

Pikes Peak Outdoor Industry Association

Stakeholder Survey

Open-Ended Responses

PLEASE SHARE ANY ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION'S OUTLOOK, CONCERNS, AND/OR OPPORTUNITIES.

I feel guides and outfitters are considered adversarial by most land manager. My business is directly limited by this relationship.

Workforce development and retention on the seasonal staffing side of things will be an important factor moving forward.

We anticipate continued demand within our industry along with continued backlogs on new RV deliveries from OEMs. Used sales are very strong. We anticipate a potential downturn in third quarter of 2022. The the major impacts for our industry are things that take money away from a typical family budget which are increase fuel costs, increase interest rates and inflation.

We are a growing community with new concerns, and learning from like communities (Fruita, Trinidad, etc.) is really helpful.

Well, the Incline certainly doesn't need any promotion. It's reputation is widespread. If anything its popularity has resulted in a vehement backlash from a small but vociferous group of people who consider it a nuisance instead of the asset it really is to a village that relies heavily on tourism. That dichotomy is eminently frustrating. If anything the Incline is only going to become more popular and the village of Manitou Springs would do well to embrace that fact and leverage that popularity for the good of their economy instead of adopting a stance that bewilders and alienates tourists.

Protecting and utilizing the outdoors is important for our business/agency in that it promotes health and wellness.

Group access to public needs to improve. Permitting process too onerous.

Concerns: Recruiting personal. Worry about the lack of interest in applying for our open job opportunities. Wishes: Adding off-road adventures in Colorado Tourism as an outdoor tourism activity.

Positive forward thinking

The influx of growth and tourism into this part of Colorado has hurt this beautiful place. The greed around growth has hurt this place.

The CO4WDA is a statewide association of four-wheel drive clubs in Colorado, and we do not have employees, however economics impact our membership. As an example: higher fuel costs mean that many people will stay closer to home rather than driving across or out of state to go four wheeling.

This may increase and already overused motorized trail system and increase potential conflicts with other groups. There seems to me little effort on the part of federal and state land managers to address the dramatic increase in trail use along the front range.

We are championing several initiatives to promote both inclusivity and diversity through promotions and events.

As a powersports retailer, service station and parts supplier, our business relies on the public land in the area to be open to use by motorcycles and ATV's. Keeping these areas open to OHV use is imperative to our survival in this industry. It's our passion and what we know best and we all love doing what we do.

The need for more single track riding opportunities increases as the number of users increases.

Our national forest is being destroyed by the uncaring or uneducated visitor. We are on the brink of a disaster if we continue to promote visitation without EDUCATION

My organization is indirectly affected by outdoor recreation, we have three outdoor rec outfitters, but our outdoor recreation is one of the biggest draws to bring visitors in our region. However, our outdoor assets are very fragile, so education, maintenance, and visitor dispersion both geographically and seasonally is of VITAL importance to maintain our incredible outdoor resources.

As the City of Colorado Springs and Teller County continue to grow, the resulting increase in traffic in incorporated Teller County could have widespread negative impacts on a variety of local businesses including the Lost Dutchman.

A strong concern is not only finding staff, but finding qualified diverse staff from underrepresented populations.

I work in the water resources/distribution industry. Although long-range planning exists for water in our state, it does not appear that land use authorities are considering the water supplies required to support the growth, and possibly tourism, that is happening and being promoted in Colorado. This is not a "rich" industry - in fact some people believe clean water is a "right" (not a service) and should be free. The public is barely educated about water, not because we don't try, but because it isn't an advertised emergency so they don't CARE. They have no idea what goes into treating the water or obtaining the water rights, they seem to just follow fads and mandated watering restrictions. The necessary water resource, rights, infrastructure, and demand management improvements to meet the projected demands for the next few years to the next century seem to be ignored, or at best placed on the back burner. My organization's primary concern is how this is a sustainable way to develop and move forward in the future.

With OHV use we continue to see huge growth in sales and use but opportunities have predominantly either been limited (closed) or remained the same.

Addition of new (and enhancement of existing) outdoor recreation site needs to gradually increase in order to accommodate increased interest, due to COVID-inspired increased awareness of the benefits of being in the outdoors and the ever increasing population in the three-county area, especially El Paso County.

Life is good outdoors.

Trail closures in the national forest system which condenses users is one of the largest threats to our industry. The Forest Service has closed seasonal a significant number of trails in and around the Pikes Peak region until June 15th. With Memorial Day week one of if the largest outdoor weekend these seasonal closures push people out of the state. The high country in Colorado is still snowed in this time of year. The Pikes Peak region is open for access, but closed by FS. Does two weeks really make a difference or was it arbitrary?

