

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

**Minutes of a meeting held September 7, 2000**

1. The Southwest Utah Planning Authorities Council (SUPAC) met at the Hunter Conference Center in Cedar City, Utah, on Thursday, September 7, 2000, at 7:00 a.m. prior to the opening of the Rural Summit meetings.
2. Vice Chairman Scott Truman called the meeting to order and welcomed those present.
3. The minutes of the meeting of July 6, 2000, were moved for approval by Ron Thompson with two minor corrections (the meeting was on Thursday, rather than Tuesday and the addition of Steve Robinson's last name "Robinson" to the minutes). The motion was seconded by Alan Gardner and all voted aye.
4. Introductions were made by those present.
5. Vic Knox gave an update on the snowmobiling issue discussed at the last meeting. He explained that since the last SUPAC meeting they were able to get an exception for Cedar Breaks on the closure to snowmobiling. They got it approved through the regional director as an exception for this season and into the foreseeable future. It will continue as it has been in the past. This issue of snowmobiling in parks is a nationwide issue. He said there is going to be a change to the regulations and it will have to go through the rule making process. They don't know yet what the changes will be or how significant they will be. He said it could involve Cedar Breaks again after the rule making but it is resolved for this season at least.

Scott Truman explained that SUPAC was asked to send a letter to the regional director regarding this at the last meeting and when the letter was being circulated for approval he found out it had been resolved and so it was never sent.

Denny Davies said that most people, with few exceptions, do stay on the right of ways when snowmobiling. They are proposing enlisting a volunteer corp to make sure there is responsible use through the corridor and developing a special vest with an identifying mark or patch for them to wear. They would enlist the help of other snowmobile operators to do this on a voluntary basis.

Gordon Topham said he appreciates the efforts made on this snowmobiling issue. Commissioner Stowell said he was also grateful that this was worked out because lots of people in Iron County use this area.

6. Mary Wagner gave an update on the OHV Topical Advisory Group (TAG) and

distributed a one page summary update. She indicated that they have met two times since the last SUPAC meeting and the participants are shown on the update. Rob Wilson, District Ranger has been selected to chair the TAG. The TAG members have agreed to focus on:

- Coordination and information sharing about current/future planning endeavors.
- Help elected officials know what is going on from federal, state and local levels.
- Make folks aware of educational opportunities & funding opportunities
- Convey, two-way, where there might be problems
- Promote participation from all interests—listen to OHV community, environmental community & local communities
- Stay connected with NRCC effort
- Connect with southern Nevada local, state and federal partners
- Connect with Arizona Strip Regional Planning Task Force
- Advocate for safe and responsible OHV use
- Take opportunity at each meeting to learn of approaches, challenges and solutions, both locally and from other areas

The next meeting of the TAG will be November 7 in St. George. The agenda will include presentations from the Paiute ATV Trail Committee and Emery County.

7. The next item on the agenda was a Colorado River Compact Update. Scott Truman indicated he had a meeting with Kathleen Clarke and the Office of Planning & Budget on the Colorado River Compact and the work they have been doing with the river states on signing this. Ron Thompson gave some history and explanation of this. The compact is an allocation between the upper and lower basin states. The upper basin states entered into a separate compact where they allocated the upper basin allotment. The lower basin never had a compact. Congress allocated the lower basin mainly to three states. Arizona and California have had a very strained relationship. California has been using a big share of Arizona's water and then Arizona starting using 100% of their water after the Central Arizona Project. Ron indicated that California has been using a million a.f. over their compact rights. They are pressing for a surplus declaration for water not being used in upper basin that they could get access to. This has created a big fight between California and the other six states. The states have come to an agreement on this surplus declaration. There are strong incentives in it to California to bring their usage back in line with the original compact through conservation and other methods. Seven states have signed on to this and they are waiting for the Secretary of Interior and Bureau of Reclamation to agree to it.
8. Bill Farrand and Rob Campellone were introduced. They are with the National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program. Rob gave a quick overview of the program. They are an assistance program to local communities to help them find funding and develop plans and projects. Bill Farrand explained the projects they are involved with in Utah and passed out a handout of those projects. They like to work with local agencies, state, federal agencies, school districts, etc. People let them know what their needs are and what assistance they need and then they see how they can help. He said he would like to extend their services if communities or groups have

projects that they would like consultation on or help with.

Scott Truman asked about the Old Spanish Trail. They explained that they are not involved in this project. Vic Knox explained that the Spanish Trail is a proposed addition to the national trails system. It is a historical trail which is in the comment period now. The Park Service has done a feasibility study on whether the Old Spanish Trail should be added to national trails system as a historic trail. This is out for public comment but Congress would have to pass legislation to add it to the system. He said Zion National Park's recommendation is that it does not meet the criteria to be included.

9. Tyce Palmer reported on the Upper Sevier Project. In 1998 the local conservation district had concerns on the Upper Sevier watershed and saw a need to create a watershed plan. They did a public scoping process. They got the stakeholders together and created a local water shed management plan. Some of the concerns that came out of their scoping process was that the main stem of the Sevier had degradation, the state of timber on the high points of the mountain, loss of Aspen and some concerns on the uplands. It is now called the Upper Sevier River Community Watershed Project and it is a collaborative partnership addressing restoration needs, management challenges, and research opportunities for rangelands, forestlands, and aquatic ecosystems in the Upper Sevier River Watershed. The Forest Service has helped obtain funding. They are looking at other funding sources also.

Steve Robertson distributed handouts and described the project. It was one of 12 projects selected nationwide to receive funding. They have about 20 to 30 partners to date. They are currently working on watershed assessment to identify resource issues. The watershed is so large that they have identified subwatersheds in which restoration efforts will be concentrated.

Specific issues they will address are water quality, riparian and upland vegetation, fire safety and access. Some of their accomplishments to date are improvement of nine miles of riparian habitat; 750 acres of sage grouse habitat; stabilized two miles of a large gully system; initiated new grazing practices; treated 2,000 acres with prescribed fire to reduce risk. They have also sponsored workshops dealing with feedlot operators, riparian ecosystems and livestock management for ranchers and farmers with the watershed. They have also awarded a contract to develop a community owned, interactive website to better involve the public and partners in watershed restoration, monitoring and information sharing.

Cary Peterson applauded this watershed restoration effort indicating that grasses and the right density of trees, herbs, etc. will increase water yield and water quality which is very important to the watershed. If his project goes well it could easily double the water coming down the Sevier River. This is an area in this arid part of the state that could be greatly improved through these efforts.

10. The next SUPAC meeting will be November 7 in St. George at the Holiday Inn. The TAG on OHV use will meet at 9 a.m. with the SUPAC meeting to begin at 1 p.m.

11. Calendaring items were reviewed.

November 1-3: The Department of Natural Resources will be in Southern Utah to meet with people and do some touring.

The Colorado Plateau Forum Town Series: The next one is scheduled in Grand Junction, Colorado on Nov. 15 and 16. Vic Knox can provide more information if needed or A.J. Martinez in the State BLM office.

12. Agenda item for next meeting:

UDOT - New STIP and transportation issues

13. The meeting was adjourned.

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Secretary