

**SOUTHERN UTAH PLANNING AUTHORITIES  
COUNCIL (SUPAC)**

**Minutes of a meeting held March 10, 1998**

**\*\*denotes action items**

**The Southwest Utah Planning Authorities Council (SUPAC) met on Tuesday, March 10, 1998 at 1:00 p.m. at the Inter Agency Office in St. George, Utah. Those in attendance are listed on the rosters attached as Appendix A to these minutes.**

1. The council was welcomed by Scott Truman.
2. Because Mayor Alvey needed to leave by 1 p.m. for another meeting, changes were made to agenda so she could take time to discuss agenda item no. 8, Garfield/Kane Co. Mayor's Resolutions.

Mayor Alvey reported that after the elections, a few new mayors were brought on board; some of these wanted to move ahead and be a part of the GSENM Planning Process. At the meeting in Bryce, most attended and put together a resolution (still in draft form). The communities of Escalante, Glendale, Kanab, and Big Water have all signed off on this resolution. Copies were distributed to the board.

Roads, BLM, facilities, access information centers, etc. are all issues discussed in this resolution. Mayor Alvey said this is the first dialogue held and it has been challenging yet fruitful. Scott added that this process will help communities determine their destiny and not just react.

Marty Ott asked if these effort were going to be included with the Governor's Planning and Strategy Committee efforts? Karen answered yes; and that this will be on the agenda for their next meeting.

Jerry Meredith applauded this resolution and what is taking place. He is glad to see the communities getting as active as the counties have been.

3. The minutes of the meeting of January 6, 1998, were reviewed by the committee. John Williams made a motion to approve those minutes. Roger Holland seconded the motion and all voted aye.
4. **PLANNING CALENDAR:** Luke Smart sent the calendar of events as a memorandum, asking for items to include in the future. He would like the date, time and location, as

well as a brief description of the event.

Additions:

School Trust Lands Board is scheduled to meet in April 15 here in St. George — Don Leavitt will be able to tell us more about this.

Utah Association of Counties will be in Richfield in April 15-17.

March 21 there will be a public meeting at the Provo Park Hotel regarding road construction and reconstruction from 10-3.

April 21 — Governor's kick-off of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Communities

5 County AOG March 27 Senior's Conference.

5. AMERICAN HERITAGE RIVERS PROGRAMS: Bruce Richeson reported on this item. Originally 126 rivers nominated — 9, including San Juan River, have been eliminated. There will be a panel who will choose 20 rivers from the remaining 117. The Jordan river is still on this list. This list will be passed on to the president and by the end of April, we will have the 10 final rivers.

Legislation will be difficult — if it is vetoed, a 2/3 majority to override would be very hard to attain. The length of designation for the Jordan River was asked as well as who nominated it — Bruce didn't know the answer, yet he will find out.

The lawsuit concerning Sec. Of Interior Babbitt's reappraisal for BLM wilderness has been dismissed. The judge says that Utah and the counties have no standing and they are looking for an appeal over this decision.

The current phase we're in (or Secretary Dombeck's FS roadless review) is comment on language on the proposed rule. The comment period ends on the 30<sup>th</sup> of this month. Once the language is determined, there will be another comment period on this. As far as the actual implementation: 1- it will be through executive orders and we won't have a choice; 2- an 18 to 24 month period will be implemented and it will fade away because of getting into the presidential election time period.

Leadership from the senate has requested from Mr. Donbeck a list of information — they want to look at going back to a custodial management philosophy. They are looking at how much money is needed from the Forest Service and how much it would cost if we were to go to this type of management. Congress has told the administration that they are willing to work with them. The administration hasn't reciprocated this willingness.

6. SOUTHERN UTAH TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR STATUS — Commissioner Gardner reported on this item. UDOT has appropriated money for this and at their last

meeting they set up concept team from the committee that was formed. Their emphasis right now is from I-15 to the Hurricane Cliffs. They are going to study it environmentally and then go from there. St. George will still be responsible for the interchange here — it is supposed to be completed by the end of this month.

