



Trails Preservation Alliance (TPA) 2015 End of Year Report

This report provides an overview of 2015 activities and events. For a more detailed review, please see projects/issues in the news section in the website news section. *Last year we said there was some light at the end of the tunnel for Off Highway Vehicles (OHV) recreation in Colorado...this year we say there is.*

Progress and Perspective. Years ago, while TPA was working with two older Colorado National Forest (NF) master plans, the Forest Service told us “point blank” that while they could not stop us from riding the trails in a particular NF, they were going to “make sure that our grandchildren could not.” On another occasion (in a different NF), a senior NF recreation planner told us that “his” NF was for skiing and wilderness use only, and he had no time for OHV recreation in “[his] forest.” We are sharing this historic information because we are not seeing this position in most of our current work with the Forest Service (FS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM). True, there are still a few isolated cases in which some District Rangers do not support OHV recreation, and they seem to go the extra mile not to support OHV recreation on public property. However, for 2015, TPA is pleased to report that we are starting to see our current Federal Land Managers showing an interest in fostering a mutually beneficial relationship with TPA and our goal to preserve OHV recreation. That’s good news, and we hope to bring you even more in 2016.



2015 Success Stories

The **Greater Sage Grouse** was not listed as an endangered /threatened species, which could have severely impacted large portions of the state we use for motorized recreation. As part of the multi-agency process to avoid listing, natural surface roads/trails were excluded from calculation of the surface disturbance cap applied in habitat areas in the Northwest Colorado Plan.

Improvements in the **Grand Junction BLM Resource Management Plan (RMP)** plan. Between the draft and the final RMP/Travel Management Plan (TMP), *more than 500 miles of routes proposed to be closed were allowed to remain open.* The TPA continues to work other efforts related to this RMP.

The recent federal court dismissal of the **Backcountry Hunters and Anglers challenge** to motorized routes on the Rico/Delores Ranger District of the San Juan NF was confirmed on appeal. *This was a major victory for the San Juan Trail Riders, the TPA and everyone who rides in that area.*

There are **several new single track projects** completed or in the process of being completed including:

- The Tenderfoot Trail in Summit County
- New trails in the Rampart Range area and new connector trail in the Uncompahgre National Forest area
- New single track routes in the Hartman’s Rocks area



- The Sidewinder Trail on the Gunnison Gorge Natural Conservation Area (NCA)
- The Tabeguache Connector Trail outside Grand Junction.

All of these single track projects are good examples of the local motorcycle clubs working with their local Federal Land managers to make this happen!

Legislation Issues

All of the issues discussed in the 2014 end of year report are still valid, and TPA is still pursuing them to help protect our sport. In 2015, TPA took on additional legislation issues:

- TPA is partnering with the Colorado Off-Highway Vehicle Coalition's (COHVCO) statewide effort for the licensing of OHV vehicles (UTV/ATV) for use on public roads. While this effort does not directly relate to our core efforts for our sport, it is a major factor in helping develop OHV

tourism/income in Colorado's small towns. The Colorado plan is modeled after systems Arizona and Utah currently have for OHV registration.

- TPA is also partnering with COHVCO in an effort to insure that the insurance requirements for OHV grants are not an insurmountable barrier to motorized trail development and that these grants continue to be provided in a timely manner.

Legal Issues

- **Bear Creek/Green Back Trout (Pike/San Isabel Forest /Pikes Peak Ranger District).** Motorcycle use of this area continues to be denied regardless of the facts and the patchwork of ownership of the land is still an issue. The FS has settled the lawsuit and is in the process of building several re-routes of trails to avoid the trout habitat area in the Bear Creek drainage. The FS is in the process of completing a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) study of the entire area.
- **Pike/San Isabel NF Challenge.** This issue concerns existing designations of more than 500 miles of routes on the Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM). This case was filed in January 2011 and challenges FS management of vehicle access to the six (6) Ranger Districts in the Pike/San Isabel NF currently in place. The TPA-led interveners have been allowed to participate indirectly in this effort and mitigate adverse impacts on historical access. This case has now been settled. The FS is in the process of developing a plan to meet the court's settlement agreement and

address the 500 miles of routes targeted by the lawsuit. The FS plan can be read on the PSI web site. NOTE: The TPA has hired a consultant/program manager to represent the TPA as the new FS plan is implemented.

