

**Southwest Planning Authorities Council (SUPAC)**  
**Minutes**

March 8, 2011

SUU Hunter Conference Center

The tour of CML Mines was canceled due to inclement weather.

1. **Welcome & Introductions** – Brian Cottam welcomed everyone and introductions were made. Brian explained the brief history of SUPAC.
  
2. **BLM Field Office** – Todd Christensen, Color Country District Manager, gave an updated on the Resource Management Plan – They are working, interpreting, and developing a process for the DOI Secretarial Order 3310 regarding wild lands designation. The policy doesn't change management status and no wilderness will be created nor is it being designated. These lands will be dealt with in a public process. Multiple use agencies and the policy doesn't stop them from using the land. (A BLM Fact sheet was distributed and is incorporated in these minutes Attachment B.) The BLM will be doing an inventory process. Existing mines will not be inhibited and will be part of the inventory process.

Cedar City is starting their RMP process and will work in wild land sites and will be subject to public input.

Washington County already went through this process for 4 years and it has been put into law by Congress – Does this mean Washington County will have to go through it all over again. If lands have wilderness characteristics it's still up in the air what/how they need to be managed. Jim Crisp said Washington County has wilderness areas and the process will never be done. There are multiple use management definitions. Todd said he thinks that the RMPs completed with their inventories will remain open for review and public comment. They completed theirs and called them natural areas and we cannot make them wilderness but they were being managed like wilderness. The concern is there was a public process that took place in all of these different places. First stage will be inventory; then ramp up information and have a public process; and they will develop the planning process according to the manuals. For plans in existence the BLM will reassess. Kane County is concerned about the process in play for the Red Rock area.

The Cedar City RMP process is going quite well. They are analyzing management situation and it will be done in the fall. Inventory for wild lands will take place in the next few months. The energy report is completed. The alternative travel route planning is a pilot project with Iron County. They are scheduled to go through the draft of 2004. It needs to be community-based and they doing a good job. The plans are on the internet.

Washington County is going through the NCA plans, and amendments to the bill. They are working on their cultural resource reports. The ID team will meet in March and again in April and a draft cut will be out by 2011.

3. **Utah Association of Conservation Districts** – Anne Excell - Resource assessments were distributed in January 2011 and will be incorporated as part of the minutes. These assessments will be used to better serve the public. The 3<sup>rd</sup> list distributed is the priority list off of their website (incorporated herein). Also she invited the group to the annual Zone 5 meeting and dinner for March 14, 2011.
4. **Utah Prairie Dog Recovery Implementation Program (UPDRIP)** - Elissa Black, UPDRIP Coordinator, distributed a brochure and work plan table. There is an exchange program being developed by all local, state, and federal agencies. The brochure and short term annual work plan is being worked on. This is so they can see where they can leverage funding and combine resources. Recovery and relocation is being done to get them off the endangered species list. It is a new effort even though we have been doing it for the past 15 years. Hopefully in the next 5 years they can show some head way. Use UPDRIP to work on issues for the cemetery and golf course. The projects are not completely funded yet. DNR is looking for a long term funding. They are working on a 5 year strategic plan and will have it posted on the website [www.suu.edu/ad/regional/updrip](http://www.suu.edu/ad/regional/updrip)

Trend is up over the past 10 years. We're roughly in recovery units and one-half way there. They need 5000 acres in each recovery unit. In Iron County 6, 7 and 8 we had over 1,000 dogs on the federal lands. On private land they can't count them. There has to be a conservation easement in order to count on private land. County has put together a rangeland habitat conservation unit. A HCB is on its way. There is a limited amount of take and holding in development. The key projects for this field season include routine translocation and increasing efforts off the Cedar City golf course and off the cemetery. Plague abatement and flea dusting will be held on US Forest Service public land. A land purchase through the FAA will provide mitigation with Fish & Wildlife service. The Nature Conservancy will hold title in Garfield County. Research is going on with translocation. The work is being done in partnership with USU extension and SUU to test survivability of translocation. Habitat enhancements and the Utah partners are used for trapping and translocation. The listing of partners in the work plan shows the coordination is going well. They have an executive committee and their funding partners are DNR, BLM, USFS, SITLA, RC & D, NRCS, US Fish & Wildlife, SUU, and the counties are currently represented by Iron County commissioner Alma Adams. The current Paragonah mayor represents municipalities and is a rotating position every two years. Brian Cottam said everyone puts a ton of effort in Prairie Dogs and it's making a great deal of a difference to have this collaboration.

5. **Round Table Updates** – Kevin Carter is waiting for the legislature to finish Thursday. The budget for most agencies will be impacted somewhat. SITLA is currently working with the BLM and are

having a plan done to dovetail with the feds. SITLA serves greater than the five county areas and is working with other southwest counties on projects (e.g. Piute, etc.)

Marreen Casper said that Senator Hatch is very concerned about the manner in which DOI Secretary Salazar's order 3310 was introduced. Western senators are working together and are considering withholding funding from these projects, etc. Hatch is the chairman of the hi-tech committee. The national monument designation transparency and accountability act SB 407 which limits the President's unchecked power to designate national monuments in the west is being sent to congress. Western senators are co-sponsoring the bill.

Mike Empey reported the possibility of a government shutdown and a continuation resolution is on the calendar for the 18<sup>th</sup> about ongoing funding until the budget is passed. Budget cuts are on the table. Congressman Matheson wrote a letter about DOI Secretary Salazar's 3310. The hearings have driven people back into their corners rather than showing a continuing collaboration.

Jock Whitworth reiterated a potential government shutdown. The Virgin river flood damaged a lot of trails and grounds in Zion. The headwaters had shown e-coli last year and they're concerned it was going to continue this year. Zion is preparing for what they will do with a shutdown and what effects it will have for economic development in tourism. Some campsites were erased. They are doing Wild and Scenic River planning and they are working with BLM Todd Christensen to make sure it works with the RMP.

