

SOUTHWEST UTAH PLANNING AUTHORITIES COUNCIL (SUPAC)

Minutes of a meeting held July 13, 2004

1. Welcome and introductions were made at 1:00 P.M.
2. Clare Ramsay motioned to accept the May 4, 2004 minutes as written, and Commissioner Gardner seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.
3. Bevan Killpack presented Ron Wilson with the “meteorite” which started the *DamRon Fire*. (Ron always said that this particular fire started with a meteorite.) Bevan expressed how invaluable Ron was to the Forest Service, and said that the State gained greatly from hiring Ron.
4. Bevan Killpack gave the OHV-TAG Report. Bevan gave a background of the OHV-TAG subcommittee of SUPAC. The High Desert Trails Agreement is one that provides motorized trails across Beaver, Iron, and Washington Counties. A feasibility study will be done for the HDTA by April 1, 2005 to decide whether a NEPA should be done on it. The representatives are a variety of resource people that will handle and collaborate with their counterparts from the different agencies. Noelle Meier is doing work on a travel management plan for the motorized travel. Road analysis is being done and a Noelle’s working with a contractor who can assist us with the decision tree process which will streamline the High Desert Trail. In the meantime, Bevan is trying to touch base with the State (Fred Hayes) about a proposal for the \$50,000 (promised by the Fred Hayes earlier), to be used toward this process to hire the contractor Les Weeks for the process. At today’s OHV-TAG meeting it was discussed to have a Motorized Travel Coordinator. It would be funded by BLM, Forest Service, and supervised by one person. A five-person subcommittee was established by the OHV-TAG today to determine the job criteria/description; outline policy and procedure; and report on which unit will supervise the employee. Bevan will report on the coordinator position at the next meeting.
5. Motorized Travel Management: Noelle Meier, Dixie National Forest, gave a report that the Dixie Ranger District is co-sponsoring an off road usage survey. The Dixie is randomly taking people’s demographics and their views on off-road use. The survey includes questions that include possible displacement to another area of the OHV-TAG. Two Utah State University technicians are working with Noelle to survey everyone. They are surveying in the Swain-Strawberry, Mill Creek, Duck Creek, and Yankee areas. They have only been underway about three weeks. The indicators show that Clark County, Nevada is 72% of usage in some areas. 10% of the usage was Utah. Facilitation contractors are being used, and the evaluation process is neutral. They are 98% complete taking inventory of roads and trails. It will go out for NEPA process. They will reconvene and have the collaborative working group meetings on one night of the week starting the week of September 12, and 19. In mid-October they will have meetings every night for the public for a two week period, to be held in various locations.

6. 10-J Ruling Condors – Henry Maddux gave a historical report on the status of the condor, and the expansion of the 10-J Ruling. Three major areas of re-introduction of the condors are California, Mexico, and Southern Utah and Northern Arizona. It's been confirmed that there are two active nests this year. One is in the Grand Canyon and the other is located in Vermillion Cliffs National Monument area. Their eggs were laid in March and these will fledge around Thanksgiving or Christmas time. 47 of the 100 condors in the wild are located in the Vermillion Cliffs area. Birds have been sighted in Cedar City and Zion National Park. It is said they're looking for Ron Wilson to see if he's working.

The question came up about the expanding of 10-J to all of Utah. The condors were released in the Southern Utah – Northern Arizona area. This is called an experimental non-essential area. Henry distributed articles from www.azgfd.com/artman/publish/artical_104.shtml. Once the animals fly out of the experimental non-essential area then the birds gain the full protection of the Endangered Species Act. It's very important that all of Utah become 10-J experimental non-essential area. Henry has sent an e-mail to the Director of Region 1 out of Sacramento. Our regional director is in New Mexico. An e-mail was sent back to Henry that discussed the request for expansion for 10-J in Utah and they would support an expansion. The only constraint is workload. Endangered Species Actions are more tightly controlled with the appropriations and fund allocation process, more than they used to be, but they want to move on it as quickly as possible. Henry e-mailed them back and offered to assist in the drafting of the NEPA documents.

