Meeting Notes For:
Meeting of Pikes Peak Recreation and Tourism Nonprofits:
Finding a Collective Voice and Building Bridges to Business and Government as the Pikes Peak Region Brands its Natural Resources

Wednesday, February 3rd, 2016
Penrose House
1661 Mesa Ave., Colorado Springs, CO 80906

Sponsors:
- El Pomar Foundation’s: Pikes Peak Recreation and Tourism Heritage Series
- Colorado Outdoor Recreation Industry Office, Colorado State Office of Economic Development and International Trade

Conveners:
- Rocky Mountain Field Institute – Jennifer Peterson, Ph.D. Executive Director
- Trails and Open Space Coalition – Susan Davies, Executive Director
- Colorado Outdoor Recreation Industry – Luis Benitez, Director
- El Pomar Foundation, Pikes Peak Recreation and Tourism Heritage Series – Walter Hecox, Senior Program Advisor

Purpose:
Nonprofit environmental and outdoors organizations in the Pikes Peak region are a vital part of what makes our recreation, tourism, and environment unique aspects of a high quality of life. El Pomar Foundation’s new Pike’s Peak Recreation and Tourism Heritage Series convened a meeting of these key stakeholders at a time when there are enhanced efforts to “brand” the region’s natural dimensions.

Group Topics:
• Funding Climate and Challenges, Jennifer Peterson
• Networking Opportunities between nonprofits, Susan Davies
• Brainstorm Branding of Pikes Peak Region Natural Amenities, David Leinweber
• Challenges and Opportunities for Nonprofits, Lauren Truitt

**Funding Climate and Challenges Group Conclusions:**

➢ **It would be beneficial to**

  - Increase investments and corporate headquarters from business sector to drive growth in philanthropic dollars for nonprofits who protect our natural resources that drive economy
  - Combine fundraising efforts, either as a whole or simply combine similar fundraising initiatives among similar organizations (Perhaps kick off a big nonprofit expo)
  - Increase awareness about our value
  - Create wider pool of potential donors – ask volunteers, grow connections with millennials, potentially grow relationship with military/veterans, diversify population and in turn increase donor saturation.
  - Build a database of funders and donors
  - Look to partner more with academia
  - Increase investment in parks from the government sector
  - Increase reliance on fundraising events
  - Prioritize relationships
  - Increase restricted versus unrestricted funding
  - Increase diversification of events and utilize more sources
- **Challenges faced are**
  - Decline of public and private partnerships
  - Sometimes the impact of what we do takes many years, so how do we effectively show our impact?

**Brainstorm Branding of Pikes Peak Region and Natural Amenities**

- Variety of activities including but not limited to: Mountain bike trails, hiking trails, OHV, ORV, bird watching, fishing, big game hunting, rock climbing, ice climbing, etc.
- Home to many natural wonders and popular tourist attractions including: Garden of the Gods, Pikes Peak, Royal Gorge, Arkansas River, Manitou Incline, Zoo, Olympic training facility, and Military bases
- Natural beauty traits including: scenic views, view sheds, vast land, open space and parks, rugged landscapes, numerous wildlife species, interesting geology, and a generally sunny weather
- Gateway to the Heart of Colorado
- Big Moments
- Free and easy access to the outdoors
- Close to home, right in our backyard
- Important history and heritage, ie Pikes Peak or Bust
- Make the extraordinary, ordinary. Meaning that though it is extraordinary to visitors, since it is in our back yard, it should be a regular thing for Coloradans, not to be only reserved for special occasions
- Ring the Peak
- Encourage health and wellness, as well as promote athleticism and fitness
- Home to many environmental labs, including RMFI and Alpine Study areas
- Pride that creates community ownership and builds stewards of the land
- Natural Resources
- Best Kept Secret
- Cannabis
- Microbrews

**Networking Opportunities between Nonprofits**

- Recognize shared interest/ identify your friends/ stay in your lane and collaborate, partner, and network with similar groups
- Do not silo oneself/ connect with not necessarily “like minded” groups/ go outside the box and take a chance
- Bring skills and resources together/ collaborate to avoid competing – come together for mutually beneficial project
- Have good communication and share that information – possibly convene more often
- Create social media/base-camp place to share information
- Reach out to obvious advocates who may not be engaged
- Make networking exciting by creating a win-win situation for everyone involved
- Be able to coach and be coached
- Utilize targeted recruitment

**Challenges and Opportunities for Nonprofits**

- Collaborate grant applications
- Create a means to efficiently share information
- There are multiple needs for the same spaces which gives an opportunity to collaborate to avoid resource saturation
- Utilize cross promotion and expand outreach pool
- Tap into big business/ create a matchmaking, speed dating event to pair businesses with nonprofits
- Educate the general public on money savings for nonprofits’ versus for profit in taxes; ie – work on trails/open spaces
- Assist with land management issues
- Utilize the local news, Gazette has a Thursday outdoor section
- Harness technology in the field and promote what people are doing
- Tap into colleges/universities to gain student volunteers
- Increase promotion of Adopt a Trail to businesses
- Engage citizenship and sell the quality of life
- Reach out to retirees, they have money and time

☑ Challenges
- Youth not getting outside even with vast opportunity
- Lack of knowledge/awareness of the important role that nonprofits play on the environment
- Lack of foundation support for environmental nonprofits
- Funding (The F Word)
- Finding middle ground with conflicting groups
- Lack of recognition for the work we do
- General public thinks they are contributing through taxes
- Under staffed
- Big business is not investing in the local community
- Capacity issues with land managers, over burdened and under funded
- Getting young people to disengage from their phones
- Lack of outdoor editorials within papers
- Tech coordination with utilizing social media, different websites, etc
- Multiple grant request for the same funds
- Working with a changing demographic
- Raising awareness and outreach
- Resource saturation
- Heavy competition for funding and volunteers
- Nonprofits are held to unrealistic budget standards