

Southwest Planning Authorities Council (SUPAC)
Minutes
January 11, 2011
Washington County Water Conservancy District

SUPAC members took a tour of the new St. George airport.

1. **Welcome & Introductions** – Brian Cottam welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

2. **2011 Legislative Preview** –

Senator Stowell is on Executive Appropriations committee. Dave Clark is no longer Speaker of the House. Becky Lockhart is now the Speaker. There is a \$300M shortfall representing 7% of the Utah budget. State departments are being asked to make 10% budget cuts. It may end up 3% final overall cut for State departments. There is \$200M in the rainy day fund. Our revenues are on the rise. 20-30 Immigration bills may overshadow our legislative session.

Larry Gray, State Parks & Recreation is concerned because they are preparing for a 10% budget cut for a total of \$1M which would include staffing losses. The legislative audit requested last session requiring privatization of State parks. The audit will be public on Jan 19, 2011. The sense is that the recommendation there will be more offerings of concession opportunities throughout the parks statewide e.g. boat rentals, camping, etc.

Robert King hopes that the loan funds won't be raided as they have monies for redevelopment and improvement of water systems. They are making a budget contingency of 10% cut.

Ron Wilson, UFFSL said that last year there was a bill for firefighting which didn't get finalized and included seeing that the cities, counties, and state would share the costs. They are still working on a bill.

DEQ said the legislative preparation for the budget is a 10% reduction contingency plan. They have had 27-28% budget cuts over the past 3 years for DEQ. They have a couple of bills on the floor for solid waste fees and drinking water improvements. There are two more bills protected and they are looking at combining Department of Health and Department of Environmental Quality.

UDOT hasn't heard too much about budget cuts for them. They are just trying to finish their projects they've been working on for the past year.

SITLA – John and Kevin Carter would be tracking any budget cuts or bills for SITLA

Garfield County is hoping to increase jail contracting reimbursement.

Dirk Clayson, Kane County is also hoping to increase jail contracting reimbursement with their new jail.

Dianne Nielson is retiring in the Governor's Energy Office

Cory, WCWCD said they are funding with impact fees and are seeing some improvement in revenues

John Keeler, Utah Farm Bureau is following all agencies for bills concerning water quality.

3. **Colorado River Drought Plan Coordinated Reservoir Operations & Shortage Guidelines –** Robert King Utah Division of Water Resources and Reclamation stated that Escalante is 130% above normal on water and the Virgin River is 310% above normal on water. We are blue state and we have an average 80% of watersheds – Lake Mead is two feet above normal level. There are administrative shortages in the lower basin. In the late 90's states got together and the 7 basin states decided the Operational Guidelines be established for Lake Mead and Lake Powell. Look up the administrative storage rates. Small shortages (and having more of them) would curtail larger shortages. The lower basin has priority for water shares Robert showed 602(a) 1968 Act whereas volume storages which are desirable for Lake Powell. 2000-2010 may be the critical timetable. Lake Powell has 3640.3 feet (66% capacity) and Lake Mead has 1105 feet (46% of capacity) and this is end of Water Year 2011. Conditions unregulated inflow into Powell = 13.19 maf (110% Average); January 2011 most probably 24-month study. In Utah we are doing okay because we will fill up our reservoirs. Siltation in Lake Powell is not effected for the next 700 years. Silt has gone into the dead pool storage. This may even extend the period. Sediment scientists say that we need to build up sediment in the lake. The Grand Canyon Protection Act requires delivering 11.5 million acre feet of water needs for the Colorado River Act. We need more sediment. 2020 is projected date to have Lake Powell pipeline project completed. The schedule is on target. The environmental process is in play. The biggest problem is funding. Brian thanked Robert for coming down to present. It was most appreciated.
4. **Army Corps of Engineers Jurisdictional Waters –** Pat McQueary couldn't make it today as she was ill. However, on January 27th at 1 p.m. – 4 p.m. she will make a presentation at the Washington County Water Conservancy District.

5. **Round Table Updates:**

Larry Gray will keep us posted on the audit. Larry will be on the agenda for the next meeting to look at the impacts on his respective areas. Following the audit for concession or private opportunities within the parks will be presented.

Arizona BLM and Northern Arizona had the draft EIS for a February 18th release date through 45 days to comment. Fredonia, Flagstaff, Las Vegas and Salt Lake City meetings to be held and they will be meeting with two Native American tribes as well for comments. Arizona Strip District GC and Parashants has a new Manager. Pam McAlpin and she'll report in mid-March. If you go to the website www.Blm.gov on the front page the news release that will show the external questions and answers. There are two links to the draft policy issues for wilderness service areas and land use plans.

Dirk Clayson reported Kane County is working on RS2477 roads to move forward with the access roads. They started an economic strategy plan in their county to strengthen the economy. Two construction projects: Jackson reservoir (surface area of 240 acres) is 35% completed (mid-summer completion) and the new county jail will represent the largest capital expense in Kane for some time. Everything is on track.

