MINUTES
Emery County
Public Lands Council
November 7, 2023

PLC: Rod Player, Ray Petersen, Les Wilberg, Leon McElprang, Ben Grimes, Sherrel Ward, Bruce Wilson, Kim McFarlane
PLC Absent: Leon McElprang, Ben Grimes
PL STAFF: Jim Jennings (ECPL), Jan Olsen (Secretary)
Agencies: Commissioner Keven Jensen, Commissioner Lynn Sitterud, Kyle Beagley (BLM), Jordan Davis (BLM), Brian Kurta (Outdoors Rec), Wayne Lubington (SRBCH), Bryan Torgerson (SITLA), Joel Brown (Sen. Lee), Clay Crozier (PLPCO), Myron Jeffs (USFS), Chris Wood (DWR), Roger Fairbanks (Utah AG's Office), Larry Ellertson (Rep. Curtis), Jessica Mortensen (AG).
Electronically:
Public: Ed Geary, Bruce Richman

1. **Welcome**
   Rod Player welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. **Approval of Minutes for October 3, 2023**
   Les Wilberg motioned to approve the meeting minutes, Bruce Wilson seconded the motion. Motion carries.

3. **Chairman Comments**
   The 2024 schedule was presented, and Bruce Wilson motioned to approve the 2024 meeting schedule. Sherrel Ward seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

   The board is looking to advertise for (3) three vacancies, one specializing in Historical background. This advertisement will be going to the paper next week and run for (2) two weeks. Ask around, and if anyone is interested in these positions, please contact Rod Player. We are also asking the commission for their recommendations of people for this board.

   There is a Land Management meeting tomorrow.

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 of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) introduced the new Acting Field Manager, Jordan Davis. Davis, a Sanpete County native, is out of the Salt Lake City office and will be at the Price office for four months; the position should be filled permanently. He announced that Jurassic Monument is closed for the season. He then gave updates: North American Helium has started drilling three helium mines in southeast Emery County, and Lila Canyon Mine is close to drilling into the long wall at the mine. An 80-acre parcel of BLM land southeast of Castle Dale is for sale.

   - **Division of Water Rights (DWRi)**
     No one in attendance

   - **Division of Oil, Gas, and Mining (DOGM)**
     No one in attendance

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

   Aquatics

   - Aquatic biologists sampled the lower Price River near the newly installed BDAs. They plan to return in the first week of November for additional sampling. They are looking for Flannel Mouths and Bluehead Suckers to see whether the BDA work enhanced their habitat.

   Law Enforcement

   - Bull Bison was shot on a cow permit in the Book Cliffs, the hunter self-reported.
   - Two Does were shot during the deer hunt, and both self-reported.
   - People with Cow permits, CWMU has shot two Spike Elk
   - A Deer was shot in the headlights before shooting hours near Monticello
   - Officers are still responding to trespass calls

Outreach

- Youth Pheasant Hunt @ Desert Lake was held on Saturday, October 28th. It was a success
- Pheasants- DWR will release birds each weekend in Wildlife Management Areas from now through Thanksgiving. The areas include Huntington Game Farm, Upper San Rafael WMA (Fuller Bottom), Lower San Rafael WMA (Frenchman), and Desert Lake.
- Nash Wash Mule Deer watch will be on Saturday, Nov 18, from 2-7 pm.
- Our RAC will be on Wednesday, Nov 15, from 6 pm in Green River. Topics include mandatory Big Game reporting, restriction on muzzleloaders with scopes, antelope transplant sites, deer hunt strategy changes for units in the southern region, and LOA and CWMU recommendations.
- Restoration on the Upper San Rafael WMA took place last week. DWR reclaimed the road that was created during the Horizon film. Emery County road crew offered their help with a grader. We ended up using some smaller equipment. Re-seed will happen in the future.

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- **School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA).**
  Brian Torgersen, School, and Institutional Trust Lands Administration, spoke about the land exchanges prescribed by the Dingell Act. Some are still outstanding because of lengthy appraisals but are nearly finished. He also discussed the solar company's plans on Cedar Mountain and their visual impacts.

- **Manti-LaSal National Forest (MLNF)**
  Myron Jeffs, Forest Service Recreational Manager, stated that timber cutting has stopped in the Little's and Reeder Canyon areas but will continue hauling as long as weather permits. He said the Forest Service is responsible for ensuring things are returned when timber work is completed. The Box Fire on Emery Mountain still has a few hot spots and continues to burn a little. He then announced that the Forest Service is hiring for future jobs. Two positions are available: a seasonal job and summer help with permanent placement if desired. The temporary jobs are open until Nov. 11, and permanent jobs until Nov. 12.

- **Utah State Parks**
  No one in attendance

- **Utah Division of Outdoor Recreation**
  Brian Curtis, Outdoor Recreation, spoke about the thousands of visitors to the areas for the solar eclipse. Two new trail bosses have been hired, and crews will be built around the bosses. He spoke about grants available for building trails, using funds for equipment and labor. Grants are also available for school programs. A Mountain West Trails Conference in Vernal is scheduled for May 13-15, 2024.

- **Utah State Department of Agriculture**
  Jessica Mortensen spoke about the grazing program and the range grant improvement open enrollment for next year's program at $12.00 per acre for 3 years.

- **PLPCO**
  Clay Crozier reported that we have recommended 120 thousand new wilderness acres, and the forest is looking over the wilderness plan. Provisions on water, obstruction in the water, like beaver dams.
  The 33% restriction cut from motorized OHV trails, commercial timber production, and livestock grazing. Grazing restrictions on most all places, soil, tribal, 1.3 million acres. A tribal plan is of interest in how you can manage your lands.

  Depositions for our lawsuit for EC-RS2477 for the next few months. Help to protect these routes from being closed.

- **Washington Delegation Staff**
  Joel Brown from Sen. Lee's office is helping with RS2477 to help with federal funds to help keep these roads under the Historical Protection Act. It was stated that only 3 roads have been saved with this protection act, which has been going on for 11 years. The RS2477 moves very slowly.

  Larry Ellertson spoke about issues with Grand County and all this wilderness plan. Glen Canyon received 166 million to work around there, and other canyons and projects and improvements are underway.

7. **Commission Comments on Public Land Items**
   Jurassic Road was put on hold due to money, but hopefully, it can move forward.

8. **Additional Issues From Council Members**
   Our reservoirs are great, 70 - 80 % at this time.

9. **Concerned Citizens with Emery County-related issues**
   Julie Johansen asked what is going on with Fossil Rock; only surface stuff as of now, no work inside at this time.

10. **Adjourn**