

SOUTHWEST UTAH PLANNING AUTHORITIES
COUNCIL (SUPAC)

Minutes of a meeting held November 2, 1999

** denotes action items

The Southwest Utah Planning Authorities Council (SUPAC) met on Tuesday, November 2, 1999, at 1:00 p.m. at the Holiday Inn in St. George, Utah. Those in attendance are listed on the rosters attached as Appendix A to these minutes.

1. Vice Chairman Scott Truman called the meeting to order and welcomed those present.
2. The minutes of the meeting of September 8, 1999 were reviewed by the council. John Willie made a motion to approve those minutes as written. Jeannine Holt seconded the motion and all voted aye.
3. Scott Truman asked for calendaring items. Denny Davies of Zion National Park indicated they have the formal dates now for the five public meetings on the General Management Plan for Zion National Park. The draft plan is at the printer and is due out any day. The formal review period is December 1 through February 1 and may be extended into mid February. The public meeting dates (with locations and times to be announced) are as follows:

January 6	Cedar City	Sharwan Smith Center, SUU, 351 W. Center Street
January 10	Springdale	Town Offices, Public Assembly Hall, 118 Lion Blvd.
January 11	Kanab	Kanab City Library, 374 N Main Street
January 12	St. George	Interagency Offices & Information Center, 345 E Riverside Dr.
January 13	Salt Lake	Dept. Natural Resources, 1594 W North Temple

There will be a transportation commission meeting in Kanab this Friday, 11/5 at 9 a.m. They will be making some decisions on the Cedar North interchange.

There will be a Board of Parks and Recreation meeting here tomorrow evening and then again Thursday morning.

Mayor Chris Blake asked what the future meeting schedule for SUPAC will be next year and if we will continue with the first Tuesday of every other month. There was discussion among council members on this. It was decided that the SUPAC council will try and continue with this schedule of meeting on the first Tuesday of every other month. The next meeting will be January 4 in St. George.

4. The West Desert Wilderness Proposal was the next item on the agenda. John Harja gave an update on this as Brad Barber was not able to attend. John said a bill has been introduced in the House. It is HB # 3035. A hearing was held on October 19. The Governor spoke at that time and others testified. Congressman Hansen submitted the bill and chaired the hearing. The environmental groups spoke against it. As far as where it

stands now, if Congressman Hansen chooses to move this forward it won't be until in February at the new session. By then perhaps some of the concerns can get worked out. The school trust lands exchange is not done. Yesterday the BLM announced that the 202 process would cease and not proceed as in the past. They will reinitiate a new 202 process in a new Federal Register notice in the next few days. This will focus on the southeastern part of the state. They would then complete the process and the rest of the state in 2004. Secretary Babbitt, Congressman Hansen and the Governor have to get together and address various concerns.

5. Diane Nielson talked about Regional Haze Rules. Diane gave some background information on this to bring the council up to speed since her presentation on this a couple of years ago. The Grand Canyon Transport Visibility Commission was set up to address regional haze issues. Their report was presented to EPA in 1996. Recommendations from that report are being carried out by the a group of western states called the Western Regional Air Partnership (WRAP). WRAP is a collaborative effort of tribal governments, state governments and various federal agencies to promote and monitor implementation of recommendations from the Grand Canyon Visibility Transport Commission and engage in other common regional air quality issues. California, Nevada and western Texas are participating but not yet members. Their charge is to address regional haze issues at a regional level instead of a national level. Diane reported on what that partnership is doing and the negative impacts of growth and density on air. We need to find ways to manage air quality, especially visibility so we can continue to enjoy this beautiful scenery of the west. Many times visitors at Grand Canyon, for an example, go away disappointed because of the haze affecting vistas and color. There are many causes for this impairment and many complex solutions. The source of haze is commonly not activities adjacent to parks but transported over great distance. It is sometimes related to human activities, prescribed fires, automobiles, smokestacks, etc. Diane reviewed the national visibility goal.

The activities of WRAP are conducted by a network of committees and forums composed of WRAP members and stakeholders who represent a wide range of social, economic, geographic, relative population and technical viewpoints.

Implementations for state plans are due by December 31, 2003. Plans for other Class 1 areas are due by 2008. Annex due October 1, 2000. There is more information available at the web site at www.wrapair.org

Also information can be obtained by contacting: John Leary, Western Governors' Association at 303-623-9378 or Bill Grantham, National Tribal Environmental Council at 505-242-2175.

