

**ROCC General Meeting Draft Minutes
Thursday, June 23, 2016**

1. High Alpine Regulation - Jen Parker

A. Ways You Can Help

- 1) 227 people have signed the online Keep Our(AY) Alpine Wild letter shown below. Please sign the letter if you haven't done so already by emailing Roze Evans or Al Lowande at evanslowande@gmail.com.

KEEP OUR(AY) ALPINE WILD

Dear Ouray County Planning Commissioners and Board of County Commissioners,

The people whose names appear beneath this letter all want to express their feelings about the process that is underway seeking to enact smart residential building regulations for mining claims in the Alpine Zone.

We are concerned that a large number of individual letters might cost the County a lot of unnecessary printing expense and would certainly cost you and County staff a lot of precious time dealing with them. So we ask that you treat this composite letter with the same gravity and respect that (# to be supplied) individual letters would justify.

We urge you to enact strong, smart rules/processes that discourage high-density alpine residential development and that prevent the negative ecological and economic consequences that would result. The tundra ecosystem is especially critical. We believe that any residential development in this fragile area above timberline is utterly inappropriate. The potential damage to watersheds, soils, plants and animals is simply unacceptable and the lack of any tree cover would make the visual impact devastating to the enjoyment of residents and visitors alike.

There are a number of reasons we feel that Ouray county needs rules at least as rigorous as our neighboring counties:

- If our rules are relatively lax, we become the go-to option for everyone wanting a high country home.
- The whole point of land use planning is to direct development to areas where it is appropriate from the viewpoint of economic, ecological and social factors. Unlike Ridgway, Ouray and Loghill Mesa, the high country makes no sense from any of those perspectives.
- If we are to have any hope of a future revival of the mining industry and its good-paying jobs, few things make less sense than building houses on mining claims. The residential owners (some of whom would probably have very deep pockets) would likely fight tooth and nail to prevent mining from happening anywhere near them.
- The main driver of our economy and its main source of jobs is tourism. Our tourists come for one major reason - the magnificence of our high country and its colorful mining history. Allow the marring of that alpine landscape with lots of houses and much of our tourist traffic will divert to our equally magnificent neighbors who have the good sense to preserve it.

Thank you for the time and effort you will put into this endeavor so crucial to the future of our County. Please make your constituents and future generations proud of the result.

- 2) Please sign the KEEP OUR(AY) ALPINE WILD Declaration of Support Petition.

- 3) If possible please collect Declaration of Support Petition signatures.
- 4) Please speak at the Ouray County Planning Commission public hearing on July 19 at the 4-H Events Center.
- 5) If you are not comfortable speaking in public Rachel Zatterstrom will hold a Public Speaking Coaching session on July 12 at 6:00 pm at the Ridgway Community Center

B. Important Dates

July 6 - Final High Country Regulation Draft and Report to BOCC

July 19 - Planning Commission Public Hearing

C. Discussion on High Alpine Regulation

The following is a break out of the size of the 841 mining claims above 9,500 feet:

less than 1 ac. - 20 claims

1 ac. - 23 claims

2 ac. - 24 claims

3 ac. - 24 claims

4 ac. - 52 claims

5 ac. - 76 claims

number of claims greater than 5 ac. = 693

number of claims less than 5 ac. = 148

6 ac. - 69 claims

7 ac. - 87 claims

8 ac. - 89 claims

9 ac. - 137 claims

10 ac. - 214 claims

number of claims less than 10 ac = 606

number of claims greater than 10 ac. = 235

11 ac. - 2 claims

13 ac. - 4 claims

14 ac. - 2 claims

16 ac. - 1 claim

18 ac. - 1 claim

19 ac. - 1 claim

20 ac. - 5 claims

21 ac. - 3 claims

31 ac. - 1 claim

65 ac. - 1 claim

Rein van West stated that there should be more restrictive acreage and square footage in the high alpine zone.

Scott Williams stated that the 35-acre zoning applies to new subdivisions, but smaller acreage is allowable for legal, non-conforming lots, such as mining claims. However, there is a site-development review process that these mining claims would have to go thru in Ouray County.

Al Lowande suggested writing letters to the Planning Commission and the BOCC as individuals and not as ROCC members.