Representing the interests of class 1 ebikes, we need more trail access, and a faster process in getting approval.

We are a small business in a small town. Our capacities are about at maximum proficiency in servicing the volume of people who roll through. The public lands in our area are swamped with overlapping uses, particularly from illegal campers. Our region is in area that is sensitive to growth, meaning we don't have the infrastructure, public servants, or commerce to serve the growing recreational populace in our region. My personal guidance is to stay small, keep on a simple path, and control the quality of our services. We could use more management resources of the public lands up here - maintenance of ATV roads, trails, access and policing of remote areas for illegal uses including off road, poaching, fires, shooting arsenal types of weapons. Access to personal or commercial wade fishing in South Park is quite intense though not as bad as the Front Range in the vicinity of urban boundaries in comparison. Designated access with managed trails, fencing, signage and parking with toilets would be a tremendous asset to the public waters up here.

Would like to see Old Stage road and Gold Camp cleaned up.

PLEASE SHARE ANY ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS ABOUT OUR INDUSTRY AND REGION'S OUTLOOK, ISSUES, GAPS, AND/OR OPPORTUNITIES.

Public - Private partnerships should be given a higher priority to achieving current recreation and conservation goals.

I am not sure about access to other groups. I never realized that was an issue. If you increase the fees to regulate demand (creating a supply/demand issue) then you restrict the access to other groups.

While I indicated agreement that information on such policies as Leave No Trace is available, we can do a much better job in this regard. Given the number of tourists and the area's growing population we have a lot of people using our resources who could be better educated in outdoor etiquette and behavior. Those who live here and spend a lot of time utilizing our outdoor resources have a reverence, respect and appreciation for just how precious those resources are. In my opinion urban dwellers aren't as likely to have that same appreciation and respect. Sometimes it's a simple matter of educating people. Other times, unfortunately, it's a callous disregard for our resources and the woeful attitude that someone else will pick up their litter or take care of a trail issue or repair some damage to a facility. Sadly, I don't have a lot of faith in people to do the right thing.

Many/most of these that I marked as "neutral" were in lieu of there being an "unsure/I don't know" option - I'm not familiar with some of these issues and variables broadly, as I tend to stick to recreating in the open space area near where I live. (sorry)

We must to a local model for public land management and stewardship.

Planning needs to be done to determine WHERE land should be conserved and WHERE new recreational assets should be built. We are overused in some key areas but also under-used in other parts of the region that desire more outdoor recreation, such as in western Teller County. We need to work collaboratively to find more "win-win" scenarios.

Open more land for responsible outdoor recreation opportunities

Due to the growth of population and the desire to increase tourism - the future outlook is bleak. For example, the amount of trash on the highways and roads has increased so much that we may as well be in Philly.

The motorized community through the OHV Sticker Program and Grant Program managed by Colorado Parks and Wildlife contributes over \$4.5 million dollars back to keeping motorized trail opened and maintained in Colorado. Our member clubs through the Adopt-A-Trail program have adopted and maintain over 90% of the over 50" motorized trails in Colorado. We do all of this at no cost to local, State and Federal agencies and yet it is the motorized user groups that are targeted the most for trail closures, increases in fees and lack of access to our public lands.

Most outdoor users are respectful of the resources, unfortunately, there is a small contingent that not only abuse those resources, but they also abuse anyone who confronts them.

Some of my neutral scores are because I think we are heading in the right direction but we could do more.

I don't know the budgets of the forest agencies but they do a good job of keeping trails clean and maintained

Trail maintenance & construction is limited or nonexistent

Not if, but WHEN the next fire will occur because visitors do not adhere to rules. We are in one of the WORST drought situations ever. Haven't we learned from the past?

Timed reservations make sense to help spread people out, but pay to play makes our outdoor resources less accessible to some of our underserved communities. When people can easily access and interface with nature, they're far more likely to understand and fight for conservation efforts.

Is there a way to educate all recreational users about trail etiquette, such as NOT littering or leaving dog crap everywhere or running people over with your bike or wrecking everyone's enjoyment by blasting music on their crappy phone speakers? Can we increase fines and punishment for littering and dog crap and carving on trees/rocks, and advertise that somewhere? Trails that were once a peaceful way to enjoy nature are now overflowing with entitled hypocritical loud trashy people and their trash. And what ever happened to head phones? It's like you have to drive 3+ hours west or go off-trail, which is not ideal for nature preservation, to get away from the riff raff that enjoys nature by making it disgusting?