6. The next item of discussion was the Bryce Canyon Transportation Plan. Fred Fagergren described the new transportation system which they will be implementing this summer. Bryce Canyon is a long narrow park with a road running through it that dead ends at the end of the park. The yearly visitation has grown to 1.7 million visitors. They have

3,000 cars a day with very limited parking spots, and this has become a big congestion problem. The 17 mile road through the park is used for additional parking. They began looking at this transportation system in the early 90's. They wanted to develop a transportation system that would capture some portion of the visitors in the main developed area of the park. In 1994-95 they did an experimental shuttle. They are now planning on having a staging area where visitors can leave their vehicles and ride a shuttle to the visitors center and then another loop inside park stopping at each of the view points. The shuttle system seems to be the best option economically and politically to meet this ever increasing visitation. They want to do it now before they are in a real crisis situation. They will handle all of this system with service contracts paid by collected fees. It will not require them to build any significant infrastructure. Bryce Canyon presently has a \$10 entrance fee which is good for 10 days. This will increase to a \$20 entrance fee per vehicle whether the shuttle is used or not. The staging area contract should be out in the next 30 days and then after that they will do the shuttle contract.

7. Gordon Topham discussed Snow Canyon transportation issues. There will be a public meeting tomorrow at Snow Canyon Middle School regarding the management plan and the transportation issues related to that. The issues at Snow Canyon are extremely complex. The draft resource management plan was completed and taken to stakeholders and then introduced to the public. They have reviewed the process up to this point with stakeholders, the committee, public hearings, etc. to try and identify issues. The one-way road through the park was the most controversial issue. The Board of Parks and Recreation asked them to hire a private consultant to look at the transportation issues. The consultant selected the same alternative as the committee had. They spent the next 18 months implementing the plan. The road was not to be changed to one-way until the Snow Canyon parkway was completed. They started getting strong opposition as the signs were put up. At the board meeting tomorrow night they will hear concerns and there will probably be some alterations in the management plan as a result. Gordon invited everyone to the public hearing. He indicated he feels good about the process they have gone through. There has been public involvement from the beginning. He says he feels badly that people didn't make more comments and express their concerns through the process.
8. The next item on the agenda was Jerry Olds to discuss the Interagency Watershed Assessment Agreement. Scott Truman said he was unable to be at the meeting and this would be deferred to the next meeting agenda.
9. Randy Hayman, Forest Planner for Dixie and Fishlake National Forests was introduced. He was representing Mary Wagner and will discuss three issues. Randy explained there are four new proposed planning regulations for the forest service. He will discuss the proposed protection of forest roadless areas, the effort to deal with habitat management for the Goshawk and the National Forest Management Act proposed rule. He passed out copies of the planning regs and said he would give a brief highlight of them. The process will be ongoing for public involvement.

On the rule making process for roadless area, he passed out a handout that gave an overview on this. It is direction to the Forest Service from the President of the United States to develop a proposal to protect more than 40 million acres of inventoried roadless areas (i.e., the remaining unprotected portions of these areas) on National Forests and establish a process for evaluating possible limitations on activities in other uninventoried unroaded areas through forest planning at the local level.

This action is proposed to slow forest fragmentation and loss of open space, respond to public desires concerning the conservation and use of National Forest resources and because it makes little sense to build new roads into pristine roadless areas when the Forest Service is unable to take care of the 380,000 mile road system that already exists.

Inventoried roadless acres on National Forest Service lands in Utah (based on a variety of datasets) is 4,132,447. Dixie National Forest has approximately 708,579 acres of inventoried roadless acres.

The 60 day comment period ends December 20, 1999 on this. Upon completion of the scoping period a DEIS will be prepared. The DEIS and proposed rule are expected to be available in Spring of 2000. The final EIS and rule will follow.

10. Randy also gave a brief update on the Utah Northern Goshawk Project. The Federal Register Notice for availability of EA was published in the Federal Register today (11/2/99). The comment period starts today through January 3. Since the Fall of 1998 they have gone through a public hearing process and developed a range of alternatives regarding the Goshawk habitat. The EA has six alternatives which are out for public review right now for 60 days. The Intermountain Region of the Forest Service has announced the availability of the predecisional Environmental Assessment for the Utah Northern Goshawk project. The Forest Service is proposing to modify or delete current programmatic direction and add new direction in response to new information concerning management of habitat for the Northern Goshawk and its prey. This action will amend the management direction established in the current land and resource management plans for the Ashley, Dixie, Fishlake, Manti-LaSal, Uinta and Wasatch-Cache National Forests. The direction will be in the form of goals, objectives, standards, guidelines and monitoring requirements.
11. Randy also gave a overhead presentation on the highlights of the Proposed Forest Planning Rule. The proposed rule sets forth a process

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and living documents. He explained that the collaboration concept is to focus on collaboration with all who have an interest in the management of the national forests and grasslands.

