

2013 Public Lands Transportation Scholar Program

Application

If there are any questions, please call the TRIPTAC helpline @ (877) 704-5292, or

E-mail helpdesk@triptac.org

Project Information

Project Title: Chimney Rock Transportation Plan and SW Colorado Integrated Regional Public Lands Alternative Transportation Plan

Project Abstract (150 word limit):

The Scholar would focus upon: A) Development of a Transportation Plan for newly-designated Chimney Rock National Monument. The Plan would research and design shuttle, road, parking, and trails alternatives within CRNM, offering expertise that would be incorporated into the CNRM Management Plan (under development). The Scholar would make recommendations about how the developing and potential systems could be further developed and marketed to realize their full value for reducing congestion, safety concerns and dependence upon private vehicle use. B) Follow-up on 2010 TAG recommendation to “Develop an Integrated Regional Public Lands Alternative Transportation Plan”. Tres Rios BLM would like the Scholar to focus on some of the Report’s eight specific recommendations. “The overarching theme should be the need for regional, seamless, and sustainable transit services and trails that are integrative and supportive of land agency management plans.” Alternative transportation connections between public lands and west-side communities shall be highlighted.

Project Description (250 word limit):

Please describe the need for a Transportation Scholar at your park. Carefully describe the project on which the Transportation Scholar would work.

A) Chimney Rock was designated a National Monument last September. Prior visitation was estimated at 12,000/year. It’s expected to increase by 40% or more, causing an urgent need to redesign the transportation system! Change in how visitors travel to CRNM is also anticipated (more tour/school buses, RVs). Facilities consist of a base staging area connected by 3 miles of steep, winding road to the main summit area attraction. Archaeological resources restrict options for additional parking near the summit. Parking is already stressed. New transportation solutions involving alternative transportation are required to meet current/increasing visitation. Scholar accomplishments can include: 1) Design a shuttle system to decrease summit parking needs

and congestion around precious archaeological sites; 2) Evaluate road surfacing options to be cost effective, reduce environmental/safety impacts, and enhance visitor experience; 3) Design expanded parking at base area to provide staging for potential shuttle system that will also accommodate vehicles that can't access the summit; 4) Evaluate hiking trail opportunities to provide recreational diversity/ alternative transportation to visitors.

B) The 2010 TAG identified a need for an Integrated Regional Public Lands Alternative Transportation Plan. Local partners were interested in pursuing such a plan, but had no capacity to facilitate such an endeavor. Scholar would provide the means to study transportation issues, make recommendations to address needs, and begin implementation on specific priority deliverables. The Scholar would provide our coalition of Federal, State, and Local Agencies and our private and non-profit partners the ability to initiate the planning process while simultaneously producing deliverables.

Project Products and Benefits (250 word limit):

Please describe the potential products you would like to have produced from a scholar.

Please describe how unit resources and/or visitors will benefit from this alternative transportation product.

Products include a comprehensive CRNM Transportation Plan, to be integrated into the Management Plan. Transportation Plan would include alternatives with benefits/risks identified. Decision-makers would select a preferred alternative to incorporate into the overall Management Plan. Scholar would provide interim presentations and reports to Agency and community stakeholders, and present draft findings for review. Scholar would participate in Management Plan development, and produce final written reports describing studies/recommendations. With future implementation of this Plan, improved service to visitors would be apparent through efficient transportation options (including adequate parking, shuttles, road improvements). Valuable archaeological resources would be preserved by keeping vehicles and visitors off sensitive sites; sensitive species would be protected from ill-effects of inadequate visitor management.

For the Integrated Plan, discrete products include: a) Create an inventory of existing plans and alternative transportation services; b) Prepare inventory and map of existing and planned public and private transit services and trails; c) Integrate, enhance and promote existing ATS; improve trail signage; d) Prepare specific trail plans to connect the communities of Mancos and Cortez to adjacent public lands, such as Phil's World and Mancos-Cortez Travel Management Area; e) Reconvene stakeholders engaged in

alternative transportation planning to develop common understanding of issues and help formulate realistic ATS solutions for public lands. The public and the resource will benefit from the gathering and preparation of tools to assist decision-makers; a comprehensive look at trail signage, increased communication and awareness of ATS, and identification of additional well-placed trail opportunities. Other details similar to Chimney Rock.