Some of the public land managers' restrictions for a particular purpose can have negative impacts on the concerns of other managers. For example, the cast-in-iron sheep protection policy of Colorado DPW to not allow any new trails above timberline results in wider and/or braided "social trails" -- thus significantly destroying tundra grasses, mosses, alpine flowers. The hikers are going to get where they want to go whether there is a "system trail" or not.

Land managers (Forest Service) turn down help and do not ask even as groups regularly offer help with trails.

We're reaching a point of over-regulation, over maintenance, (signs and fences everywhere), while at the same time excluding new user groups, such as ebike riders.

Specifically "waterways" or creeks specifically are not well maintained.

WHAT ARE YOUR ASPIRATIONS FOR THE OUTDOORS - THE INDUSTRY, ASSETS, INFRASTRUCTURE, OR OTHERWISE - IN THE PIKES PEAK REGION?

We find the proper balance between conservation and recreation which includes expanding recreational opportunities to spread use.

In the Pikes Peak region, I would love to see outdoor enthusiasts spreading out more and utilizing more public lands instead of the same places. It would be beneficial to provide more safe connectivity between trails and parks. As a youth development and stewardship organization, MHYC would love to see more local youth engage in our program, but it has been challenging to connect with the young people in our region.

Finding a balance in providing outdoor infrastructure and access for both the local population and visitors.

That we are somehow able to find a balance between use, conservation, and economic growth. More isn't always better.

More campgrounds! Better highway 24 access into the mountains to handle the volume...it ain't going away!

Continued partnerships with land managers and private land owners to create new, responsible, attractive recreation opportunities for our region. We MUST figure out a way to accommodate new users (there are so many!) without negatively impacting our wildlife and open spaces.

Incline Friends has two major priorities. We are committed to helping build a trail from the top of the Incline, to the north to eventually connect with the current Northern Return Trail that leads to the Ute Trail and the base of the Incline. Our hope is that such a trail will reduce pressure on the Barr Trail as well as reducing conflicts between Barr Trail hikers and the number of Incliners going down the Barr Trail. Our second priority is to help build permanent restrooms near the base of the Incline. Both the trail and the restrooms were included in the 2011 Master Plan that was developed for the Incline. Beyond that, Incline Friends has always considered education to be an important part of our mission. Our aspiration would be to continually educate people about trail etiquette (yielding to uphill hikers for example), respect for the resource, e.g. not cutting switchbacks, not littering, not defacing signs with stickers and graffiti. We would also hope to recruit future stewards, either as full-time board members or volunteers. We want to continue to encourage people to contribute not just dollars but also sweat equity through trail maintenance and sustainability projects.

Convenient public transportation to access many parks, to limit the need for single vehicle use. More land protected and conserved, including that could be multi-use for agriculture. Less land going toward development projects.

The Pikes Peak region must be a great place to live, our local elected official must deal with and correct the homeless/vagrant problem. The Pikes Peak Region must enforce community standards against vagrancy. It effects our image locally, state-wide and nationally. The more we want to help the worst the problem gets. We must establish and enforce community standard that we as Coloradans expect.

I would like to see the industry thrive with new outdoor businesses to support users, particularly in the parts of the region who are not experiencing economic growth from outdoor recreation. The same with new assets such as trails and parks - put primarily where we're not seeing use, to move it off the front of the Peak and high-visitor-use areas. I'd like to see the land managers well-resourced and using innovative ways with new technology and practices to manage the recreational demand while preserving what makes this region special. I would like to see resources put toward forest health and wildfire prevention.

A more connected, supported industry that prioritizes new trails, trail access, and equal accessibility across all incomes.

Adding more outdoor educational programs serving minorities in our communities

Provide leadership to sustain a model of stewardship and responsibility

I hope that we do a better job of handling the natural and man made assets/infrastructure that currently exist. Its all overrun already and we aren't even handling the current volume of users.

A big problem that I don't see being addressed is the lack of parking at trail heads. With the explosion of UTV/SxS being both sold and rented in Colorado, these vehicles in most areas need to be trailered to the trail which means you now have a two vehicle and trailer, same goes for some of the new E-Bikes that area also becoming more popular. The majority of conflicts I have seen are at these trail heads when inconsiderate people to what they do and create problems. The other point I want to make is that we organize trail clean ups throughout the state and the majority of the trash we pick up are from dispersed campsites and recreational/target shooting areas, not 4WD trails. The 4WD community is not the problem, we are part of the solution.

To see much great use of resources during the shoulder seasons and getting participants out past the first mile from the parking lot.

Maintain the ability to have visitors enjoy our lands, but also realize that we will never have the capacity to satisfy everyone. It is a finite resource that can easily be destroyed.