7. VIRGIN RIVER PARKWAY CONCEPT: Lori Rose reported on this item. The Three River's Trail has a list of vision points and a logo. This could link the county with a trail system from Gunlock on west to Zion on the east. It would be approx. 80 miles long. She emphasized that the fundamental point would be the volunteering of community members and property owners. This project needs their support. She wants each community to have access points to the river. Ivans, Santa Clara, Virgin, St George, Springdale have all been working on these access points. There is plenty of room to access the river. She is preparing to make a presentation to State Parks Board meeting this Spring — she invites SUPAC Board members to give input.

Reed Harris asked if there was a concern for funding — Lori said there are some significant dollars needed on the table — private foundations and funds are desired. Presently there are two main land owners. Roger was concerned that there are more and more tax base requests eating away at community's tax dollars. He asked if the property taxes would go back into the communities or where it would go. Lori indicated that the Virgin River Land Trust is not asking Hurricane and LaVerkin to fund this investment — she also sees a great return of revenue for the communities. Steve Muth asked who would provide for the maintenance of the trail. Lori said if this does come to pass, there is a need to look at a broader solution. Answers to questions like this need to be discussed and decided by a community. She doesn't want an undue burden on communities. Cary Peterson stated that it may be good to have State Parks to take the responsibility of management, but it doesn't necessarily have to be them.

8. THE HOW'S AND WHY'S OF VISITOR COUNTS: Ann King and Karen Sudmeier discussed this item. First they discussed why is it important. When planning and making decisions on land use, in management for BLM or Natl Park lands, counting is important. Without knowing numbers, we can't tell how you how valuable the land is economically.

Karen is with the Division of Travel Development — she compiles numbers from different sources and assess trends of tourism, recreation, etc. She has just started an effort about six months ago, of which there are four major points about common areas: 1- understanding recreation patterns; who are the visitors? 2- what is the economic benefit to the communities? 3- what are the costs? 4- how can we better involve the citizens in the planning?

Jamie Dalton said what they are looking at is getting an inventory. To get a handle on this counting is a large scale effort and wants to coordinate efforts with various entities. Gordon Topham commented that it depends on a visitor experience. What do they expect? What are their plans? How does someone decide what the capacity is? Jamie wanted a definite accurate figure; a good baseline of visitation is needed. How do you avoid repeat counts? Gordon looks at a comparison of visitors (car count) as well as revenue and that brings their count. As long as one is using the same system, trends are easy to see, but the carrying capacity is hard

to tell.

Jerry Meredith said that the GSE management plan is concerned with this as well.

Already all those that manage land there are places that are getting bombarded with too many people in one place -- soil is compacted and growth is stopped.

Hugh suggested comparing the commonalities in the state and come up with a common way of counting. Jamie would also be interested in a common methodology.

Scott commented that the trends are as important as numbers.

John Williams made a motion that the agencies get together as a sub-committee to find a commonality of count, then work on a carrying capacity. Comm. Urie seconded this motion and the voting was unanimous. This committee would report back to the Board at a subsequent meeting.

9. GSENM REPORT by Jerry Meredith. The next meeting of the Governor's Strategy Committee is the 19 March in Escalante at 10 a.m. They have been holding the wild and scenic rivers review as part of the act of congress; They appreciate the nominations received from counties and state. One thing they haven't clarified yet is how they will release the eligibility and suitability.

The other major event coming up for them: net update to the public. They added an extra step to the planning: they will be sending out newsletters to their mailing list helping to track how they get to the issues. This will be an opportunity to give input and comments.

10. Other items discussed: Dale from Utah Department of Transportation said that their Region Four User Guide is now available; for those who want copies they may contact him.
11. Next meeting was set for 12 May — Roger motion; Marty seconded.