The next High Alpine Regulation Leadership Committee Meeting will be at 10:00 am on July 1st at Jen Parker's house.

It appears that the BOCC wants to prevent building above timberline, because any building in the Alpine Tundra would be harmful to the fragile tundra ecosystem.

The Leadership Committee has talked about hiring an attorney to give an opinion letter on various legal issues that might be raised with regard to this High Alpine Regulation. Scott Williams is talking to a number of attorneys who have been recommended to the committee.

Marti Whitmore, the county attorney, has expressed the opinion building development can be limited by the regulation without that being a taking, but that limitations placed on mining claim development would be a taking.

2. Business Meeting

A. Approval of May 19, 2016 Minutes

Rein van West made a motion to approve the minutes and Jim Stephenson seconded the motion. Motion passed.

B. Treasurer's Report - Scott Williams

Net Income for the year is \$6,362.71 and expenses for the year are \$8,773.09, which includes \$6,500 in grants. Therefore, net income for the year is <\$2,410.38>.

So far from the \$10,000 anonymous donation given to ROCC last year, \$2,500 has been expended to cover part of Rachel Zatterstrom's salary. And \$5,000 has been expended on the Ridgway Public Schools LED Program.

C. Committee Reports

1) Public Lands - Jim Stephenson

See proposed By-Law change on the next page.

Jim Stephenson made a motion to adopt the By-Law change and Tom McKenney seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Committee: Public Lands

Date: 5 April 2016

Topic: Bylaw change to facilitate timely action by ROCC committees.

Background:

- Ouray is approximately 50% public lands. So public land management has been a critical issue for ROCC.
- Historically, the ROCC public lands committee had broad authority to support good public lands management.
- The ROCC Bylaws were updated in 2014. The bylaws require membership and Board approval for "the adoption, modification, or repeal of a Council policy or position and/or a specific action to be taken on behalf of the Council." (Article 7 Section 7.1).
- The effect of the Bylaws is that ROCC's Public Lands Committee must get Board and membership approval for any action related to good public lands management.
- ROCC used to have monthly business meetings. Now business meetings occur only every other month.
- ROCC members participate actively in WCC's public lands committee. In the past, ROCC's support of WCC's positions has been very helpful. Currently, ROCC has not been active in supporting issues of common concern.

Potential Issues:

- From time to time, requests for letters of support come from organizations such as the Southern Rockies Conservation Alliance, the Wilderness Society, Great Old Broads for Wilderness and other well known and respected organizations. Sometimes these requests are on issues of importance to ROCC. For example, recently there was a request for a letter supporting preservation of lynx habitat in Colorado. Since we have lynx habitat here, ROCC might wish to support lynx habitat elsewhere to set a precedent.
- Also, recently the BOCC considered whether to renew their support for the expansion of the Sneffels Wilderness area. The time frame between notice and action by the BOCC was only several days.
- Depending on when a need for action occurs relative to the schedule of ROCC business meetings, it can be up to two months before the public lands committee could present and get member and board approval.
- As a result, ROCC misses opportunities to impact important issues.
- When ROCC is able to support other organizations of issues of common interest, those organizations are more likely to support ROCC in times of need.
- ROCC's action on issues can make a difference.
- Other ROCC committees, such as the Land Use and the Affordable Housing committees, are also impacted by the inability to take timely action.

Action Taken:

- No action has been taken to date.

Action Recommendation:

Amend Article 7 Section 7.1 of ROCC's Bylaws to read as follows:

Section 7.1. Council Decision-Making, Open Meetings and Member Participation. The Council is intended to be a democratic, grass-roots organization, and to that end both the members and the Board shall approve the adoption, modification, or repeal of a Council policy or position and/or a specific action to be taken on behalf of the Council, provided that where time constraints would prevent timely action, such actions may be approved by the Board. Members are encouraged to attend and participate in any meeting of the members and/or the Board, and members may make motions and vote on any matter brought before the meeting requiring approval of the members