Project Contributions:

Please describe how the scholar's work will continue to the unit's long-term transportation planning objectives.

The Scholar would be developing the long-term transportation plan for the Chimney Rock National Monument, which hopefully will be adopted into the Chimney Rock Management Plan (planning horizon typically 10-20 years). The Scholar would be contributing to an Integrated Regional Public Lands Alternative Transportation Plan, which would set the long-term vision for the region.

Project Partners: Tres Rios BLM Field Office, San Juan National Forest, Chimney Rock Interpretive Association, La Plata and Archuleta Counties, City of Durango, Town of Mancos, City of Cortez, Town of Pagosa Springs, Volpe Center, Kokopelli Bike Club, Trails 2000.

Project Requirements:

Please identify any issues the park would have in meeting the program requirements listed in Section B of the RFP.

None Known. The Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management will provide housing and office space for the scholar with access to a Government computer, telephones, and GIS mapping and analysis capability. Formal supervision will be provided by the Forest Service and/or BLM with input for evaluation purposes from community stakeholders. It is anticipated that the Agencies and community stakeholders would work in a collaborative manner to provide project guidance to the Scholar. The Partnerships and Travel Management Coordinator for the San Juan National Forest is a former District Ranger and Forest Engineer with a degree in Civil Engineering, having been registered in California for over 20 years. She, along with Forest Engineer Ben Martinez (Registered Civil Engineer) and other engineers/employees on the San Juan National Forest and Tres Rios BLM staff, will be available to be mentors to the Scholar.

Housing Availability

Please describe in detail the housing that will be made available to the scholar.

The San Juan National Forest has housing available in Pagosa Springs, Durango and Dolores. The Tres Rios BLM Field Office may have housing available in Canyon of the Ancients National Monument. While working on the Chimney Rock Transportation Plan (estimated five-month duration), Scholar would likely be living in Pagosa Springs. Housing available in Pagosa Springs consists of Government-owned houses in town very close to the District Office. Seasonal employees occupy the houses, mainly during the summer months. Common living, kitchen and bathroom facilities are shared. Bedrooms are typically double occupancy during summer months. Similar housing is available in Durango and in Canyon of the Ancients National Monument (CANM) west of Dolores, Colorado. Dolores Ranger District has a bunkhouse-style facility available, with double occupancy rooms. While working on the Integrated Alternative Transportation Plan, the Scholar could be located in either the Durango housing or the Dolores/CANM housing, depending on availability and proximity to field locations. We will work with the Scholar to provide a desirable living situation.

Will you provide housing on-site or will a stipend be given for the scholar to obtain their own housing off-site?

On-site housing would be provided.

If the housing is on-site, is the housing shared, and if so, what is the turnover rate for the tenants residing in the house?

Housing is shared by seasonal employees. Seasonal employees typically stay for the entire summer season. During the other seasons, fewer employees would occupy the facilities.

If a stipend will be given, will the stipend be given before the first of the month or will it be given as a reimbursement?

N/A

Car Usage and Availability

Will a car be required for transportation to and from the unit and the available housing?

A vehicle will not be necessary to commute to and from the unit and the available housing in Pagosa Springs and in Dolores. A vehicle may be necessary at the other locations. There will also be times when the Scholar will be working out of a number of offices, and at these times transportation would likely be required.

If the scholar does not own a car, will a car be provided for work related activities?

A Government pool vehicle will be provided for all work-related activities.

If the scholar does not own a car, can a car be provided for non-work related activities? i.e. going to the grocery store and airport

An agreement can be executed such that limited use of a Government vehicle would be allowed for certain of the Scholar's non-work-related uses.