



Roadless Areas Review Task Force Operational Protocols

I. Purpose

The Roadless Areas Review Task Force, convened in response to Senate Bill 05-243, will examine and recommend appropriate management options to Governor Owens for applicable forest areas in National Forests throughout the State of Colorado.

(From SB 05-243, Section 1: Legislative Declaration)

“The general assembly finds, determines, and declares that the management of national forest roadless areas is of great importance to Colorado, its economy, and its environment. The general assembly further finds that the state of Colorado should seek to resolve deliberations and disputes concerning such management by engaging local communities, affected stakeholders, and the people of Colorado as to the proper management of these lands.”

II. Task Force Composition

The task force shall consist of the Executive Director of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) or the Executive Director’s designee, who shall convene and chair the task force meetings, and who is authorized to contract with a mediator or other third party to facilitate accomplishment of the task forces’ duties, as well as:

- four members appointed by the Governor: Joe Duda, Diane Hoppe, Josh Penry, David Ubell;
- two members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives: Eddie Kochman & Steve Smith;
- two members appointed by the President of the Senate: Melanie Mills & Doug Young;
- two members jointly appointed by the Chair of the House Agriculture, Livestock and Natural Resources Committee and the Chair of the Senate Agriculture, Natural Resources and Energy Committee: Tom Compton & David Peterson;
- two members appointed by mutual agreement and consent of the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the President of the Senate: John Swartout & Jim Lochhead.

III. Process and Schedule

The act provides for seven public participation meetings in each of the communities of Steamboat Springs, Monte Vista, Glenwood Springs, Fort Collins, Durango, Pueblo, Delta, and one at the State Capital.

“The Task Force shall consider and give weight to the public comments received during the public hearing process, as well as written comments from affected counties, cities, city and counties, special districts, forest stakeholder groups, and any other Colorado citizens. The Task Force shall consider comments on the roadless characteristics of all applicable forest areas, using the roadless area conservation rule as the starting point for its deliberations.

“The Task Force’s recommendations may include boundary adjustments to applicable forest areas or modifications to the management prescriptions, standards, or guidelines of applicable forest areas as set forth in the roadless area conservation rule. All recommendations by the Task Force shall be based on a substantive analysis of the comments during the process described.”

In order to enable the task force to fulfill its charge, the proposed process has been structured as follows.

Proposed Sequence of Task Force and Public Participation Meetings	
Meetings	Goal
<i>Task Force Meeting #1: Planning Meeting</i>	<i>Initial planning session with the task force and facilitation team.</i>
Public participation meeting #1: November 2 nd , Delta	Clarify for the public the charge to the task force Summarize written comments Hear public comment
Public participation meeting #2: December 9 th , Durango	Clarify for the public the charge to the task force Summarize written comments and public participation meeting #1 Hear public comment

Public participation meeting #3: January 6 th , Pueblo	Clarify for the public the charge to the task force Summarize written comments and prior public participation meetings Hear public comment
<i>Task Force Meeting #2: February 10th, Denver</i>	<i>Discuss written and public participation meeting comments Discuss cross-cutting issues Deliberate on and develop recommendations for three locations Review remaining schedule and strategy</i>
Public participation meeting – State Capitol: February 24 th , Denver	Clarify for the public the charge to the task force Summarize written comments and prior public participation meetings Hear public comment
Public participation meeting #4: March 17 th , Fort Collins	Clarify for the public the charge to the task force Summarize written comments and prior public participation meetings Hear public comment
<i>Task Force Meeting #3: April 14th, Denver</i>	<i>Discuss written and public participation meeting comments Discuss cross-cutting issues Deliberate on recommendations for second set of two locations Review remaining schedule and strategy</i>
Public participation meeting #5: May 18 th , Steamboat Springs	Clarify for the public the charge to the task force Summarize written comments and prior public participation meetings Hear public comment
Public participation meeting #6: June 7 th , Mount Vista	Clarify for the public the charge to the task force Summarize written comments and prior public participation meetings Hear public comment
Public participation meeting #7: June 21 st , Glenwood Springs	Clarify for the public the charge to the task force Summarize written comments and prior public participation meetings Hear public comment
<i>Task Force Meeting #4: July 19th, Denver</i>	<i>Review suite of recommendations Finalize recommendations</i>

The task force will schedule additional meeting if necessary.

This strategy allows for interplay between the public participation meetings and the task force. Task force deliberations can inform later public participation meetings and the back-and-forth gives everyone the opportunity to improve both the task force and the public participation meetings.

Our approach to the public meeting will be tailored to the task force needs. The process design will facilitate providing information to the public on task force purpose and the lands to be address and to take public comment. The balance of the meetings will be for public comment. Process for the public meeting will include:

- A presentation with a question and answer period before the public comment period.
- A comment period to gather public comments on specific forests.

Public Participation

The proposed public participation approach is two pronged, enabling written and verbal comments to be considered by the task force.

A Web page has been developed for the public to comment on specific or all applicable forest areas (see handout). The Web page will note task force and public participation meeting dates, and encourage those wishing to weigh in on specific forests to submit their written comments (via Web or traditional mail) prior to the task force deliberations on those specific forests. Additionally, all approved meeting summaries and schedules with times, dates, and locations will be posted to the Web page. Once the task force has finalized its meeting schedule, a press release with the Web site address and meeting dates and locations will be released statewide, followed by targeted local press releases preceding each of the seven public participation meetings.