DATE	May 19, 2016
	Public lands
CHAIR / DESIGNEE	Jim Stephenson
COMMITTEE REPORT Please keep reports to 2-3 paragraphs	<p>There are 4 issues to report on;</p> <p>1. Wilderness Proposal. Senators Bennet's office has expressed interest in reintroducing the Wilderness in the senate. He needs evidence that the issue is still alive and wants support from the local government and as well as some local businesses etc. The Ouray BOCC and Ridgway Town council have renewed their support and reissued their resolutions. Several community leaders and businesses have agreed to give quotes and LTEs. We are monitoring the progress. This show is being co-ordinated by the Bennet staff and the Wilderness support group of the Wilderness Society.</p> <p>2. BLM Uncompaghre Field office is ready to release the resource management plan and we will be preparing to comment on the EIS.</p> <p>3. SPEADMER record of decision has been released and the WCC PLC has registered our objections on 4 points. We won on only one issue. The Forests Service has agreed to enhance their monitoring notifications.</p> <p>4. This is the big one! The GMUG is preparing to begin the process for the Forest Management Plan Revision. There was an important and well attended meeting of a large and growing alliance of groups that are preparing to participate in this process. It will likely be about a 7 year process with much monitoring as assessing of forest health and conditions along with many comments and meetings etc. The group has already had the first tele-conference and will have bi-monthly calls.</p>
ACTION ITEM(S)	<p>#1. May need some volunteer help to produce the requested documentation etc. Nothing certain right now, this is a slow moving process and not in the spotlight because it is an election year.</p> <p>#2. When the EIS is released, I may need some comments from users of the areas concerned.</p> <p>#3. I may ask for monitoring help if we are tasked for that.</p> <p>For #4...Members should be prepared to report in on areas of concern and comment about how it should be managed in the new management plan. I would like to see a deeply interested and active group of volunteers that would participate in some field work and writing comments.</p>

Next Jim Stephenson updated the Public Lands Committee report shown above from the last ROCC General Meeting.

Item 1 - Won't happen in the near future.

Item 2 - The BLM Uncompahgre Field Office Resource Management Plan has been released and comments on the plan are due by September 1. Lands with wilderness characteristics are important in this plan.

Item 3 - The Forest Service agreed to enhance monitoring notification and WCC registered four complaints on SPEADMER.

Item 4 - GMUG's Forest Management Plan Revision release has been push back to 2017.

2) Grants Committee - Scott Williams

The committee has received two grant requests, which can be paid out of the remaining \$2,500 from the anonymous \$10,000 donation to ROCC.

a. Top of the Pines, Inc. has requested \$1,000 for designing and building new hiking trails and a family oriented bike trail.

b. Trust for Land Restoration has requested \$1,500 to help acquire patented mining claims.

Tom McKenney made a motion to email a letter to ROCC members asking them to help support the buying of mining claims by the Trust for Land Restoration. Jim Stephenson seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Rein van West made a motion to approved a \$1,000 grant to Top of the Pines, Inc. with the proviso that we express concern about over-signage at TOP and that there should be separate trails for hikers, bikers and skiers. Chuck Wyre seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Jim Stephenson made a motion to approve a \$1,500 grant to the Trust for Land Restoration. Tom McKenney seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Scott mentioned that there is still \$1,250 left in the general grant budget for this year.

3) Clean Energy Committee - Rein van West

The topic at the last committee meeting was about solarizing Ouray County. The idea is to make 100 percent of Ouray County's energy production from renewable energy by purchasing such things as solar panels in bulk with large discounts. The more people who sign up to purchase solar panels, the larger the discounts.

The committee spent a lot of the meeting discussing the pros and cons of solarization and the committee members' enthusiasm for tackling this issue.

Leif Juell will work up the numbers on the \$/watt cost of solar panels using solarization.

4) WCC Report - Rein van West

Six coal hearings are being held all over the U.S. about the future of coal in the U.S. One of the hearings was in Grand Junction today.

The BLM has put a three-year moratorium on new coal leases.

Mountain PACT is an advocacy organization that is working on this coal issue.

The big problem is that well paid coal miners (on average \$80,000 salary) are losing their jobs and having to take less well paying jobs. So there has been a suggestion to increase coal mining lease fees and use the increased fees to retrain coal miners to get jobs outside of the coal mining industry.

D. New Business

This Saturday River Fest will be held in Rollins Park from 9 am to 6 pm and music begins at 3 pm.

Tom McKenney thanked all the ROCC members who helped with the Adopt-a-Highway cleanup.

Next ROCC General Meeting will be on Wednesday, July 20th at the Ridgway Community Center.