Todd Brindle, Glen Canyon NRA & Rainbow Bridge Superintendent reported that the off road vehicle environmental impact statement is being worked on. Lake is going down but they expect a good spring. Regional director, John Russell will be there on March 22<sup>nd</sup> in Wahweap for the official welcome of Todd as the new superintendent.

Paul Roelandt reported that Cedar Breaks NM is 140% of normal for snow. There was a good recreational season. They recently sponsored a trails planning Charrette and Parowan came with expertise and designed a charrette for planning trails. There is a March 15<sup>th</sup> meeting at the Heritage Center for the trails planning committee.

Jim Crisp said that they have trail committees in Washington County planning from Gunlock to Zion. There is a new initiative through the Zion Canyon Corridor exerting an effort to coordinate the various trails committees.

Todd Christensen reiterated they are currently working and focusing on planning efforts.

Ron Wilson, UFFSL lost a forester (Patrick Moore) and hired a new forester Sarah Sampson. She starts March 21, 2011. She comes from the Wasatch front. April 29 & 30<sup>th</sup> they are having an engine academy (fire department training) for volunteer wildfire firefighters. All the moisture from this year may see the cheat grass growing. In the

next few months they'll see if they need to work on it. Currently they have fuels reduction projects in Bumble Bee, Parowan Canyon; Woods ranch; Beaver; Comstock by the mines; and Virgin River project work is being done. They have inmates working there now to cut the Tamarisk and are replacing with Willow. They'll move over to the Escalante River area and take out the Russian Olive. They are trying to get more funding. Forest legacy project is continuing and they are hoping to finish the conservation easement to keep from a ranch being developed.

Larry Crutchfield – GSENM Matt Betensen is the new planning chief 435/644-6439 Matt is working on the hole in the rock environmental assessment (large groups to use the area) as a joint project with Glen Canyon. Two records of decision will be signed. They are in the process of pulling away from restoration projects because they have 8 environmental assessments due this year; the following year 12 due; and then 36 following that.

Kane County RS2477 quiet title legal Initiative has court trial date set for July 2011; they are in round two of the hole in the rock group of roads which has been filed but no date set yet. The jail is being built and is moving on schedule and will be ready this fall. Inmates will be in by January 2012. Jackson Flat reservoir is 6 weeks behind schedule but it will be finished by fall to receive water. USDA assistance provided funding loans for the jail constructions.

Alma Adams apologized for the weather having to cancel the tour to CML metals. They have a great contractor out there. They built the short line railroad to deliver the product. They are 60-70% pure ore. RS2477 is working currently with the facilitator. The new public safety building for Iron County will house all the various cop shops in Cedar City. Skytech Solar is putting in a ½ billion dollars photovoltaic cell out on the west end of the county.

DEQ was almost historic during this legislative session.

Gary Zabriskie, Five County AOG reported that the Dixie Center exposition is going on now. They have all the major projects going on in the five counties. Commissioner Danny Drake is on the Governor's Community Impact Board. Capital improvements are being made in Iron, Kane, and Washington Counties. The impact list is updated to include Southern Utah Museum of Art. Five County AOG's human services public forum will be out shortly. Five County & Six County AOGs are working with the Native American to update the comprehensive all 5 bands of the Piute tribe and it is past due\ working with BLM on working on a cultural heritage. Zion Corridor plan worked with them for a Scenic byway for national byway SR17 La Verkin up the road to the east entrance of Zion Park. USGS is doing a study in Virgin area for sudden and not so sudden for soils degradation, and it will be done by October 2011. Gary gave a special thank you to SUU GIS and Brian Cottam from the Rockville's first town office. CIB provided funding to build their town office.

Garfield County is working on Highway 9 for a national scenic byway designation. They are in the process of working on the courthouse and will be moved to the Fair building to hold county business. They expect this to last for about a year. Got together with Kane county and Garfield will maintain the Hole in the Rock road. Along those lines it was also mentioned that on the 28<sup>th</sup> of May, Escalante will have an all day celebration for the Escalante Heritage Center. It starts at 10:00 a.m. and will go through to the evening. The agenda should be out shortly. Gerald Lund will speak and Jerry Roundy is the driving force behind the launching of the center. Two road crews are down working on the Hole in the Rock Road. Russia bought the uranium mine at Ticaboo and China has our iron mine. Clare said it makes you wonder who won the cold war.

Mike Worthen reported that the management plan was adopted into the county resource plan. They are presenting to the Planning Commission and it will go to the county commissioners on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March.

Brian Cottam said higher education will receive a 2% budget cut. Brian reported that he is the Interim Director of Regional Services and reported there are many more changes coming in our office and that the VP of Advancement Stuart Jones. He said Stuart Jones is committed to continuing the efforts of regional services. The Utah Rural Summit will be held August 11-12, 2011. SUTREC is holding their Annual Renewable Energy Fair on April 28<sup>th</sup> at Milford High School.

6. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be May 10<sup>th</sup> in either Beaver County or possibly Brian Head.

ATTENDEES  
MARCH 8, 2011

Jim Case, Community member  
Kevin Carter, SITLA  
Brian Cottam  
Marreen Casper  
Tilli Huntsman  
Mike Empey  
Paul Roelandt  
Jim Crisp  
Todd Christensen  
Dirk Clayson  
Alma Adams  
Paul Wright  
Gary Zabriskie  
Clare Ramsay  
Jock Whitworth  
Ron Wilson  
Larry Crutchfield  
Mike Worthen  
Kathleen McDowell  
Ron Young, Iron County  
Elissa Black