



COMMISSIONERS Corner

News & Updates from Grand County's Board of County Commissioners



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HWY 9 WILDLIFE CROSSING FINDINGS

In 2019 CDOT, in cooperation with Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) and many other partners completed Colorado's first-of-its-kind wildlife overpass and underpass system on Highway 9 between Kremmling and Green Mountain Reservoir.

CPW officers updated the BOCC Tuesday regarding the success of the over- and underpasses, along with current Big Game population trends:

Pre-construction:

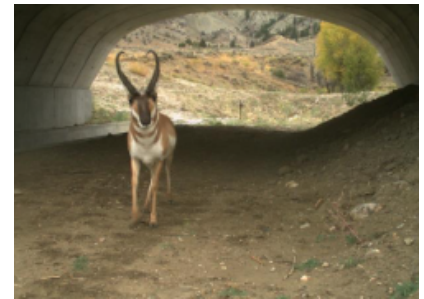
- 60 percent of crashes were wildlife vs. vehicle collisions
- An average of 63 carcasses were counted each year related to vehicle collisions

Post-construction:

- Carcass counts decreased over 90 percent

Cameras at the crossing structures captured 17 species successfully using the crossings, including mule deer, elk, bighorn sheep, moose, pronghorn, white-tailed deer, badgers, bears, bobcats, coyotes, foxes, mountain lions, rabbits, skunks, raccoons, turkeys and even a pair of river otters.

CPW also studied wildlife response to different types of guards, and found that flat bar guards with grates are the most likely to be breached by ungulates (hoofed mammals).



Big Game Populations

Regarding the impact of the East Troublesome Fire and Williams Fork Fire on big game populations, CPW officers stated they had some individual mortalities, but so far, they have observed no impact to the overall populations.

The elk populations are very strong in Grand County; two separate herds are monitored, and are estimated at about 9,000 animals. Deer populations are also very strong; the Middle Park population is estimated at 13,476 animals.

To read the entire report, visit www.co.grand.co.us; click on the Agendas & Minutes icon (); select the link to the June 22, 2021 BOCC meeting; click the blue "Click here to Access Agenda Item Support Documents" link.

Meeting minutes, support materials and full audio are available at:
co.grand.co.us/AgendaCenter
co.grand.co.us/Archive

FIRE RECOVERY UPDATE

Emergency Manager **Joel Cochran** provided a recovery budget update, which included request for a budget amendment related to debris clean up now that sites are being identified by Southern Baptist Disaster Relief. The number of homes needing assistance with debris clean up is now over 50, but not expected to exceed 100. Commissioners approved a motion for a supplemental budget amendment request for up to 100 homes, the cost not to exceed \$500,000. The motion was approved with no discussion.

Recovery Manager **Alyssa Ingles** is currently packaging reimbursement requests for FEMA for the overtime labor and fringe benefits incurred by County first responders and staff during the East Troublesome Fire. The County is eligible for approximately \$100,000 in reimbursement of these expenses.



EMERGENCY WATERSHED PROJECT UPDATE

Assistant County Manager **Micah Benson** and Water Quality Specialist **Katherine Morris** gave an update about the EWP work underway. Engineering firm SGM surveyed Smith Creek, Drowsy Water Ranch and the East Fork Headgate. Project designs will begin shortly once the survey data is entered.

SGM and the Manager's Office would like to thank property owners for access to their land, and will be back in touch with landowners once design concepts are ready for review.

Work continued on rain gauge installation throughout the East Troublesome Fire burn scar areas to assist with early detection and warning of potential flood-after-fire events. The public can view and monitor the precipitation data at: <https://USGS.gov/centers/co-water/data-tools>.

WRC / DIGITAL ECONOMIC RESILIENCE PROGRAM

Commissioners had a lengthy discussion with staff, including Economic Development Coordinator **DiAnn Butler**, and WRC representatives regarding a funding request for a Digital Economic Resilience Program, to include a Broadband Workforce Development Center and ForestTech Center. The discussion was a follow-up to WRC's presentation to the BOCC on June 1.

WRC has asked the BOCC for \$250,000 for each initiative, for a total of \$500,000, from the funds Grand County is due to receive from the American Rescue Plan Act. Commissioner Linke opted not to hold a vote on the subject Tuesday. WRC is on the July 6 agenda for further discussion.

BOCC REMINDERS...