Integrating Public Engagement with Task Force Deliberations

The Keystone Center will, two days before each public participation meeting, summarize written comments, to include both important themes and a quantitative measure of relative support for the various themes identified, and use this summary to brief task force members. Similarly, The Keystone Center will summarize public participation meetings and comments submitted, and circulate these summaries to task force members prior to their forest-by-forest deliberations. In this way, the task force will be as fully informed as possible as to the interested public's opinions, issues, and concerns in order to shape draft recommendations for the preferred management prescription for each inventoried roadless area. The rationale for developing draft recommendations on inventoried roadless areas is to craft viable decisions that stand on their own, and which would change only under an aggregate review or with the introduction of new data later in the process. The task force and the public will have an opportunity to review the aggregate draft recommendations to ensure consistency across the suite of management recommendations. Following a complete review, those draft recommendations and any modifications to them will become the final recommendations to the Governor.

Finally, The Keystone Center will issue task force meeting summaries to reflect the prevailing issues, concerns, and draft recommendations that are developed. These will

be circulated to task force members for corrections/approval prior to public posting, and will *not* attribute comments to any particular participants.

IV. Roles

Participants

Task force members will be expected to:

- Attend both public participation meetings and task force meetings;
- Adhere to the protocols adopted by the group;
- Engage in collaborative problem solving to address the range of interests brought to the table; and
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Special Presentations

Any special presentations (e.g., U.S. Forest Service or other government agency personnel, academics, etc) will be determined and scheduled ahead of time by the task force.

Observers

All meetings of the task force will be open to anyone interested.

Facilitation and Process Support

The Keystone Center will provide neutral facilitation and overall process support to the project. In consultation with task force participants, The Keystone Center will assist with the convening, agenda development, facilitation, logistical support, and coordination of and drafting of the meeting summaries and final report. The two staff members supporting the task force will be Kathleen A. Rutherford, Senior Mediator, Jody Erikson, Facilitator and Helen Littrell, Project Support Coordinator. Their contact information is as follows:

- Kathleen A. Rutherford: (303) 468-8864 or krutherford@keystone.org
- Jody Erikson: (303) 468-8862 or jerikson@keystone.org
- Helen Littrell: (970) 513-5825 or hlittrell@keystone.org

V. Discussion Guidelines and Approach

General Approach

The task force will approach its deliberations as a collaborative problem-solving body seeking to produce consensus recommendations that address, insofar as possible, the practical needs and interests of all participants. As necessary, the group will work jointly to educate and build understanding regarding the participants' values and interests related to the issue while also developing a baseline understanding of essential

scientific, technical, legal, economic, and political information. Furthermore, members will deliberate upon public input in their analysis and decision making capacities.

Collaborative problem-solving is most successful when parties agree that their major interests have been heard, considered meaningfully, that other participants have made every effort to address their interests in any final proposals, and that the final proposals accurately characterize any outstanding differences.

For purposes of the task force, consensus is defined as, at a minimum, “no objections” or as being able to “live with” an outcome, perhaps in light of how it fits into a larger whole. When agreement is not possible, the group will work to accurately and respectfully understand and document the different perspectives on an issue. The Keystone Center will use a variety of specific straw polling techniques to calibrate and then reflect the actual levels of consensus achieved by the task force. The enabling legislation stipulates that each of the task force’s recommendations shall require the affirmative consent of eight of its members.

Ground Rules

The task force’s protocols and interaction assumptions are as follows:

- Discussions are “off the record” insofar as no one will represent the task force’s collective views of positions without the agreement of the group itself.
- Anyone attending is free to use the information in the task force’s deliberations but will not publicly represent the views of others present.
- All task force participants are encouraged in discussions to “explore without committing.” This further frees up the group to explore potential solutions without viewing those explorations as formal proposals.
- Work together to develop the components of appropriate management recommendations for the applicable forest areas, ensuring that all significant issues and concerns of the parties they represent are fully and clearly articulated during task force meetings.
- Conduct themselves professionally and courteously.
- Operate in good faith.
- Neither initiate nor undertake any action outside of the task force process intended to undermine the process, whether such action may involve communication with the press, non-party elected officials, federal or state agency personnel, or private parties.

- Not represent the views of other parties.
- Work to find ways to resolve differences as they occur.
- Provide written notice 30 days in advance to all task force members, including the reasons for withdrawal, if a party wishes to withdraw.
- As pertains to specific discussions, task force members agree to:
 - Disclose interests;
 - Listen fully to understand;
 - Look for ways to address not only your own interests but those of others as well;
 - Participate, share the floor, be concise;
 - Look ahead – acknowledge the past but don't rehash it;
 - Be explicit and factual – ask for clarification if confused;
 - Let expertise fuel, not constrain, creativity (“beginner’s mind”).

Meeting Summaries and Final Report

The Keystone Center will be responsible for preparing summaries of both public and task force meetings with an eye toward capturing key issues, conclusions, and agreed-upon next steps. Members of the task force will have the opportunity to review and comment on draft meeting summaries prior to finalization/posting for public review. Both public and task force meeting summaries will be rolled up into the final report.

The Keystone Center will work with members of the task force to draft all proposals/draft recommendations, as well as a final group report. All documents will be subject to group review and support prior to finalization. The final report will be forwarded to the Governor. In addition, the final report will be available to other interested parties upon request.