. In review, Mary is looking for content, not typos, etc.

Rick asked the group to look at the final map. There was discussion about adding a segment that would create another loop, as proposed by Greg Waterman, and whether it would be advisable to add this now. It was agreed that any routes on Forest Service land should be shown now, as the potential for adding them in later might be less likely; however, this route would not have the benefit of field testing or survey. Some of this route would also be located on private property, and this owner has not been contacted about the several routes that traverse their property. Resolution will take responsibility for consulting them about easements through their property for trails. Easements may be purchased or given, and stipulations about maintenance and other things could be required. Mary said that this particular proposed addition could actually be submitted as a revision to the plan later. All agreed this is a good approach. In another revision, Elizabeth Butler had suggested a modification that has not been made, and Rick said that this oversight would be fixed.

Related Items

Pryor told the group that the town is looking at an annexation proposal, which could include up to 1/3 of this RUG proposed recreation area.

On a lighter note, Todd announced that there will be a Donkey Race in the area in October and the town needs to develop a trail that's 5-12 miles long for this. He asked the RUG to make suggestions on a route that could be used. There were questions about what kind of trails or roads would be most desirable. Mary asked Westland to make some recommendations about this as well.

Review RUG Comment Letters on EIS Mitigation & Bronco Creek Exploration

Godec noted support letters to the Forest Service for the RUG plan from LOST, Rebuild Superior, and Town of Superior. He said that the goal for the group today is to approve the RUG support letter so that it can be submitted along with the plan to the Forest Service. After a final review, the group approved this letter and members signed it.

Regarding the comment letter on Bronco Creek exploration, RUG members had several comments. A revised letter incorporating these comments is attached to this summary.

Todd Pryor noted that the only leverage the community has to influence this activity is to increase the cost of the permitting compliance for Bronco Creek since mineral rights must be respected. He believes that it is suitable to ask the Forest Service to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement rather than an Environmental Assessment because of the magnitude of potential impacts; this would also be a much expensive proposition for the company.

Discussion of RUG Communications & Outreach Ideas/Plans and Additional Members

Godec pointed out the draft of an 'informational marketing' piece for the RUG and asked the group to review it. There was discussion about what this would be used for (member organization information, Chamber of Commerce availability, public and other potential users) and the format of it depending on that. Options of a two sided fact sheet or tri-fold brochure were discussed, as well as an electronic version. Todd said that the new Town of Superior website will have an ArcGIS map that visitors can click on for information. Jim Schenck pointed out that the RUG plan may be confused by people with the LOST and other trails in the area. There was concern about publicizing a plan that doesn't actually exist yet. Most thought that a general marketing piece about outdoor recreation in the Superior area would be valuable. All agreed that a clear distinction must be made between existing and proposed trails.

Two objectives for a printed informational brochure were agreed to by the RUG. These are communicating with RUG member organizations, and communicating with economic development organizations, who can distribute it to visitors and the general public. An emphasis needs to be on marketing the area in support of obtaining funding and grants, for example.

The suggestion is to go ahead with this copy (possibly modified by group comments), and to ask Westland Resources to prepare a map to go along with it. It was pointed out that Westland has done a map for the town that may be appropriate.

Another later product could be a more detailed fact sheet that can provide more detailed information about the RUG, its work, and how we got here.

Begin Discussion of Trail Plan Funding and Maintenance

Mary Morissette suggested that we not have this conversation today, but wait until discussions with Rio Tinto are further along, to see what they are willing to contribute.

Next Steps, Next Meeting

The group thought a meeting in May would be helpful, since conversations with Rio Tinto will be more advanced. It was tentatively scheduled for?

Wednesday, May 15, 2019

10:00 AM

Superior Town Hall – same meeting room