

Lead King Loop Working Group

Conference call notes

February 19, 2019

Members of the group present on the conference call on February 19th included Ron Leach, Shelley Grail, Karen Shroyer (District Ranger, Sopris Ranger District, White River National Forest), Bob (?), USFS, John Groves, CPW, Chris Cox, Manette Anderson, and Ryan Vinciguerra.

The group discussed hiring a part time USFS employee to patrol the Loop for up to 120 days in the summer months. Karen would prefer to hire two people instead of just one for safety reasons. This is consistent with the Pitkin County Intergovernmental agreement with USFS to patrol certain road and trails in Pitkin county. The estimate for the two employees is \$25,000 each for the summer which would include their training insurance, worker compensation policy and vehicle. Stating pay would be \$16.00 per hour. Posting the jobs would need to be completed by early March with hiring to be completed by the end of March. The total costs for the two employees is proposed to be split by Town of Marble and Gunnison County. Chris offered housing in Crystal for the employees during the summer. A clear job description would be needed for the employees. The employees would have no enforcement authority but rather provide a presence and information only. Bob suggested a jeep Rubicon type vehicle would be preferable to an ATV for the employees to patrol with.

Legally restricting access to the Lead King Loop and instituting a permit system for OHV use was discussed. Karen said that OHVs are allowed on the Loop and it would not be easy for the White River National Forest to institute a permit system and restrict access to the Lead King Loop. The process would likely involve an environmental impact study and could take years to complete.

The Town of Marble and Gunnison County's vision for the Lead King Loop was discussed. Manette sees a need for formal short and long term goals and objectives with timelines attached as a place to start. An action plan needs to be developed with the big picture kept in mind. Everyone seems to agree with this plan of attack. Several ideas for obtaining professional planning assistance were

discussed including hiring a professional planner with an environmental background or reaching out to Western State College for help from their environmental sustainability program.

Commercial OHV rental operations doing business in the Town of Marble or the White River National Forest was discussed. Shelly reported that the Sopris Ranger District has no intentions of issuing permits for this type of business model and that two rental companies had been contacted last year regarding their business operations in the Lead King Loop area. Ron reported that the Town of Marble had also contacted two operators last year and had denied business licenses to both companies for their operations which included renting and dropping off OHVs to clients in Marble for day trips into the WRNF.

The White River National River Travel Management Plan was again mentioned as a resource document for everyone to read. Other ideas that were mentioned to help mitigate the impacts created by the increased usage of OHVs in the Lead King Loop area included social media outreach efforts, distribution of the Marble Chamber map to visitors, visitor brochures, signage and improved pull out areas on the loop.

Unanswered questions include which agency can legally restrict access to the Lead King Loop area and the Town of Crystal and what can this group do to legally restrict access. Which agency has ownership and maintenance responsibility on the Crystal road. Which agency has enforcement authority in the Town of Crystal and the Lead King Loop.

The next conference call is scheduled for 3:00 pm on March 19, 2019. Please let me know if you can not to be on the call.

Thanks to everyone on the working group for your time and energy to come with an appropriate management plan for the Lead King Loop.

Ron Leach