

## August 13, 2020 Ouray Ice Park Advisory Team Meeting Minutes

The Ice Park Advisory Team held its regular meeting on August 13, 2020 in Women's Club Park in Ouray from 6:00 pm to 8:20 pm.

Attending were Elías de Andrés Martos, Katie Beringer, Steve Berwanger, Clint Cook, Ethan Funk, Dawn Glanc, Angela Hawse, John Hulburd, Mark Iuppenlatz, Grant Kleeves, Bill Leo, Diane Mielcarz, Pat Ormond, Frank Robertson, Todd Rutledge, Lance Sullins, Josh Vincent, Matt Wade, and John Wood.

### Agenda:

Level Set and Ground Rules	Frank
CGS Group Recommendation	Matt
Comments on Process and Results	CGS Reps
Feedback on Recommendation and Process	IPAT Members
Process Going Forward	Frank
Open Discussion	All

Frank reminded the group of the output of the prior work session, a charge to propose assignment of one part of a provisional Catch-up allocation in response to last season's use profile. These 100 Service Days (SDs) are being added to move Commercial Use closer to the operational target of 15% from 12% based on the data collected and our functional capacity model for last season. Our investments in the Ambassador program and data systems are paying big dividends in the form of actionable information.

Matt presented a proposed division of the 65 SDs for assignment to current Contracted Guiding Operations (Incumbent CGOs). This adaptive management trial is for the coming season only and must be used during weekdays. The attached letter documents the methods used and the resulting split in detail. First the CGOs, then the IPAT members commented on the process and result of this off-line group deliberation. Though not all agreed with the proposal, 8 of 10 CGOs did, and representatives of the two others made their counterpoints during the meeting.

One would have preferred a private opportunity to make the case for an allocation increase individually with OIPI as a neutral arbiter. The other felt that the former Concessionaire should not receive any additional allocation until their portion of the total was significantly reduced from 50%, which was awarded by the City in recognition of providing that service, and that continuing with so large a portion constituted an unfair business hegemony.

John Wood observed that the outcome was equitable, and encouraged the IPAT community to build on this collaboration and OIPI to continue institutionalizing toward a sustainable system independent of individuals.

All who asked for an increase are accommodated by the proposed distribution, with the two different levels of assignment based on objective criteria. Because of the unique approach taken with this matter, the chair asked the IPAT members (just this once) for a motion (John moved, Grant seconded) and vote (unanimous) to make the CGO group's proposal a formal IPAT recommendation. Though it was not unanimous, OIPI views this reasonable result as close to consensus as likely and agreed to adopt it for this component of the overall allocation for the coming season.

OIP further agreed with most of the longer-term recommendations in the letter from the group and will implement several of them this season. We are establishing a flex pool; we will have mid-season reviews of performance and projections with individual CGOS, particularly use of their allocations; and base any future adjustments on multi-year records of use vs. allocation. We will consider multi-year permitting and possibly changing the allocation metric to User Days going forward. With plenty going on already we will stick with SDs and the one-year cycle for this season.

Many thanks to John Wood for the suggestion of the process for this special allocation, and to Matt Wade for leading the off-line group effort.

In addition to the Baseline and Catch-up allocations, there will be another increase in Commercial Use for the coming season, based on the fact that Institutional Users are projected to hold their events during the pandemic at perhaps one-third lower attendance than last season (3% of capacity). That they have never used their targeted 10% and may be here less than usual next season has given OIPI confidence enough to redirect some IGE allocation to Commercial Use in a second adaptive management trial for this season only. This provisional allocation must also be used by Incumbents during weekdays only.

Since it is a User category transfer, the IGE Redirect allocation will be applied in a blanket uplift for all Incumbents as a percentage of their Baseline allocation. That is, if the number of SDs for Incumbents in the IGE Redirect were 60, 10% of the total Baseline of 600, and each Incumbent would be assigned 10% of their Baseline allocation from this program.

All Incumbent CGOs will receive an allocation letter on September 1, detailing their SDs from Baseline, Catch-up and IGE Redirect.

The other 35 SDs from the Catch-up allocation, and a small additional number from the IGE Redirect, are reserved to create opportunities for a few additional guide services to join our CGO roster. New Entrants' starting allocations will be their Baseline, may be used on any days, and are provisional, conditioned on review of performance relative to their proposals and allocations during their first season.

CGOs expressed a variety of concerns about this expansion, ranging from waiting for a year, to waiting until Incumbents are "satisfied," to accepting only programs that are different than those of Incumbents, to requiring certain longevity or prior permitted operations, to considering whether these small starting allocations can support a business. On that last item, Clint noted the dearth of back-country capacity to supplement Park use; Matt noted that managers of public lands are actively promoting increased guided use there.

All CGOs must comply with the same requirements, and services applying for the first time will be evaluated on their qualifications, including actual and planned training and certifications, as well as their business proposals. We discussed a mentoring program to help those new to the Park succeed, and arrived at using the AMGA Scope of Practice as guidance for New Entrants' training programs and OIPI's evaluation of new applicants.

At the time of the IPAT meeting there were three parties expressing interest [and since then two more have done so] for this first new opportunity in many years. With more requests than we will approve, OIPI has established a boundary condition that the increase in the number of permitted CGOs will be kept significantly below the expansion of the total allocation, to avoid diluting the business opportunities for all. [The OIPI Board after the meeting established a further criterion for this program in preference for local guide services. Priority will be as follows: Ouray County, then adjacent counties, then Colorado-based operations.]

OIPI will evaluate applicants after posting the opportunity on our web site through August 31. OIPI expects to complete its selection of New Entrants by October, work with them ahead of the season on orientation, and support them moving forward on their roadmaps for programs and training.

A Flex Program will be re-established this season, targeting 5-10% of total allocation. A portion of the IGE Redirect will be reserved for this purpose and any SDs not assigned, or vacated by CGOs, will go to the Flex pool. A primary objective for the pool is to provide additional opportunity to CGOs using their allocations before Presidents Day. Depending on projections at mid-season reviews, OIPI may provide more or fewer SDs to fewer or more CGOs. Depending on water, temps and crowding, OIPI may decide not to assign Flex days, providing us a further tool in adaptive management.

OIPI is holding Chicks' 30 SDs until we understand their path, and will carefully consider the suggestion that they be reserved for women's programs. The crew held a moment of raucous non-silence for the two Chicks present to convey to the rest our great appreciation for all they mean to us.

Given we have determined allocations, Incumbents returning for the coming season will not have to reapply, and we'll update other documentation with them by October.

We are looking with significant concern at how to manage User traffic in the Park during the pandemic. We have and will continue to consult with Ouray County Public Health, the City of Ouray, AMGA, and CGOs on regulations, best practices, and potential mitigation plans. OIPI will generate a COVID Operating Plan and review it with our communities prior to the start of the season.