There will be a public hearing at the Hilton Hotel in Salt Lake City on December 7 from 6 to 8:30 p.m. on these planning regs. Comments can be submitted through the public website or by mail. The website is www.fs.fed.us/forum/nepa/rule

Check their website for further information on any of these issues and make comments if interested.

12. Jody Gale of USU Extension spoke briefly on some forest issues. He covers all of rural Utah for USU Extension as an agent for agricultural economic development. He said the decreasing availability of timber from public lands is primarily the result of changing management paradigms. There are also some real serious forest health concerns on

public lands as there is a lot of beetle problems. Some feel the battle is lost with the beetles. This decreasing timber is causing lots of pressure on private lands and causing loss of harvest on private lands that contain timber. He said there is a mill in Sigurd, Aspen Mill Project where they are trying ways to utilize non commercial species of wood. The Monroe Mountain Project has a specific emphasis on trying to manage Aspen for Aspen regeneration. Their strategy is try and assist this project in obtaining Aspen on Cedar Mountain. Iron County has a made a proposal, and the mill is considering putting a satellite operation in Cedar City. He passed around some items made of Poplar. They are looking at Poplar as a possible substitute for Aspen.

13. Steve Burr from USU discussed an open space and recreation project they have been involved in with the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Recreation and State entitled Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). This came about as a directive from Governor Leavitt in February of 1999 at the Utah Great Outdoors Conference. The goal of the conference was to develop strategies and actions for addressing open space needs in each planning area of the state.

Phase 2 of this project was a survey to go out and further validate critical issues identified at the conference and prioritize these issues in certain planning districts. Two broad questions were asked regarding outdoor recreation and open space needs issues. The number one issue identified was to find proper balance among development, recreation, dispersed recreation and wilderness. The second issue identified was better cooperation and communication among Federal, state and local groups to plan and execute recreation programs for the future. The issues identified to the second questions were also ranked and the top two issues were establishing funding sources and technical assistance and urban sprawl - improper development into open spaces.

They will now move into Phase 3 of the project. This is to identify specific projects and initiatives in each planning area that meet or address these critical issues.

There was some discussion about where they will get their funding to continue this work. Jeannine Holt was asked to check on the status of the land and water conservation fund legislation and report back to the SUPAC council.

Steve Burr said if anyone is aware of any specific project or initiative that would address any of these issues identified, to please write it down and give it to them today or mail or fax it to him: His address, phone and fax are:

Steve W. Burr
Department of Forest Resources
5215 Old Main Hill
Logan, UT 84322-5215
Phone 435-797-7094

Fax 435-797-4040

14. Scott Truman reminded the council members that the next meeting will be Tuesday, January 4, 2000, in St. George. Proposed agenda items for that meeting are:
- Jeannine Holt - status of land and water conservation legislation presentation
 - Jerry Meredith - status report on Grand Staircase Monument final plan
 - Gordon Topham - Coral Pink Sanddunes - presentation on resource management plan
 - Jim Crisp - Washington County HCP Public Use Plan Report
 - Shivwits monument update
 - Discussion on format of SUPAC meetings
 - Gordon Topham - Kodachrome RMP (if agenda permits)
 - Dixie Forest - Upper Sevier Watershed Protection Plan
23. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Secretary

APPENDIX A

John Willie
Gordon Topham
Marty Ott
Clare Ramsay
Scott Munson
Dennis Stowell
Fred Fagergren

Dianne Nielson
John Williams
John Harja
Randall Hayman
Bob Blackett
Peter Rowley
Mike Small
Jody Gale
Steve Burr
Judy Rurtzman
Scott Hirschi
Bruce Barrett
Jeannine Holt
Alan Gardner
David Clark (for Cary Peterson)
Les Prall (for Rick Mayfield)
Denny Davies (for Don Falvey)
Jim Crisp
Chris Blake
Reed Harris
Norman Carroll
Scott Truman