- June 29 in the *fifth* Tuesday of the month, therefore there will **not** be a BOCC meeting next week. The next BOCC meeting is July 6.
- Beginning July 1, 2021, the BOCC will be sitting as the Board of Equalization.
- BOCC meetings are open to the public. Final agendas are published by the Friday ahead of the Tuesday meeting, and are posted on the County's website in the Agenda Center.
- To access the Agenda Center, simply visit www.co.grand.co.us, and click on the Agendas & Minutes icon.



AGENDAS & MINUTES

Now Hiring!

Grand County has MULTIPLE positions open in nearly every office:

- Housing Authority
- Public Health
- Road & Bridge
- Human Services
- Clerk & Recorder
- Sheriff's Office

Most are benefited, full-time positions. Learn more at www.co.grand.co.us/jobs

MANAGER'S UPDATE

County Manager **Ed Moyer's** update included:

- Water flow update:
 - As of yesterday, the Windy Gap pumps are off. Last week the Learning by Doing partners coordinated to cycle releases so additional flows hit lower sections of the Colorado River near Kremmling in the afternoon. Water temperatures near Kremmling and down river have been very warm (over 70 degrees F) , and there has been documented fish kill.
 - We anticipate the Shoshone Outage Protocol (SHOP) coming on any day. SHOP partners will begin additional releases to accommodate transit time and hit the Dotsero gauge and maintain 1,250 cfs.
 - In the last couple weeks, Denver started releasing 100 cfs out of Dillon to Green Mountain, which will knock down the substitution bill owed from Wolford and Williams Fork Reservoirs; the lion's share of the substitution will be released from Williams Fork Reservoir.
- County Rd 522 follow up: We are planning for the County Engineer to present a historical overview and final options at the July 6 BOCC meeting. We are also reaching out to the Army Corps of Engineers to discuss options and deadlines, as well as talking to Metcalf on cultural steps, so that the BOCC has the appropriate info and options in order to decide whether to move forward.
- Staff is working with the Subdistrict of Northern Water on an MOU to address Windy Gap FIRMING Project 1041 Permit - Conditions 21 and 22, regarding the nutrient reduction plan and nutrient monitoring plan. The MOU commits to a long-term adaptive management process. The MOU will be presented to the BOCC once finalized.

PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE

Grand County Public Health Director **Abbie Baker's** update included:

- Middle Park Health's **Dr. Jason Stuerman** has accepted (and was approved by the BOCC) the position of Grand County Public Health's Medical Officer. Dr. Stuerman replaces Dr. Darcy Selenke, who will assist with the transition, and will continue her role as EMS' Chief Medical Director.
- Sitting as the Board of Health, Commissioners approved a contract with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment for GCPH to promote and provide immunization services in alignment with the Colorado Public Health Transformation Core Public Health Services concepts.
- Baker took the opportunity to provide Commissioners with a COVID update:
 - Grand County had a "minor flare up," but case rates are very low - about 6 / 100,000 with a 2% positivity rate
 - Vaccine immunization rate is about 62.7%
 - Grand County still has a lot of COVID vaccine and appointments available
 - Antigen testing is now only being offered in Hot Sulphur Springs on Wednesdays between 10 a.m. and noon; no appointment is necessary
 - The Delta variant is gaining traction and causing more illness than the UK variant, but is mostly concentrated on the far Western Slope, particularly Mesa County

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS...

- Weekly vouchers and wire payments were approved with no discussion.
- Human Services Director **Deb Ruttenberg** presented two Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) for approval regarding program administration; both were approved with no discussion.
- Community Development Director **Robert Davis** presented a sketch plan extension request on behalf of Cougar at the Summit, which was approved until July 22, 2022 on staff recommendation.
 - Davis also asked for direction whether Xcel should appear before the BOCC to present information about a moratorium on new gas lines; Commissioner Manguso stated she would like to hear the specifics for herself to better understand the situation.
 - Davis provided Commissioners with an update regarding permit processing times: the average processing time exclusive of over-the-counter permits is 17.4 calendar days (under three weeks).
 - Amended Final Plat, Wildacres First Filing, Lots 5 & 6, Block 5 was approved on staff recommendation.
- Undersheriff **Wayne Schafer** presented a lease for renewal on behalf of the Animal Shelter, which was approved with no discussion.
- EMS Chief **Robert Good** recommended Middle Park Health's Dr. William Rose for appointment as EMS Associate Medical Director; the recommendation was approved with no discussion.
- Sitting as the Housing Authority Board, Commissioners approved a contract presented by Housing Authority Operations Manager **Sheena Darland** for emergency services to be performed in a Silver Spruce unit due to mold and water damage.
- A ground lease for a new hangar at the Kremmling Airport was approved with permission to stamp signature outside of a meeting.