

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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OUTDOOR
PIKES PEAK INITIATIVE

PPORA announces \$150k award to advance outdoor recreation and conservation planning through Outdoor Pikes Peak Initiative!

Colorado Springs, CO (December 2, 2022) – The Pikes Peak Outdoor Recreation Alliance (PPORA) is excited to announce its recent grant award of \$150,000 through the Colorado Outdoor Regional Partnerships Initiative to continue leading the regional partner effort to advance conservation and outdoor recreation planning for the Pikes Peak region. This is a second award, added to the 2021 award of \$75,000 that kicked off the Pikes Peak region's regional partnership and supported the first phase. The regional partnership has a new brand identity as well: the Outdoor Pikes Peak Initiative, or OPPI for short.

Since the initial award, OPPI has accomplished a number of goals! It formed a diverse Task Force comprised of land managers, and conservation and recreation partners across El Paso, Teller and Fremont counties who provide strategic leadership to the process. OPPI gathered and evaluated over 100 planning documents from the region and conducted a land manager needs assessment to learn management and operational goals and needs. It partnered with the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs (UCCS) to create and host the Outdoor Pikes Peak Data Hub to communicate outdoor-related information to the public and community leaders of the Pikes Peak region for better understanding, recognition of value, and thoughtful fact-based planning and decision-making. Through partnership with the Colorado Tourism Office, PPORA conducted the first ever survey and analysis of the local outdoor industry to better understand its needs and aspirations and to inform this regional planning from the industry stakeholder perspective. OPPI also identified and begin evaluating creative and effective alternative management and funding models to learn what possibilities exist for our region.

This next phase of planning expands upon these accomplishments and includes some new elements, such as public engagement and development of a mapping tool. All of OPPI's goals come together as building blocks to culminate in a comprehensive Outdoor Recreation and Conservation Plan for the Pikes Peak Region by the summer of 2024.

One additional building block is the recently completed Elevate the Peak Strategic Vision & Action Plan, facilitated by Palmer Land Conservancy. Elevate's strong emphasis on hearing from local communities that are traditionally underrepresented in the outdoors makes it a particularly valuable complement to OPPI and will be used to inform this planning effort.

Because one significant focus of this phase is public input, OPPI is holding community listening sessions **January 23-28, 2023**, in six locations across the region, with both in person and virtual options. This will be a great opportunity for the community to learn about OPPI and share what matters to them. More information about the initiative and listening session details can be found on the new website: www.OutdoorPikesPeakInitiative.org. To receive OPPI updates, you can sign up [HERE](#).

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ABOUT PIKES PEAK OUTDOOR RECREATION ALLIANCE (PPORA)

Pikes Peak Outdoor Recreation Alliance's mission is to strengthen the outdoor recreation industry for the Pikes Peak region through leadership and collaboration. PPORA's work is rooted in 5 pillars: To GROW, INSPIRE, STRENGTHEN, STEWARD, ADVOCATE. Visit www.ppora.org to learn more about the organization and www.pikespeakoutdoors.org for resources to enjoy the outdoors in the Pikes Peak region.

The [Colorado Outdoor Regional Partnerships Initiative](#) is funded jointly through Colorado Parks and Wildlife and Great Outdoors Colorado and was created to ensure that our State remains a world-class outdoor destination while preserving our land, water, wildlife, and quality of life. Read the full text of the [Executive Order B 2020 008](#) that helped create the Regional Outdoor Partnerships. Funding is designed to support new and existing coalitions that meet criteria under a State-level Vision and advance development of local and regional planning elements to inform a Statewide Conservation and Recreation Plan.