

**SOUTHWEST UTAH PLANNING AUTHORITIES  
COUNCIL (SUPAC)  
Minutes of a meeting held March 1, 2005**

1. The Southwest Utah Planning Authorities Council (SUPAC) met at the Five County Association of Governments Building in St. George, Utah, on Tuesday, March 1, 2005, at 1:00 p.m. Those in attendance at the business meeting are listed on the roster attached as Appendix A to these minutes.
2. Vice Chairman Scott Truman welcomed those present and conducted the meeting. Introductions were made and a roll was passed.
3. Scott Truman reminded those entities present who had not paid their dues to make sure and get them paid. He told them to check with him if they were not sure if they had paid or not.
4. The minutes of the meeting of January 4, 2005 were moved for approval by Mayor Lawson. John Williams seconded the motion and all voted aye.
5. The first item on the agenda, the IORT Presentation on Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument, was cancelled. This will be rescheduled.
6. Bevan Killpack gave an OHV TAG. Bevan said they met this morning and even though they have the desire to move forward, they don't really have the means to do it. They would still like to hire a Southern Utah Coordinator to work with all agencies but unfortunately their budgets aren't so they can do this at this time. State Parks has some money to put towards that but wanted to wait until they have supporting portion from other federal agencies. So they have decided to hold off and BLM has indicated they have put earmarked 2006 money to hire a coordinator.

The OHV TAG has focused on three areas which are the Three Peaks area outside of Cedar City, the Enterprise Reservoir area and the Gunlock area. These areas are close to or adjacent to the High Desert Trail Proposal. These are areas they feel could be hot spots in the future and the areas they should focus on in planning. At their next TAG meeting they may go to the Three Peaks Area and tour that. Bevan said they appreciated having Scott Truman attend the meeting this morning. Scott Truman told the council that given the appropriations process and the effort to get this moving, they discussed the possibility of approaching our delegation to look at earmarking funds for this process for the Southwest Utah OHV trail planning. Scott asked the representatives for the delegation that were present at the meeting about the process for requesting these funds. Bevan said it may be helpful to the congressional delegation that the steering committee has already done a lot of work and they also have a contract with a man who is putting together some good information about the roads and trails in an inventory of this area. Scott Truman said he would send in this request to the legislators. The goal would be to find funding to do NEPA work on this Southwest Trail Proposal.

7. Bevan also reported on flooding damages on the Dixie National Forest and what repairs they have been able to do. There was over \$2 million damages on roads, bridges and culverts from the January floods. They had some damage in campgrounds from the October flooding and these are still under snow so they can't access those yet. They don't now how much federal funding they will get but this would be for replacement only.

They have also had an area closure for the Enterprise Reservoir area. They had water overtopping the lower reservoir in the January flood. A rock dislodged off the ledge that the dam is towed into. There are some cracks in the toe of the ledge. The dam is well constructed and doing an excellent job. They are concerned more about the slope it is tied into but they are concerned about the safety so they have closed the area. They are waiting for the runoff to come and see where they are at. They are also working with town of Enterprise on emergency measures and evacuation if needed. He also reported that the Pine Valley campground will be open in May. At Honeycomb they can't work on the road in there until at least August.

Ken Sizemore reported that the High Desert Trail study team has been meeting over the last year trying to establish a feasibility analysis for the trail network. They met in the fall and created teams which were assigned to create spreadsheets on each segment of the proposed route. After some work they decided to have Advanced Resources Solutions take information from each segment, analyze it and prepare a report that can be used in the NEPA process on the High Desert Trail.

8. Next on the agenda was Cedar Fuels Management. Paul Briggs did a PowerPoint presentation on this. Their purpose is protecting communities and reducing hazardous fuels in Southwestern Utah. The program involves preparedness, prevention, rehabilitation, monitoring and education. They have some working committees which include: fuels, aviation and training. He showed a map of the focus areas where the projects are they are working on. He showed a list of the communities that have completed fire plans. He showed pictures of some of the different projects. They are finding spring regeneration in some of the areas where they have reduced large amounts of pinion timber. He showed pictures of areas they have treated including Greenville Bench, Tobin Bench (near Gunlock), South Canyon, Woolsey Ranch (west of Cedar City), Cedar Highlands, Joel Springs, Ashcreek, Parowan Front and Dry Creek.

He told about the national award they recently received at a national fire plan conference in Albuquerque for their work.