Henry referred to the following website to hear most of the news regarding condors <http://actionnetwork.org/campaign/condor> There is a petition to ban lead bullets in California in Condor habitats. Henry said if interested, please go to the website. Alan Gardner asked about wolves as far south as Beaver. There are no confirmed sightings in Beaver. The wolf killed on I-70 in Colorado, came from the Tetons in Wyoming. The likelihood that Mexico's wolves would head north is slim. We are more likely to have the northern wolves head south into our territory. For wolf information contact: Allen Clarke, State; and John Neal out of Ogden.

7. County Wilderness Washington: Alan Gardner reported that the governor visited a month ago started the land planning issues for the wilderness. They are patterning the plan after Clark County, which started out with a legislative bill for water pipeline and expanded it to include utility corridors, natural conservation area, property exchanges, disposable land on BLM property; and created about 500,000 acres of wilderness and they also released approximately 200,000 acres of WSAs. The Lincoln County bill is similar to the Clark County in that they created the Silver State ATV Trail through their county and Washington County plans to address many of the same issues. Tomorrow the committee will be evaluating the Nevada bills, and going over the areas they want to identify for the bill. Alan said that there are environmental groups on the committee from the Sierra Club, SUWA, and Wilderness Society. The ATV Blue Ribbon Club is represented along with citizens on the committee. The County's economic development director is also on the committee. Alan said it is a county issue and not state. They also have retired Supreme Court Justice Hauer

(sic) represented on the committee they are using as a moderator. They plan to meet twice a month.

8. Guides & Outfitters on Public Lands – We are impacted by BLM fees, Forest Service fees, and National Park fees. An article stated that the Forest Service fees for guides and outfitters is almost cost prohibitive. Bob Morgan made a comment Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation receives permits annually. The money goes back to the state agencies of Utah. One of the problems is that someone buys a permit for \$60,000 and then they can't get permission to have access to go in and find the animals.

Bob Russell said that the Forest Service is 3% of the outfitters net income. They are developing a process in the ranger districts to provide permit days. Bob said that it varies among each ranger district. Bob said that if the State and Forest Service operate in agreement for a state-wide licensing for the hunter and outfitter guides it would be great. The process now for allotting guide/outfitter days on any ranger district, it's basically up to each ranger district. It's very difficult for the individual district rangers to respond on very short notice when a conservation tag is purchased in May, and that outfitter may not be permitted on the area. Outfitters and guides operating on the national forest need to be permitted to do so. The Forest Service has to make sure that they are not over-permitting for general hunting public and outfitters and guides. The process is time consuming. The cattle drives held overnight and camping commercially by a guide require a permit. Outfitter insurance is very steep and this causes illegal activity. One permitted and three illegal. Bob said that he would like to see the State and Forest Service in partnership for licensing.

A major problem is that if an outfitter/guide crosses into three different jurisdictions they require permitting from each agency. This emphasizes the necessity for a central coordinating office for state-wide licensing and permitting.

The National Park Service requires an annual permit fee of \$250 for outfitters/guides. They are only allowed to charge a cost that pays for the monitoring and use of the area.

Mark Habbeshaw said that grazing permits are centralized and coordinated with all the other offices/jurisdictions.

Scott Truman asked if the SUPAC should be developing a model for centralized licensing and permitting.

9. Congressional Updates: Marreen Casper, Senator Orrin Hatch's Office reported that congress will adjourn 7/23/04. Senator Hatch is on the transportation committee and congress has confirmed a number of judicial appointments, and those appointments on the higher courts of appeals are being held up. Senator Hatch will be in-state for the month of August and will speak at the Utah Rural Summit on 8/12/04.

Quinn Warnick, Senator Bennett's Office, reported that there is an appropriation from DOI still being considered by the subcommittee for a \$750,000 addition for the BLM construction for Sandhollow; the position to provide a liaison for Iron & Washington Counties has been

restored; \$2.3 million appropriated for the forest legacy project of Cedar City; \$3.2 million funding for the sage grass habitat rehabilitation spread across western states; and endangered fish has been restored to BLM for gas/oil exploration.

