

MINUTES
Emery County
Public Lands Council
October 3, 2023

PLC: Rod Player, Ray Petersen, Les Wilberg, Leon McElprang, Ben Grimes, Sherrel Ward

PLC Absent: Wade Allinson, Bruce Wilson

PL STAFF: Jim Jennings (ECPL), Jan Olsen (Secretary)

Agencies: Commissioner Keven Jensen, Commissioner Jordan Leonard, Commissioner Lynn Sitterud, Kyle Beagley (BLM), Darren Olsen (USFS), Wayne Ludington (SRBCH), Marc Stilson (DWRI), Cheyenne Larsen(DWR).

Electronically: Kim McFarlane

Public: Ed Geary

1. Welcome

2. Approval of Minutes for September 5, 2023

Ray Peterson motioned to approve the meeting minutes, with a change of the date Jun 6, 2023 to September 5, 2023. Leon McElprang seconded the motion with the change to the date.

3. Chairman Comments

Emery County Public Lands Council Chairman Rod Player opened Tuesday's council meeting with comments about the Foundation for America's Public Lands Organization meeting in Las Vegas. Their purpose was to provide a blueprint for outdoor recreation. More information will be available soon.

4. Presentation by the BLM on Rule Changes on Conservation

The council also watched two video presentations on Tuesday morning at their regular October meeting. The Bureau of Land Management presented the first video with Kyle Beagley as the narrator. The Purposed Public Lands Rule was a resource for questions and showed the three main points for discussion. Although the comment period has already ended, no decision has been made.

5. Presentation by the Forest Service on the Revision of the Forest Plan.

The Forest Service presented the other video. This presentation outlined the proposals for the Forest Service Plan being considered for implementation. The comment period for this plan ends on Nov. 16. Ranger Daren Olsen did state that each individual allotment plan would remain the same. Comments can be made online, by mail, or by attending public open houses.

Both discussions included recreation and wilderness areas within their boundaries. Information on these presentations can be found online at their respective websites. When Ranger Olsen was questioned about the riparian areas in the Forest Plan and their effect on grazing and recreation, he replied that comments are being considered. The same was answered about winter recreation opportunities in the forest, stating that snowfall governed many decisions.

6. Agency Reports and Council Member Comments

- **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)**

Kyle Beagley reported that the support for Public Lands Day was good. He also said that plans for Joe's Fest are underway and ready for later this month.

- **Division of Water Rights (DWRi)**

Marc Stilson, Utah State Water Engineer, spoke about the legislation that expanded to allow water shareholders to bank or save water. He also remarked that there are no maximum or minimum storage requirements for reservoirs. Later in the meeting, Councilmember Ward related that most reservoirs in the area are about 80% full, a remarkable water year.

- **Division of Oil, Gas, and Mining (DOGM)**

No one in attendance

- **Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR)**

Cheyenne Larsen with the Division of Wildlife Resources announced a youth pheasant hunt planned for Oct. 28. Division of Oil, Gas, and Mining representatives reported to the council about the violation at the Skyline Mine in regard to the coal fines found in the upper Electric Lake water. The fans have been repaired, and the tests show that water quality is back to normal, but this violation hearing is pending. The company has appealed the violation

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- **School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA).**

No one in attendance

- **Manti-LaSal National Forest (MLNF)**

The Forest Service agency again reported that wood permits are on sale until Nov. 30 and that Christmas tree permits are available online at rec.gov. Wood is still being harvested at Reeder Canyon. The Box Fire on Emery Mountain that started on Sept. 19 is being managed, but the storms have almost put it out. The grazing extensions of 10 days on five allotments will wrap up around the middle of October.

- **Utah State Parks**
Water at most Utah State Parks is being turned off to prevent freezing. Scofield had already reported freezing lines. Goblin Valley is gearing up for the significant influx of people for the eclipse on Oct. 14. Their campground reservations have been complete for a couple of months.
- **Utah Division of Outdoor Recreation** (Brian Kurta's Report, can not attend)
The "New" Boating Grant (Available 01/01/2024) could help with cattle fence issues across the San Rafael River. The code to look at for the use of funding is found in 73-18-22. See [Link](#). Ty Hunter, our Boating Administrator, will oversee this grant until we hire a specialist for this grant.
Money in the Boating Account may be used for:
 - a. The construction, improvement, operation, and maintenance of publicly owned boating facilities;
 - b. boater education; and
 - c. The payment of the costs and expenses of the division in administering and enforcing this chapter.

We have made a conditional offer for our Trail Crew Lead out of the Moab area. Scott Wheeler was voted back onto the OHV Advisory Council.
We will be out in the field helping with the Solar Eclipse on October 14th.

- **Utah State Department of Agriculture**
No one was present
- **PLPCO**
No one was present
- **Washington Delegation Staff**
No one was present

7. Commission Comments on Public Land Items

Nothing at this time.

8. Additional Issues From Council Members

The reservoirs have not gone down much, the first time it has been this full in years.

9. Concerned Citizens with Emery County-related issues

Kim McFarlane would like an update from the Commissioners on North Long Street.

Commissioner Sitterud asked Kim McFarlane if the people of Green River still want them to move forward with this. They were under the impression that the GR citizens did not want to continue. The commission would like a letter asking them to move forward.

10. Adjourn