9. Ron Thompson was next on the agenda regarding the water situation. He said they have been busy dealing with the impacts of the January flood. We have the biggest snowpack this year since they started keeping records on the Virgin River. He said he is hopeful we can get the spring runoff down without any more disasters. Ron said all reservoirs on the Santa Clara have been full since October and there is still the high snow to come down. Kolob Reservoir is 60% full; Quail Creek is nearly full and Sand Hollow is over 40% full. Ron says the District hopes to end up with Sand Hollow 80% full. Ron reminded

the council that the Virgin River is running much higher than normal and this has been a very good water year but one year doesn't usually end a drought.

Ron discussed some of the factors leading up to the flood. Ron said the drought has definitely contributed to the problem. There hasn't been any channel forming floods. Also the tamarisks have clogged the floodplains. The large fires on the Santa Clara watershed drainage leaving almost no vegetation on the watershed contributed. Also the extraordinarily wet fall and a lot of low snowpack contributed to the flooding. We got a warm storm that came in and dropped a lot of the low snow and a significant amount of rain over a prolonged period of time. Ron said another problem is there has been essentially no effort to regulate the floodplain.

The January flood down the Santa Clara was calculated at 8500 cfs. The Virgin River flooding was calculated at 22,000 cfs at Bloomington. This would be about a 25 year flood as 44,000 cfs would be a 100 year flood. Ron said that most of the big damage was from constant eating away of the bank as the river got out of its course. There was also a lot of debris and the tamarisk plugging the floodplain. The river cut huge wide slots down through Santa Clara. Ron said that downstream from confluence of the Virgin and Santa Clara Rivers, the river is 6' higher today than before the floods. Today there is 58" in the snow pack according to the Snotel data. If we have a March like year this won't be a problem but that is highly unlikely. The key is that we get the low snow off early without additional rain on it and then the rest of it come off orderly over the next three or four months. Ron said traditionally the high snow pack is at the end of April. The spring runoff may be a little later this year than some years.

Ron said every bridge, except two, were lost on the Santa Clara from Gunlock on down. A lot of pipeline was lost and sewer line. The District and cities are working with federal agencies, NRCS, Army Corp of Engineers, FEMA, etc. The Safe Drinking Water board did authorize some monies to help with the community water systems. Ron told the council they have tried to put together a resource team between the two cities (St. George and Santa Clara), the water district and the county to do a long term master plan on how to manage the river and hopefully cross coordinate with NRCS and the Army Corp of Engineers. They hope to have a long term management plan when they are done.

Ron answered questions regarding the flooding. There was some discussion of the flooding in October and perhaps what preventative measures could have been taken after that but were not. Ron said some of the federal agencies looked at it but said they couldn't do anything until there was a disaster. Scott Truman said maybe we need some collective effort to push this long term management along so that this doesn't happen in other areas. Jim Crisp mentioned that emergency NEPA regulations would take a minimum of two months which is not acceptable. Jim also said that this conflict will reappear every time we have a flood unless some action is taken. A long term management plan is needed for this.

Scott Truman encouraged the congressional delegation representatives at the meeting to pass on to the delegation what had been discussed regarding this.

10. Ken Sizemore reported on the County Resource Management Plan project. At the last SUPAC meeting he reported that the Five County Region had submitted an application to the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget to try and address some of the planning deficiencies at the county level dealing with land management agencies. The application did not get funded. Ken introduced Bryant Cottam from the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget who gave further information on this and some other items. He said he started with the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget in January of this year and his primary responsibility is the co-resource management plan toolkit. He has been assigned to attend the SUPAC meetings also. His office is in Bicknell. He explained that they had 17 different counties that applied for the County Resource Management Plan project. The four counties selected were Daggett, Uintah, San Juan and Tooele. He said they are hoping, through legislation to get \$3 million dollars and to make sure that 10% of that gets out to rural counties and communities.

11. The next item on the agenda were Congressional Reports.

Maureen Casper, Senator Hatch's office, reported that Senator Hatch introduced a bill for a land transfer for the Boy Scouts of America in Iron County which will allow the exchange of two small parcels of land between the BSA Utah National Parks Council and the Brian Head Ski Resort. He also passed legislation to put together a health reform group committee at the national level that will let Americans know how the trillions of dollars spent on health care are actually spent, lead a national discussion about whether the current health care system should be changed and reporting to Congress on the view of the American people. The web site regarding this:

[www.gao.gov/special.tbs/citizenshealthpr0228](http://www.gao.gov/special.tbs/citizenshealthpr0228). She also distributed copies of a letter written by Sen. Hatch to Mark Everson at IRS to expedite getting recognition for exemption under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code for Virgin River/Santa Clara River Flood Relief, Inc. Copies of a letter to the Secretary of Agriculture from Sen. Hatch were also distributed wherein he thanked him for assistance of NRCS to this point and asked for full assistance in funding from NRCS for flood repair work. Maureen said Senator Hatch was here to see the flood damage and meet with local officials. She also reported that Senator Hatch was disappointed but not surprised with the NRC's decision against Utah's concerns for storing high-level nuclear waste at Skull Valley. She announced two upcoming events: March 3 at the Senior Citizen's Center in St. George, Rob Foreman, and Former Legislative Director of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services will speak about the Medicare Drug Benefits and other new services available through Medicare. On Friday, April 1 at the Little America Hotel in Salt Lake