Mike Empey wolf letter; co-sponsored for \$500,000 million for supplemental emergency fire funding.

10. Forest Plan Revisions: Bob Russell handed out a newsletter. The Dixie National Forest “searched far and wide” and Dale Flanagan will be the new Forest District Ranger for Cedar City. They are currently refining the roadless inventory. Secretary Veneman proposed a new roadless rule yesterday. The rule gives a big role to the Governors for petitioning management and an update will be given in September.
11. Drought issues - Bob Morgan spoke about the drought. There are many ramp closures on the lake due to low water. Emphasis has been on public land issues and there is a little controversy going on in Emery County for the “Range” Creek. Eighty people showed up to a meeting. The Discovery channel, Today Show and the Nature Show all want to go there to do segments on the issue.
12. Roundtable - Jim Crisp announced that state-wide BLM is conducting, under a contract, R & P amendments to incorporate in the Management Plan the National Fire Plan policies and practices of all BLM managed lands in Utah. It is required and Utah is supposed to be done by May 2005. They are trying to complete it by September 30, 2004. The EIS is being done.

Ken Sizemore announced that John Williams back to work full-time yesterday at the Five County AOG Office.

Scott Hacking announced that the Southwest Public Health Department said it’s a banner year for septic permits on the mountain. They are having big growth spurt and it causes problems getting septic for wastewater.

Lou Brown said he came here looking for Ron Wilson. He spoke with Ron the other day Ron said, he’s burning up state lands. SITLA is working on roads with the counties state-wide to resolve issues for those county roads on SITLA lands.

Ron Wilson reported that fire restrictions apply at midnight tonight for all five counties, except for Beaver Mountain. No campfires, fireworks, or smoking except in designated campsites.

Paul Roelandt reported that the Cedar Breaks road is being replaced and they will close the road at night for the next month.

Zion has had 80 rescues this year. A 14 year old fell off Angel Landing and died a couple of weeks ago. NPS is working closely with the boy scouts. They are working on all their management plans and they will try to complete them by the end of this year. Zion is up 11% on visitation to the park. Bryce Canyon’s visitation is up too.

Dennis Stowell announced that Prairie dogs are on the run on lawns in Cedar City and we requested that we be permitted to trap them in Iron County.

Scott Truman announced that the Annual Utah Rural Summit will be held August 11, 12 & 13, 2004 at the Hunter Conference Center. **There will be a Gubernatorial Forum August 11, at 6:30 p.m. in the Great Hall of the Conference Center.**

Agenda items for the September Meeting –

1. Request for Assistance Beryl/Escalante Soil Erosion - Dale Laub and Dennis Stowell will give a report.
2. Roadless Wilderness Conservation rule with Bob Morgan
3. Drought issues at the end of summer with Bob Morgan

The next meeting will be held September 14, 2004 in St. George.

Alan Gardner motioned for adjournment and Clare Ramsay seconded. The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Kathleen McDowell

APPENDIX “A”

ATTENDANTS SUPAC – July 13, 2004

Blake Walbeck, NRCS
Rob Quist, Utah State Parks
Henry Maddux, FWS
Wayne Thomas, DEQ
Bill Sinclair, DEQ
Scott Hacking, DEQ
Alan Gardner, Washington County Commissioner
Kenneth Sizemore, Five County AOG
Jim Crisp, BLM
Clare Ramsay, Garfield Co. Commissioner
Mark Habbeshaw, Kane County Commissioner
Pat Yardley, Beaver County
Bob Morgan, Dept. of Natural Resources
Bob Russell, Dixie National Forest
Mike Empey, Congressman Jim Matheson
Andrew Pace, Congressman Jim Matheson
Paul Roelandt, NPS – Cedar Breaks National Monument
Ron Wilson, Utah State Forestry Fire & State Lands
John Keeler, Utah Farm Bureau
Lou Brown, SITLA
Jock Whitworth, Zion National Park
Dennis Stowell, Iron County
Bevan Killpack, Dixie National Forest
Marreen Casper, Senator Orrin Hatch
Quinn Warnick
Bryan Thiriot, Senator Bennett’s Office