More trails, more enforcement, more education for users on trail etiquette all would be helpful

People need to understand what conservation is, be prepared to participate including financially, and make the outdoors a pristine place for anyone who wishes to enjoy.

We aspire for more educated outdoor users. As a climbing guide service we demonstrate to our clientele how to use and protect our outdoor resources while enjoying them in responsible ways. We will contuse to educate where we can.

We can always use more trails and the closer to the front range the better!

Additional single track mutiuse trails

No one is talking about the issue of mismanaged visits and what they are doing to our landscape. We seem to have a "knee jerk" reaction and no planning

Pikes Peak get Wifi service

One thing I have seen work REALLY well is connecting our school age children with our outdoor assets. RMFI connected to my children's elementary school and both of my older children spent time rebuilding trails in Garden of the Gods. This did several things, 1. it gave them an understanding of how fragile our ecosystem is here, and how important it is to stay on the trail, avoid muddy trails, and respect regrowth areas. 2. It gave them a tremendous sense of pride, they are both in high school now and still talk about the trails they helped save. 3. It was part of what made them good "Earth Rangers". That was a term coined by one of their teachers who taught them about water ways, littering, and connected them with RMFI. But now they advocate and educate others - and downright shame me if i don't pick up other people's trash when we're hiking. That small program that essentially earned RMFI some extra volunteers had a huge and lasting impact. I would LOVE to see more of that and in all the schools.

Making the outdoors more accessible for under-represented populations.

Getting all of us on the same page; inter-agency communication and planning

Look at how other countries like Switzerland have created access to the alpine terrain for new opportunities to spread visitors out over the area. We need more restroom facilities at popular areas and the funding to maintain them.

More opportunities for all users but specifically beginner and intermediate motorized multi - use single track. With these opportunities good infrastructure to support it - camping, parking, toilets, etc.

Improved attitudes and acceptance of diverse forms of recreation sharing the same infrastructure

I would love to see more accessible infrastructure for beginners to all activities. Finding a good one-night backpacking opportunity for teens or a place for Girl Scout leaders to take kindergarteners camping can be daunting right now!

Pikes Peak is an unusually unique place in itself, in addition to being a very large piece of "open space" close to about 700,000 people. Much of the Pikes Peak massif is over 10,560 feet in elevation. The recreation industry could tout this as "two-mile-high" recreation -- a real "Rocky Mountain High," much more than what is available next to Colorado's "mile-high city" up the road. Without encroaching on more than, say, five percent of the upper PP massif there could be several recreational enhancements, not the least of which would be increased access (vehicular/bicycles,hiking) as well as increased public awareness of it all. The community should consider turning the whole massif into a "Park" -- whether City or National. (Note: a small part of the massif is already operated as a Colorado Springs city park, namely the self-sufficient "Americas Mountain" Enterprise, which includes the PP Highway, the Summit Complex, and the North and South Slope recreation areas.)

Well managed public spaces and respect for private property rights.

More trails to disperse users so they can get an "out in the wild" feeling. Signage on popular trails to educate users on what is allowable and why. Trail rotation so highly used trails can "rest".

Complete the Ring the Peak Trail, adequate public funding to support city, county state and federal public spaces and trails.

Open up planning processes and decision making to a wider audience. Too many decisions and processes are being funneled through the same small group of orgs/friends.

I'd like to see more youth groups participate in hands on conservation projects, like working with teams on managing the forest, rehabing trails, maintaining fences, installing monitor devices on streams. I don't have any solutions really for my biggest pet peeve, which is when a ton of trucks and campers pull into the woods and there are no campsites, they make bushwhack through the woods and make new scars that get used again and again and this widening of human disturbance and trash slays me.

Ring the Peak completion with Hut's constructed for hut trips. Improve Monument Valley / Fountain Creek near downtown for public use.

Increased trails for a variety of users in the backcountry. Support shooting, but it needs to be better regulated. More rangers to patrol sensitive and protected areas. Maybe require a permit for non locals to access certain areas so they fully understand rules and why the area is precious.

Respondents' Aspiration for Outdoors in the Pikes Peak Region - Open Ended Responses

Several themes rose to the top of respondents' aspirations, including more and new trails to cater to a variety of new and experienced users, educating people on trail etiquette and responsible practices, building more recreational opportunities to reduce traffic (and ecosystem stress) in overcrowded hot spots, among others.

IF PPORA COULD DO ONE THING WITHIN THE NEXT 18 MONTHS TO STRENGTHEN THE OUTDOOR INDUSTRY FOR THE PIKES PEAK REGION, WHAT WOULD IT BE AND WHY?

