

Minutes of the Grand County Wilderness Group Board meeting February 27, 2023 3:00 pm

Present: Monica Sandstrom, Joyce Clair, Gary Piper, Roxanne Singler, Steve Hennings, Beth Collins, Toni Wujek, Al Rothenbach

CHLT easement: The Board looked at the map which showed the exact easement area that is proposed to be purchased. It is on the other side of the Colorado River from the River Run development and would save this parcel from being developed. It butts up against BLM land that leads to the Bowen Gulch Protection area and eventually to the Never Summer Wilderness area. Gary moved that we donate \$1000 to CHLT to help purchase this land piece. Roxanne seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Spring meeting: Sunday April 30 was suggested. Monica will check with the YMCA to see if that date is available. A Board meeting would be held Sunday, April 23 to plan the meeting. Perhaps HTA could be there.

Facebook: Oliver is overseeing the page now. Monica met with him to discuss plans. Members should send photos of activities to him. Al will send his email to the members so they can do this. It should also be put on our website to send photos to him of activities.

Cabin hosting: HTA will have a page on their website for sign up. The information for the sign up will be sent by email to members. Opening dates will be the Wednesday before Memorial Day for Monarch Cabin (May 24, 2023). A training day was discussed for that day. Also discussed the importance of new volunteers working with experienced ones. Monica will check with the Forest Service about the Adventure Packs for this year. Junco Cabin opening was discussed. The road opens June 15,

weather permitting. A cleaning day was set for June 16. Volunteers would start on June 24, 2023.

Communication: We currently have email set up so no one can respond to the whole group so this method could be used for hike announcements. That way only the hike leader would receive the responses.

Spending money: Ads on Google were discussed to advertise our group. Or other technology may be available for advertising. Oliver will be asked about this.

Board positions: Monica is going off the Board so a replacement is needed unless she is President. Joyce and Steve are eligible for a second term.

Hikes: Steve suggested that a clean-up hike could be done around Monarch Lake on the opening day May 24. It was suggested that we call hikers Trail Ambassadors and use the HTA sign up genius to organize. We need to find out exactly what the HTA software can do. There is already a spot for GCWG on their website so we should be able to collect volunteer hours and contact hours from them. Al will talk to Erica about this. They have a form we could use to report trail conditions and problems on the trail. Our purpose would be to educate the public about the Wilderness, Leave no Trace, etc. and report to HTA any issues with the trail. We will stick to the

trails that have registration boxes manned by GCWG. The hike leader would fill out the forms. Our handbook says each member should do four activities during the year. This will be encouraged at the Spring meeting. The hiking will be promoted as a service project to educate the public. An information sheet would be provided with information to share with the public. It was pointed out that HTA focuses on public lands and GCWG focuses on Wilderness. A

discussion was held about how to keep our identity and not just become a branch of HTA. HTA was contracted to supervise GCWG because the Forest Service did not cover us during COVID.

Cabin reporting of trail conditions: A discussion was held about how the hosts could be better informed of and report conditions of the trail.

(At 4:45 Joyce Clair had to leave and Beth Collins took notes)

It was suggested that perhaps the Cabin Hosts could make more use of the information on the registration sheets or the log books in the cabins or post information outside of the cabins ( on the white board) to inform visitors of adverse trail conditions and wildlife encounters. Or we could use a trail blog about conditions and wildlife.

It was discussed that GCWG has a wide variety of projects but does not have the volunteers to accomplish all the projects. There was a consensus that, being a service organization, priorities should be established. It was agreed that our priorities are:

1. CABIN HOSTING.
2. Trail Assessments
3. Trail Ambassador (at trailheads or hiking the trails)
4. Light trail maintenance on wilderness trails and our adopted trails.

Our Hikes will come under and serve these priorities

Instead of having one person to coordinate hikes, we will have a coordinator of Trail Assessment a coordinator of Trail Ambassador work and a coordinator of light trail work (although the same person may

coordinate the Trail assessments and later in the summer the trail maintenance)

The Board and the members have a good relationship with HTA. However, we are different organizations. HTA has a broad focus that covers all trails including: motorized, biking, winter trails, and high use urban trails while GCWG focuses on wilderness trails, foot trails, and trails that lead into and through the wilderness. The Board decided to establish a “working group” to coordinate with HTA and help each other by using HTA’s Sign-Up Genius platform, informing HTA of what GCWG members find on Assessment hikes and Trail Ambassador work and relaying information that Cabin hosts receive from visitors, and using HTA’s expertise to

promote GCWG and the importance of Wilderness on their website and our website. So far persons interested in being part of the HTA working group include Al and Toni, Monica, Gary Piper and Steve Hennings.

Monica suggested some social/educational hikes such as contacting someone like Doreen Summerlin to lead a wildflower hike, have a geology hike, or a hike in the burn/reforestation areas. There was a discussion about the pros and cons of this. Some were against a new activity when we don't even have enough volunteers to staff the cabins and others believed that these type of hikes would serve to educate so that we are better able to impart information to visitors about natural resources.

#### List of Actions

1. Toni - make check to CHLT and put in note or memo that if the easement is not purchased that the money will be returned to GCWG.
2. Monica – contact Snow Mountain Ranch about scheduling the Spring meeting Sunday April 30th
3. Beth – inform members of Spring meeting when determined.
4. Beth inform Board of meeting April 23rd if the Spring meeting gets scheduled for 30th
5. Beth inform HTA of dates of Board and Spring meetings and ask Maire to inform FS.
6. Al sent notice/put information on GCWG website on how to send photos to Oliver for use on social media.
7. Gary - ask Oliver what he thinks of ads on google or other technology for information re GCWG
8. See if other people want to be on the working group with HTA.
9. See if there are members who want to be on