

Joshua Baruch <[REDACTED]>

From: Joshua Baruch <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sun Jun 28 2015 21:18:13 GMT-0600 (MDT)
To: "Valente, Susan" <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: Permit Application Status
Attachments: BLM Comments 06272015.pdf Logo_copy.tiff
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June 27, 2016

To Whom It May Concern and Susan Valente (BLM Kremmling):

I am writing to explain why I believe Colorado Wilderness Rides and Guides (CWRAG) would be an important addition to the currently permitted guide services on the Upper Colorado River and in the Upper Colorado River Basin. The BLM's stated goal is to expand access to this area to both veterans and underserved youth. CWRAG is in a unique position to do so with its established relationships and history with both of these populations and its ability to offer both guiding services and transportation from Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, and Jefferson counties. Because of its experience in working with veterans and underserved youth AND its transportation authority, CWRAG is one of the only organizations positioned to provide start-to-finish services that would allow veterans and underserved youth from the Front Range to experience the majestic beauty of the Upper Colorado

CWRAG has been working with veteran populations since the company was founded in 2009. As the son of two veterans, I have spent a lot of my life working with and around the veteran population and understand many of the nuances involved in working with the veterans. We have had and continue to have veterans and active duty military on staff. We helped finance a veteran non-profit in its start up phase and have worked to bring awareness to veteran suicide (which has increased from 18 to 22 a day in the last four year, indicating that much of this population still does not receive the services it needs). We donated training, resources, guiding services, and logistical support to a 2010 veteran group ascent of Longs Peak. Many of these veterans suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and the trip was designed to offer a chance for them to heal as they bonded with each other and experienced the therapeutic properties of wilderness areas. We also worked with the Sierra Club Mission Outdoors and the National Park Service to create the inaugural trip of the Post to Parks Program, which focused on giving active duty military a chance to explore and connect with each other in the wilderness as a means of healing from the traumas of war.

Were we to be granted a permit on the Upper Colorado River and in the Upper Colorado

River Basin, we would be able to provide both rafting and multi-sport trips to many more veterans than our currently accessing this wonderful wilderness area. The Sierra Club Mission Outdoors as well as Fort Carson, Peterson Air Force Base, and Warren Air Force Base in Wyoming have all expressed their enthusiasm for creating trips with us were we to receive this permit.

In regard to access for underserved youth, we currently partner with Jefferson County Public Schools, the City of Westminster, Koru Foundation, and Living Well Transitions – all organizations that serve at-risk or underserved youth. We have provided deeply discounted rock climbing trips to Jefferson County's at-risk youth and they are very interested in both multi-sport and rafting trips for a longer day experience. Similarly, the City of Westminster, that runs a number of programs for underserved youth, has told us they would immediately partner to create trips for their youth were we to receive this permit. The Koru Foundation, supporting students with personal struggles, and Living Well Transitions, a therapeutic program for teens and young adults with high-risk behaviors, are also very excited to build programming in the Upper Colorado River area. None of these programs currently have affordable access to wilderness experiences in this area.

With both the veteran and the underserved youth groups, our authority from Colorado Public Utilities Commission to provide transportation to outdoor areas will allow for smooth transitions and a uniform start-to-finish experience. We know how important it is to build trust with these populations and that the group experience starts the moment they depart. As far as I am aware, none of the currently permitted outfitters on the Upper Colorado have authority to transport clients from the Front Range to the Upper Colorado and thus we would provide a unique service attune to the logistical concerns and special needs of these underserved populations.

Colorado Wilderness Rides and Guides is committed to giving back to our community. We would be excited to offer affordable trips to both veterans and underserved youth in a magnificent wilderness area some of them may otherwise never see in their lifetimes. In addition to our company's own commitment, we are building a corporate give-back program where our corporate clients can sponsor individuals or full groups as part of their reservation process.

CWRAG would be very pleased to receive this permit and believe we would be a beneficial contributor to Upper Colorado River Area.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Conversation Contents

Comments in Support of CWRAG for further Permitting

Stacy Bare <[REDACTED]>

From: Stacy Bare <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sun Jun 28 2015 16:50:22 GMT-0600 (MDT)
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Comments in Support of CWRAG for further Permitting

June 26, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my strong belief that granting Colorado Wilderness Rides and Guides (CWRAG) a permit on the Upper Colorado will result in significant benefits to the veteran community of the state. I have worked closely with CWRAG since 2010 and have valued our partnership tremendously. I know the owner, the son of two veterans, to be deeply concerned with veteran issues and a great supporter of our efforts to bring veterans to the outdoors.

In 2011, CWRAG donated time, resources, training and guiding services for a veteran expedition of Longs Peak. All the veterans on this trip, many who suffer from PTSD, successfully summited and many have since become advocates for the therapeutic potential of wilderness experiences. CWRAG has also partnered on our Post to Parks program to help both active duty military and veterans experience the healing nature of the wilderness. Throughout these programs, CWRAG facilitates important group bonding activities and creates a safe space where veterans can share some of their past trauma and receive much needed support from each other.

With an already established and trusted partnership, were CWRAG to receive this permit, we would be able to quickly organize affordable veteran trips on the Upper Colorado River. Since CWRAG can transport veterans from the Front Range under their transportation permit, the driving time to and from the Upper Colorado area would also be part of the group experience and would assist with veterans sharing with each other throughout the excursion.

I strongly encourage you to grant CWRAG this permit, as I know it will be of great benefit to the veteran community.

Sincerely,

Stacy

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Stacy Bare
Director
Sierra Club Outdoors

[REDACTED]

"Connecting people to nature for the benefit of both"

[REDACTED]