Clare Ramsay said Garfield is renovating the old courthouse and they'll be moving the offices temporarily to Triple C arena and the court will move into the city offices. The bid is going out in March and we'll be vacating by May for the building. Leland Pollock is a new commissioner in Garfield.

Jock reported that budgets are flat for NPS and they expect cuts in the future – They are tasked with covering a \$300,000 deficit for 2011 by reducing their expenses. Cordell Roy is retiring. Steve Martin, Grand Canyon NP retired last week. John Wessels is the new Intermountain Regional Director. Zion continues to be leader in environmental projects for leaving less of a footprint. The cheat grass is coming in heavy. E-coli is in the north part of the park. Two vacancies exist that are key positions so they will need to be filled.

DEQ – Reported that air quality in the Alton coal mine was approved. They even extended the time for improvement. A couple of flooding issues down in St. George wastewater treatment plant and it took on too much into their system. The microbe tests showed that the treatment processes were okay and working well. St. George city had a pipeline which was severed during the flood. Gunlock lost part of their transmission line.

Ken Sizemore said there were a great many elected officials who changed. The corridor management plan for Highway 9 is going according to timeline and most communities have adopted their resolutions. Senator Stowell will be presenting a resolution at State level. We're waiting for FEMA to update the pre-disaster mitigation plan.

Dana Meier, UDOT has its 4th contract RFP which will be advertised sometime in the summer. The parkway to Hurricane will be completed in a few years. Black Ridge construction is still going on. There will be a truck lane added. They are funded for milepost 28 – 30 near Browse. Go to UDOT for current projects. March 8th at Dixie Center they will have a forum on the transportation plans. There will be an expo showing all the projects.

Larry Crutchfield BLM – January 21st is the unveiling of the latest dinosaur discovered at the GSENM – The Escalante River project to clean up the tamarisk watershed went very well and it represents a public-private partnership. They are setting up for Panguitch, and Kanab to have the Dino tour. The GSENM Advisory committees have been submitted to the state level.

Ron Wilson UFFSL is involved with the project for GSENM Escalante River project to rid it of Salt Cedar and the Russian Olive trees – They received a \$300,000 grant to assist with this. They are working also at Confluence Park. The tamarisk removal on the tributaries really benefited during the floods. ARRA projects at Quichipa is completed and the other 5 will be done next summer. Jeff Hunter is still assisting for cleanup with the UFFSL for fuel wood. The timber off

of Cedar Mountain is split up and sent out for firewood. The bad thing is Pat Moore has moved to the USDA Forest Service.

Bevan Killpack USDA FS - Santa Clara fire department is on a good neighbor contract and is doing a lot of thinning for the campground for the 3rd year of a 3 phase upgrade. \$3M was awarded to upgrade the campground. They are getting more done for less money because of the economic downturn. More campgrounds will be opened and now we have a variety of slots in the campgrounds. Proposed power lines and UNEV and Westside are all coming down through Mountain Meadows and they'll keep them in a corridor for manageability.

Marreen Casper said Hatch will be in town tomorrow. He is ranking member on the finance committee. The Senate goes back on the 24th and he'll introduce a balanced budget amendment and Silent prayer amendment. They are currently working with the Army Corps of Engineers with the general permit in regulating dry washes. Marreen read a statement given by Hatch on wilderness area designations end run after session adjourned Christmas Eve. They'll be meeting with Juan Palma in Richfield along with county commissioners.

Mike Empey reported that the Congressman is concerned about the wildlands designation without public input. There is redistricting going on as the numbers come out after census. Working with USFS and UFFSL for Skyline Forest Products and talking about projects for them and there is a meeting January 27, 2011.

SITLA – Geothermal and the other energy producing projects. There is a glut of real estate in the southwest. Their projects are moving along. (Inaudible)

Brian reported the Carnegie foundation is being sought for Community Engagement – Utah State and Weber State University. We received Carnegie designation for Community Engagement for SUU in the past couple of weeks.

6. Other Business – 2011 SUPAC Dues – Everything is coming in fine.
7. Next Meeting – March 8 Iron County Location

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen McDowell

ATTENDEES

Larry Gray, Utah State Parks & Recreation
Paul Wright, DEQ
Jock Whitworth, NPS
Clare Ramsay, Commissioner, Garfield County
Corey Cram, WCWCD
Robert King, Utah Dept. of Water Resources
Scott Florence, BLM Arizona Strip
Jim Crisp, SUU Regional Services
Brian Cottam, SUU Regional Services
Mike Empey, Congressman Matheson
Dirk Clayson, Commissioner, Kane County
Dana Meier, UDOT
Kenneth Sizemore, Five Co. AOG
Bevan Killpack, USDA Forest Service
Marreen Casper, Sen. Orrin Hatch
Rick Torgerson, UDOT
Brent Bluth, SITLA
Larry Crutchfield, GSENM
John Keeler, Utah Farm Bureau
Ron Wilson, UFFSL