



# Board of County Commissioners

## MEMORANDUM

To: Boulder County Board of County Commissioners

Cc: Boulder County Sheriff Curtis Johnson  
Emily Beam, Budget Director, Office of Financial Management

From: Barb Halpin, Staff Liaison to the Emergency Services Grant Program Advisory Committee

Date: June 24, 2024

Subject: Emergency Services Grant Program Advisory Committee Funding Recommendations – Spring 2024 Funding for Search & Rescue and Recreation/Trail Safety Service Providers in Boulder County

## Introduction

The Emergency Services Grant Program Advisory Committee (ESGPAC) provides recommendations to the Boulder County Commissioners regarding the allocation of funds for the grant program portion of the Emergency Services Ballot Measure (ESBM) approved by voters in 2022 as County Issue “1B.”

The first grant round of the ESBM was offered in the fall of 2023 to mountain and rural fire protection districts that serve Boulder County. For this second round of grants, the advisory committee was tasked with making funding recommendations for **search & rescue (SAR) and recreation/trail safety service providers in Boulder County**. (Another round of grants for mountain and rural fire protection districts is scheduled for the fall of 2024.)

**The ESGPAC is recommending funding eight grant awardees for a total of \$721,703.39 for the spring 2024 grant round (see table on p. 3).**

## Evaluation Process

Boulder County received 17 funding proposals totaling \$1,330,097.46 by the application deadline. The advisory committee created a process to evaluate the proposals and met three times (twice in person, once virtually) on April 23, May 14, and June 17 to review and evaluate the applications. (One committee member, Juliette Hans, recused herself from the entire round of grant funding evaluation because she serves as an alternate board member for Boulder Emergency Squad, which was one of the applicants this round.) All meetings were open to the public to attend and observe.

**Commissioner Claire Levy • Commissioner Marta Loachamin • Commissioner Ashley Stolzmann**  
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Each participating advisory committee member independently reviewed and scored all proposals based on the following questions asked on the application:

- A. Does the Proposal serve one (or more) of the following purposes?
  - 1. Capital, including facilities and equipment, and operational costs of search and rescue organizations that can assist Boulder County in responding to emergencies;
  - 2. Trail and trailhead safety services to increase emergency response and public safety on public trails and open space/recreational areas in Boulder County;
  - 3. Innovative pilot program proposals to enhance emergency response and public safety on public trails and open space/recreational areas in Boulder County.
- B. What are the goals of the project? How will it serve Boulder County residents and/or improve SAR and recreation/trail safety services in Boulder County? What specific impacts or benefits will the request provide?
- C. Describe the need(s) for this funding: What is the problem/opportunity this program/project would address? How significant is/are the challenge(s) you're presenting and how will your project/program address those challenge(s)?
- D. How/Will this project be sustainable and continue to support Boulder County SAR recreation/trail safety efforts after this one-time funding source? How is your organization set up to manage the funding and how will you ensure either the completion of the project or provide ongoing support for the project long-term?
- E. Does the proposal identify a clear need or service demand (i.e., fill a gap) that is addressed by the request OR enhances an organization's effectiveness in providing SAR or recreation/trail safety services AND is implementable and realistic?
- F. Does the organization and/or proposal promote equity and inclusion of all community members (for example, youth, older adults, non-English language speakers/readers, people of color, LGBTQ+, differently abled, etc.)?
- G. Does the organization show positive fiscal management, an ability to implement the proposal, and operational sustainability through its grant application?
- H. Is the proposed cost (requested amount of money) appropriate, reasonable, and relevant to the purpose of making public trails and recreational areas in Boulder County safer to access and use for all community members?
- I. Does the grant request demonstrate cooperative or cross-agency grant collaboration?