- **Rico/West Dolores RD Travel Management Challenge.** This case was filed by the Colorado Chapter, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers (CBHA) and sought to close 14 prime motorcycle trails in the Rico/West Dolores area of the San Juan NF. Along with COHVCO, San Juan Trail Riders, Public Access Preservation Association, and the Blue Ribbon Coalition, the TPA intervened as co-defendants in concert with the Forest Service. The district court denied CBHA's motion for a preliminary injunction and ruled in favor of the Forest Service and pro-access interveners on the substantive claims of the case. CBHA appealed to the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit, which has now confirmed the lower court's dismissal.

The TPA stays actively involved in all ongoing legal issues.



Current OHV Tourism Projects

In 2014, the TPA accepted responsibility for an OHV tourism awareness project, and we are continuing to pursue this effort. The fundamental reason for encouraging OHV tourism in strategic Colorado communities is to garner the support of these communities in the ongoing struggle to keep public land open to motorized OHV travel. Once

communities begin to see the economic benefits of OHV tourism, they will be more motivated to protect their OHV trail assets from closure. Please see the TPA website for a more detailed discussion of this project.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The TPA has been actively engaged in a number of activities supporting our OHV goals:

The TPA is now a member of the Off Road Business Association (ORBA).



The Colorado 600 (Trails Awareness Symposium) is our major fund raising activity. KLIM, RM ATV/MX, KTM, Motion Pro and others continue to support this event!

TPA continues to work with the Rio Grand NF in the ongoing effort to protect the Vietnam War Memorial on the top of Sargent's Mesa.

TPA actively supported many OHV organizations in their requests for Colorado Parks & Wildlife OHV grants and other funding.

TPA submitted extensive comments on the Park Service's proposed motorized usage limitation on White Rim trail in Canyonlands NP outside Moab, Utah. Unfortunately, the Park Service chose a different direction from the one proposed by TPA. Although the outcome was disappointing, through this process TPA gained valuable knowledge that we will apply elsewhere.

TPA supported the startup of a new Montana off-road motorcycle club.

TPA donated funds for the successful litigation by Wyoming motorcycle clubs addressing the closure of their local Trail 38.

TPA has also partnered with the New Mexico Off-Highway Vehicle Association in support of their efforts on the Magdalena Ranger District, Mount Taylor area, Santa Fe NF/Carson NF TMPs.

TPA representatives continue to attend many USFS, BLM and State Parks meetings concerning issues related to travel management, endangered species issues, the OHV grant programs and Colorado Parks & Wildlife strategic planning.

TPA partnered with COHVCO to undertake a complete redevelopment of the 2012 economic contribution study. This study has proven to be a very important tool in preserving OHV recreation. This planned revision should prove an even more important tool in future discussions.

TPA partnered with the Bookcliff Rattlers MC to rent a trail dozer for 30 days to re-build the trail in the Uncompahgre NF.

BLM landscape-level work. TPA is opening discussions with the BLM regarding a master plan for motorized recreation in Colorado to ensure motorized concerns are addressed. Too often agency efforts do not reflect the desires of the motorized community.

Left Hand Canyon work. TPA believes this area of the Boulder Ranger District represents an important



PO Box 38093

Colorado Springs, Colorado 80937



recreational opportunity on the Front Range of Colorado, and TPA continues to push for reopening of the area.

TPA remains committed to efforts addressing routes in the Wildcat Canyon/Hayman fire area. Reopening of routes in this area has been delayed by the Earth First challenge to the PSI MVUM. With settlement of that litigation, reopening these important routes can move forward.

BLM efforts in the 4-Mile area of the Royal Gorge Field Office (FO) caused TPA to become very concerned about the flurry of proposals seeking to open extensive trail networks for the exclusive benefit of some small non-motorized user groups. Often these proposals have no funding and are seeking to close multiple-use areas. This is directly contrary to the "rising tide floating all boats" position conveyed by many land managers as part of the grant process. TPA advocates that all proposals should be governed by the same standards and requirements.

TPA is developing a new 5-year strategic plan to ensure the continued success of our long range work. This plan includes issues such as: (a) senior management, (b) development of a new TPA web site and (c) creating a new donor/endowment program for the TPA.