Bryan Thiriot from Senator Bennett's office also discussed Senator Bennett's efforts to help obtain NRCS funding for Washington County disaster areas. He also reported that the FEMA deadline for turning in applications is this Friday. He said that in Washington the House and Senate are still trying to figure out how to organize appropriations subcommittees and that has not been finalized yet. Senator Bennett has been notified that Iron County would like to go ahead with the comprehensive land use bill. On March 14 at 2:00 p.m. after the county meeting in Cedar City they will have a meeting on this.

They will be trying to follow the model of the Clark County bill and the Washington County bill.

Mike Empey from Congressman Matheson's office reported that the FEMA recovery team does have a congressional liaison that has been meeting with them. Mike said their office has received a lot of inquiries about flood insurance. He said FEMA is doing a community meeting tomorrow night for homeowners associations and interested citizens and a meeting on Thursday night for insurance and realty professionals. FEMA also has a booklet on flood insurance that people can get a copy of. Mike also said that one of the big issues for Congressman Matheson and their office is transportation issues. They are fairly optimistic on some of the Southern Utah projects.

12. Scott Truman called for any other business. Gordon Topham of State Parks said they are trying to work on the OHV situation discussed previously in this meeting through the legislative delegation and the rural AOG offices. He also reported that thanks to our state legislative delegation from this area, Dave Clark and Steve Urquhart, they were able to get funding back into State Park budget and some additional money to help over this next year. Up to that point, if they didn't get enough funding this year to take care of deferred maintenance needs they were going to have to start closing programs and parks.

Ron Wilson reported that on the Lower Virgin River Project they had some meetings in February. The agency meetings and partnership meetings well attended and had good support. The public meetings at night were not well attended. The next meeting will be March 30 and they hope to move ahead after that and have a plan put together by June. He said he hopes that various agencies will attend and give some input so that it can be included in the plan.

Jim Crisp said that the official scoping period ends this Friday on OHV trail identification.

Bryant Cottam, Governor's Office of P&B, on the Critical Lands Planning Toolkits they recently funded all applications. If anyone is not sure how to access toolkits, please give him a call as the web site is not up now but will be back up soon.

13. Scott asked for items for the SUPAC agenda for the May meeting. The following items were brought up for that meeting:

- Update on Water Quality working in conjunction with Kane Co. Water Conservancy District on water quality.
- Possible monitoring of dust from gravel pits - Update
- Bill Sinclair would like to give update on next meeting on legislative issues
- Steve Burr - Visitation in southwest Utah

Send any additional agenda items to Scott Truman.

14. The next meeting was set for May 3 at the Hunter Conference Center at SUU with lunch at noon and the meeting to begin at 1 p.m.
15. Scott Truman asked for any additional calendaring items:  
  
Senator Bennett's Rural Conference will be in Price on May 3 and 4.  
Water Quality board meeting next Monday, March 7.  
Safe Drinking Water Board meeting this Friday, March 4, here in St. George.  
Utah Water Users Meetings at the Dixie Center next week, March 8 & 9.
16. There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned.

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Secretary

**APPENDIX "A"**  
**SUPAC ATTENDANTS**  
**MARCH 1, 2005**

Ronald Thompson, Washington Co. WCD  
Alan Gardner, Washington County Commissioner  
Kevin Carter, SITLA  
Todd Christensen, BLM  
Kim Lawson, Kane Co. Mayors Assoc.  
John Williams, Five County AOG  
Scott Hacking, DEQ  
Dan McGuire, Washington Co. Mayor's Association  
Marreen Casper, Senator Orrin Hatch  
Clayton Ramsay, NRCS  
Ken Sizemore, Five Co. AOG  
Brian Cottam, GOPB  
Mike Empey, Congressman Jim Matheson  
Bruce Hamilton, State Parks & Rec.  
Bevan Killpack, USDA/Forest Service  
Randy Trujillo, BLM  
Rob Quist, Utah State Parks  
Ron Wilson, Utah State Forestry Fire & State Lands  
Gordon Topham, Utah Div. of Parks & Recreation  
Jim Crisp, BLM, St. George  
Paul Briggs, BLM  
Bob Russell, USDA Dixie National Forest  
Bryan Thiriot, Senator Bennett's Office