



PRESS RELEASE OR  
ARTICLE FOR SUBMISSION  
From  
"Stage and Rail Trail"  
A project of the Greater Arkansas  
River Nature Association  
(GARNA)



\*\*\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\*\*\*  
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## CONTENT

The Greater Arkansas River Nature Association (GARNA) is excited to announce receipt of a grant on behalf of its program to establish the *Stage and Rail Trail* (S&RT) from Salida to Leadville. On April 18, word was received from the Colorado Parks and Wildlife State Trails program that, having been rated at 90% against other applications, some \$26,000 was awarded for one year to support Phase 1 of this locally-initiated long distance trail project. Funds are expected to be available in late summer. Indications are that support for at least a second year would likely be approved following a successful first year.

According to Alan Robinson, S&RT project's team leader, this award, coupled with matching funds from local partners and public subscription, will allow GARNA and its team to move forward with initial highest priority steps in establishing this 64-mile hiking, cycling, horseback and some driving trail. When completed, it would connect Chaffee and Lake Counties through Salida, Buena Vista to Leadville, with long stretches within Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area, BLM and US Forest Service lands. The vision focuses on preservation of historic remnants and routes of the Canon City to Leadville Stage Road and pieces of the Colorado Midland Railroad. It has as added goals educating the public on significance of early transportation routes and making selected historic sections open to non-motorized use on narrow natural-surfaced trails. Though similar in concept to the older but thus far unfulfilled Rails To Trails concept using the Union Pacific right of way, the S&RT at least initially would involve very little of the UP.

Success in being awarded this grant was at least in part influenced by the January 2016 listing of the Stage and Rail Trail as one of Governor Hickenlooper's 16 Trails in 2016 for top priority political and financial assistance – see photo.

Top priority tasks to be accomplished in the first year are to contract a professional project coordinator, establish a coordinating structure involving managing partners and a citizens' advisory panel, and encourage jurisdictions to formally designate the trail. Over the first and second years of Phase 1 additional activities will assess preservation needs of historic stage road remains, develop maps and brochures and a webpage, install the

first trail signs, and identify options for recreational and conservation easements on private lands through which the trail hopes to pass.

## ILLUSTRATIONS

Photos and other illustrations will ordinarily be provided separately as JPEG images with file size greater than 1MB. Please contact Alan Robinson if larger images or different format is needed. Images inserted below are low-resolution thumbnails for reference.

Date: April 11, 2016  
Credit: S&RT Working Group

Caption: Alan Robinson (center) and Lake County Commissioner Mike Bordogna (standing, left) presented a summary of the *Stage and Rail Trail* and its priorities to Governor Hickenlooper's Interagency Trails council on April 11 in Denver. Robinson also delivered a letter of support from the Chaffee County Commissioners. This high-level council of state agency heads has been convened by the Governor to coordinate the state's contributions to address challenges faced by the 16 Trails given top priority in his *Colorado The Beautiful* initiative. Although no new state funds have been allocated, council members representing GOGO, CDOT, CPW, DOLA and others are charged with focusing existing resources on problem-solving for each of the 16 top trails. Commissioner Bordogna and Summit County officials also presented the case for another 16 Trail project, the proposed *Fremont Pass Trail* from Leadville to Copper Mountain, which when connected to the S&RT would constitute a continuous trail from Salida to the I70 Corridor.



(use separately-provided high resolution image)