Move forward a comprehensive recreation and conservation management plan for the Pikes Peak region.

Help the outdoor industry to become more diverse and equitable so that all of the people in our region feel included and like they belong in the outdoors.

Help to open access to more areas in the Pikes Peak region.

Figure out how to get sustainable funding for our outdoors. :)

#1 for now is help come up with information on fire safety. People who live in humid areas may not understand fire dangers in a dry area. Bigger picture how do we handle the increase of demand that is being placed on all things outdoors? The trails, the fishing spots, camping, etc...I only see this continuing to grow.

Consolidate and report on opportunities - for collaboration, grant funding, outreach, and educational opportunities.

That's a very good question and one that probably should be mulled over but off the top of my head, how about hiring a legislative liaison, a lobbyist I suppose although I don't care for that word...someone who would circulate throughout the outdoor industry, picking up on the concerns individual businesses might have, carrying the ball so to speak and staying in regular contact with our

U.S. Senators and Congressmen as well as state and local legislators. I know the state has a similar position but having such a position locally might be a real asset.

Communicate to the region that Pikes Peak is an international icon and must be treated as such. Local elected officials recognize this fact and address Pikes Peak as a national treasure.

Continue to promote the Pikes Peak region and our local businesses for our outdoor rec opportunities.

Move the CO Outdoor Regional Partnership Vision Planning process forward to complete a collaborative plan.

Make a big push for more trail maintenance, understanding of the taxation rates and community buy in required to build more trail & start trail construction in existing trail networks to support all the new recreationalists since the pandemic.

Building an outdoor bridge for environmental education for all ages.

Again, leadership.

Increase and spread the idea of "sufficiency." Sustainability is outdated. See:
<https://www.treehugger.com/enough-already-why-sufficiency-matters-5084460>

Targeted law enforcement on major weekends early in the season, like Memorial Day, July 4th, etc. will help spread the word that the rules need to be obeyed or access will be lost. Use social media to get the word out about these activities and it will help set the tone and alleviate some future problems.

Provide more training in leave no trace, along with how best to prepare for participating in outdoor activities.

Secure funding for more trails

Generate awareness about responsible recreation and why this matters to everyone.

Encourage better relationships between PPRD and user groups

EDUCATION ABOUT OUR RESOURCES AND HOW TO KEEP THEM SAFE.

Education -- whether that's educating visitors, locals, school age -- pick one to focus and maybe the others can be gravy!

Partner with other land managers, non profits, and local government to assist with obtaining grants for projects.

Educate the public on trail etiquette and litter control (including dog crap)! Include reasons why it's bad for THEM rather than the community - people are self-obsessed, so to reach beyond the people who already care, it seems like you either have to create a fad for them to follow or show them how certain actions will benefit THEM (since they obviously don't care about nature or the community)

Help create user group coalitions for different entities so they can tackle/prioritize the challenges in their areas. Find out the common themes for taking to funding sources.

Increase shoulder season traffic.

Become the statewide model for the Regional Partnerships that the PPORA is a better CO-OP model than others in the state. Why is it? Because it's balanced well with Rec/Conservation, has a large geographic area beyond just one county or even Ranger District and the demographic of those areas have the opportunity to truly make a difference for underserved communities. Keep up the good work!

Outdoor recreation within the Pikes Peak Region must strive to be inclusive of all forms of outdoor recreation, which challenges organizations like PPORA to ensure under represented forms of recreation are not forgotten or figuratively "locked out". PPORA should learn from the less than stellar practices being promulgated by other regional planning efforts and avoid repeating similar pitfalls.

Obtain public and local governmental support for requesting Congress to authorize and fund a National Park Service "Study" -- the required first step in the process for establishing a Pikes Peak National Park. [Senator Hickenlooper's local rep (Antonio Huerta) has a copy of a proposal containing the details about this.]

Collaborative planning efforts

Fix old stage road.

Figure out a way for the Forest Service and BLM to actually listen to input.

improve communication and outcomes between the USFS and those of us who must work with them to accomplish goals.

Class 1 ebike access for all trails traditional bikes are legal to access. Their appearance, speed, sound, and environmental impact is nearly identical, there is no legitimate reason to manage them separately, as has been proven by Jefferson County, Colorado State Parks, and others.

keep the bicycles out of Jones Park.

Get TOPS and LART increases approved to support outdoor capital improvements to existing parks/trails/creeks/open space.

Just bring more people here.

Priority Recommendations for PPORA Several strong themes rose to the top for roles PPORA can play. Namely, an ability to promote more relationship building and collaboration to plan for collective opportunities, and initiate more effective ways to educate outdoor recreation users on responsible practices and why they matter.