Major Projects in 2016

The **Grand Junction BLM RMP/Transportation Plan** remains a major issue. TPA continues to appeal the Grand Junction Field Office (GJFO) RMP. The current version of the plan allows for more than 500 additional miles of routes to remain open compared to the previous draft. That's good news. However, our appeal process continues as there are still many critical violations of federal law in the plan that will impact OHV recreation moving forward.

The **Rio Grande NF** has started a revision of their RMP and a subsequent update of their Travel Plan. TPA expects this revision to take at least five (5) years. We have been and will continue to be very involved in these proposals and the collaborative process leading up to them to ensure the area remains synonymous with multiple use routes.

Efforts targeting the **San Juan National Forest, Rico Delores Environmental Assessment and Travel Plan** remain ongoing, and TPA is heavily involved in these efforts to ensure motorized recreational opportunities are not set aside or lost.

TPA has taken a leading role in the **Pike/San Isabel NF Implementation Plan** resulting from the settlement of the Earth First lawsuit. TPA is actively working with local land managers to make sure the settlement is fully understood and applied correctly and that land managers have resources necessary to make good decisions.

TPA remains involved in the COHVCO-led project for the **licensing of all OHV (ATV/UTV) vehicles in Colorado** for use on public highways in a consistent manner throughout the state. Such licensing would be voluntary and separate from the current State Parks registration program.

The TPA is now a member of the **Governor's Colorado Outdoor Recreation Council**. We will use this involvement to promote the development of more OHV recreational opportunities.



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TPA has taken an active role in the **Western Governor Association** efforts regarding revision of the Endangered Species Act, which continues to function as a major barrier to recreational usage of public lands despite the often non-existent relationship between species decline and recreational usage of public lands.

TPA is partnering with the **National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council** in distribution of their new motorized trail development and maintenance guide. TPA believes this new resource will be an important tool in the analysis, development, and proper maintenance of routes throughout the country and is highly relevant to many of the issues encountered in the recent PSI litigation.

Donations

The TPA has continued to make donations to organizations working towards the same goals as the TPA. These organizations include:

- San Carlos MC, Pueblo
- COHVCO
- Meeker Rendezvous event
- Rocky Mountain Sport Riders (RMST)
- Book Cliff Rattlers MC
- USFS Divide District
- Gunnison MV club
- USFS Mount Taylor District
- Ride With Respect (Moab)
- Utah Trail Machine Association
- City of South Fork
- New Mexico Off Highway Vehicle Alliance (NMOHVA)

Summary

2015 was a very significant year for TPA operations and prospered on the successes we saw in 2014! 2015 was our 11th year as an Organization and our 9th year as an IRS-approved 501c3 Organization. As predicted, 2015 was the start of a 2 to 3 year period in which several major FS and BLM managed areas began undergoing their travel planning. The TPA will be actively involved with each of these activities. The importance of this effort cannot be overstated, as the outcome will dictate our access to public lands for the next 10 to 20 years.

The Colorado 600 Trails Awareness Symposium (http://www.colorado600.org/Colorado_600_2016/Home.html) has been our major fund raising activity for the last few years and will continue in the same format and structure for 2016. (Proven rider limit, with one-third new riders, one-third from industry and one-third returning riders who support our core mission.)

The TPA appreciates our 5-year support agreement with KLIM (<http://www.klim.com/>). *Gaining the support of the #1 Off-Road apparel manufacturer is a major endorsement of the TPA mission!*

The Rocky Mountain ATV/MX Supply Company (<https://www.rockymountainatvmc.com/>) continues to be a major financial supporter of our work. We are also grateful for all the TPA donations by individuals and other off-road businesses that have been on-board for several years!



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The TPA continues to be a 100% volunteer organization, putting a high percentage of all of our annual donations to direct use *for saving our sport*. The TPA Board thanks all of our supporters: individual, corporate and the clubs. Without their support we could not have accomplished the things we have so far. The future appears to be even more demanding and will require even more financial support to continue our successful efforts from 2014 and 2015.

Please contact us for suggestions concerning how you can help with the ongoing work TPA is pursuing on your behalf to save our sport in the Rocky Mountain Region.

THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT BUT OUR TASKS ARE FAR FROM OVER!

Thank you for your continued participation,

The TPA Board of Directors