The Advisory Committee met three times (for a total of six hours) to discuss the 17 applications. On June 17, the committee approved a recommendation for a total award amount of \$721,703.39 based on the following funding recommendations:

[See Table on Next Page]

## Spring 2024 Emergency Services Sales & Use Tax Funding Recommendations

Agency/Organization Name	Project/Request	Funding Recommendation*
Boulder County Amateur Radio Emergency Services (BCARES)	Upgrades, Repairs, and Enhancements of Emergency Voice, Video, and Digital Communications.	\$30,000.00
Boulder Emergency Squad (BES)	Facility-Related Capital Upgrades or Replacements, Including a Roof Replacement and Other Facility Repairs; Dual-Band Radios and Repeater to Conform to Boulder County Communications Standards by 2028.	\$454,944.00
Boulder Mountainbike Alliance (BMA)	Bike Patrol & Wapiti Trail Safety First Aid Training and Equipment.	\$8,105.00 *
Bryan Mountain Nordic Ski Patrol (BMNSP)	Education & Training for CPR/First Aid, Avalanche Awareness, Mountain Travel and Rescue, and Communications Equipment (Internal Radios).	\$50,521.35 *
Colorado 4x4 Rescue and Recovery	Amount to Cover Personal Expenses Incurred by Volunteers When Performing Search and Rescue Activities and Vehicle Recoveries in Boulder County.	\$10,000.00 *
Front Range Rescue Dogs (FRRD)	Pagers, Dual-Band Radios, Dog Tracking Collars (with inReach Capabilities).	\$34,694.30
Indian Peaks Wilderness Alliance (IPWA)	Internal and Partner Organization Communications Devices, InReach Subscription, SPOT Device, and Radio Cabinet.	\$7,207.00
Rocky Mountain Rescue Group, Inc (RMR)	Dual-Band Radios to Meet Boulder County Communications Standards by 2028.	\$126,231.74
	<b>Total Recommended Funding</b>	<b>\$721,703.39</b>

\* Not all funding recommendations represent the total dollar amount requested (i.e., amounts marked with an "\*" represent partial funding of the full amount requested).

## ESGPAC Spring 2024 Funding Round Comments

The ESGPAC also noted for the record the following comments:

- 1) Counseling services for first responders and co-responders were requested by a collaborative group of organizations in this funding round. Because of the widespread need and interest expressed by emergency service providers for counseling and mental health services, the Boulder County Sheriff's Office is pursuing a program whereby counseling can be made available to providers who respond to emergencies or search & rescue incidents in Boulder County. ESGPAC did not recommend funding the request for counseling services in this grant round because the Sheriff's Office is looking into a different funding source to make mental health resources available to emergency service providers in Boulder County.
- 2) ESGPAC has requested that the Boulder County Sheriff's Office (BCSO) explain how an organization might pursue a "pathway to becoming an official responder for the BCSO" for the next round of SAR and recreation/trail safety grants (i.e., provide a list of expectations and instructions for organizations desiring to enter a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the BCSO). ESGPAC acknowledges that any new MOU service provider would be required to meet the rigorous standards, commitment levels, and abilities to be able to serve in an official "call-out" capacity with the BCSO.
- 3) ESGPAC encourages the Sheriff's Office to continue to provide supplemental funding for its MOU agencies (as BCSO has with its annual grant program) and not to solely put that responsibility on ESBM/2022-1B funds (i.e., ESGPAC would like to see the BCSO continue to budget annually for ongoing operating and capital needs of its MOU agencies in addition to funding made available through the ESBM grant program).
- 4) Boulder County Sheriff Curtis Johnson and Commander Randy Wilber informed the advisory committee that all radios purchased under the Emergency Services Grant Program must be approved by the BCSO radio shop before an awardee will be allowed to use the grant money to purchase the radios. All agencies that serve in an official capacity with the BCSO must acquire dual-band radios that conform to Boulder County's Communications Standards by 2028. **While the radio shop will not specify a brand of radio to buy**, it will ensure that radios purchased with ESBM funding meet a set of standards that are compatible with communications in the rural and mountain areas of Boulder County. The BCSO radio shop will also provide radio programming and maintenance services for agencies that communicate with the BCSO and fire protection districts in the event of an emergency or disaster.

**Action Requested:** Approval of the Emergency Services Grant Program Advisory Committee's Spring 2024 Search & Rescue and Recreation/Trail Safety Funding Grant Recommendations allocating **\$721,703.39** from the grant portion of the Emergency Services Sales & Use Tax revenues.