

Outdoor Adventure Commission Minutes

December 12, 2023

Meeting Location: Soldier Hollow Conference Room

Department of Natural Resources

Division of Outdoor Recreation

1594 W. North Temple, Suite 100

Salt Lake City, UT 84116

Virtual Meeting Information:

Outdoor Adventure Commission Meeting

Tuesday, December 12 · 2:00 – 4:00pm

Time zone: America/Denver

Google Meet joining info

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/viy-rbtn-epi>

Or dial: (US) +1 929-367-6398 PIN: 363 237 598#

More phone numbers: <https://tel.meet/viy-rbtn-epi?pin=4606650565568>

Outdoor Adventure Commission YouTube Playlist

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLWixD5-tnhxrwAb0osnucRKxne2LX0gQW>

Attendees

In person: Travis Hair, Matthew Ryan, Chad Bracklesburg, Jerry Taylor, Michelle McConkie, Tara McKee, Evan Glenn, Scott Strong, Pitt Grewe, Patrick Morrison, Shane Stroud, Jason Curry, Rep. Jeff Stenquist, Maureen Casper, Caroline Weiler, Kelly Stowell, Vicki Varela, Jorge Vazquez, Mark Staples, Natalie Britt, Amanda Rowland, Stephani Lyons, Aaron Averett

Virtual: Christa Hinton, Emily Friedman, Kelly Goonan, Josh Van Jura, Jeff Hartley, Kate Bradshaw, Patricia Wise, Barbara Bruno, Josh Van Jura

Agenda

1. Welcome - **0:10**

Rep. Stenquist: Call meeting to order

2. Minute Approval - **0:15**

Scott Strong: Motion to approve

Unanimous minute approval

3. Recreation Access Study - Situation Assessment Update - Matt Ryan, Governor's Office of Planning & Budget - 01:00

Rep. Stenquest: We have Matt Ryan here to present to us. Matt and I talked earlier today, so welcome to our meeting and the floor is yours.

Matt Ryan: Hello all. My name is Matt Ryan, I am with the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget. Some of my main duties are to help with the start of access and recreation study. We have had the opportunity to talk to land managers to county governments, user groups, you name it. Trying to get a read on recreation access and what it looks like in a rural community. To find out where there are opportunities and where there's a gap and essentially what's happening there and what they are experiencing. The end goal of these conversations will be a request and RFP to not only hand off to my colleague, Travis at UDOT but to help out Carly and the Division of Outdoor Rec. This will come in the form of a budget requesting a million dollars recommended for this upcoming fiscal year, to finance this study should take approximately 12 months.

This will help us dive further into what recreation access looks like. The ideal product from this as we are thinking right now would not only be a list of projects, places, and pinpoints to where access could be improved, and strengthened. Make it that much easier for people to get to the places that they want to go without having so many of the side effects from it and also build up the Outdoor Adventure Commission and Strategic plan but also the Division of Outdoor Rec, having new opportunities to collect data and to better understand where people are going, what they are doing and how we can accommodate that growth and plan ahead. So that our local rural areas don't get outdated or stretched to the max.

Carly Lansche: So one of the things that makes this study such a line item of potential access improvements is how UDOT will factor their planning and capacity building. Matt has done a great job at scoping it out and helping prepare for what that study may look like.

Rep. Stenquest: So questions from the commission members, I have a few questions, but will let the commission as first if anybody has any questions. Matt and I had a chance to talk earlier today so I've shared a few of my thoughts but one of the things that I would like to ask was that you share this budget request within UDOT'S budget.

Matt Ryan: Yes.

Rep. Stenquest: I'm curious to a little more detail about where the genesis was for the idea of doing an access study.

Matt Ryan: So yes, exactly, and least within the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget, guiding the growth was a big catalyst for that. The results and those who responded talked about recreation access is a really important value to their communities. It's why they live here, it's why they moved here if they are not from here. The interest in maintaining recreation access as well as entertaining may be new possibilities for recreation access as well.

Rep. Stenquest: So are you saying that this came from public input and surveys?

Matt Ryan: A lot of surveys yes.

Rep. Stenquest: So this is a big question for the public and it's been consistent with what we have been looking at as a commission and what's in our strategic plan also as a concern and area of focus.

Tara Mckee: So the collaboration Division of Outdoor Recreation by Carly, what is the plan on that side?

Carly Lansche: So if the funding is requested for the study, so the study is not funded yet but if it is then it would be a program that UDOT would lead. It would be a UDOT program that would work on improving recreation access. We are helping with the study but the study will be done by UDOT.

Tara Mckee: Okay.

Scott Strong: Who at UDOT actually conducting the study and aligning the pieces, you outlined it very broadly.

Carly Lansche: It is very broad right now and that is still being determined. This is why we wanted the commission to be aware and involved as it moves forward and evolves.

Matt Ryan: Yeah, exactly, and we're still having conversations as well and still trying to distill everything we've heard and learned.

Jerry Taylor: How much are we talking?

Tara Mckee: 1 Million

Pitt Grewe: Yeah, it's crazy that we are talking a million for a study and we only got like a hundred thousand for our Statewide recreation study.

Tara Mckee: No, it was 340,000.

Pitt Grewe: Still a substantial amount more for a study on access points rather than full points of infrastructure for recreation.

Travis Hair: It's not just access points, I'm Travis, with UDOT. It's a big piece of it, as UDOT builds access to things, but it's also a part of access where people don't know how to get to recreation or what to do once they get there and what we can do with that piece. It's a very broad study and the Governor's office is the one that we get that million dollar line. I don't know if that's what we will get in the end but it's the access piece that UDOT would be managing it. We have that project management piece in our portfolio but it's much much beyond what UDOT would do to improve access.

Is part of the access that people don't know where to go to Recreate? This study is what UDOT will do to help people recreate.

Scott Strong: Do you have an idea of what the million dollars from your perspective is, is that too much money, not enough money to conduct a study like this?

Travis Hair: I think that depends on what we end up putting up on the scope. Is it just the access points or is it the other stuff that we could expand into that's where we would have to look at recreation wholesale? We would have to figure out what all of those pieces would look like and that is a much bigger study.

Scott Strong: And you said that this would go out to bid via an RFP process? So this wouldn't be done by UDOT staff, or Governor's staff, or the Division of Receptions? Could this be done by a university?

Matt Ryan: That isn't something that I haven't entertained, but that's something not to rule out, but I can't say for certain as of right now.

Carly Lansche: And Matt's been conducting what you call a situational assessment where he's been meeting with a lot of stakeholders, representatives, as he said earlier he met with Rep. Stenquest today. So if you have any ideas on how to guide and steer the survey, I would recommend getting in touch with Matt, myself, or Travis, and we could spitball ideas on how this direction of the Governor's office delves into what we've already done as a commission. As to not recreate or duplicate any work that has already been done. I think that is an important component of this.

Rep. Stenquest: Yeah so that seems like there's a lot of overlap with what's going on with what the commission has been doing. Once again, it is the governor's budget which is a wish list and because this is in UDOT's budget it would go to the infrastructure in the general government appropriations committee, which I happened to sit on. I'm sure that the committee will have some discussion about it and I think that they will want to hear my input on it too.

Pitt Grewe: I would like to see more of the outcome and expectations of this would be and look like. If it's more about general information sharing, education, and information around resources for outdoor recreation that is my main concern. If that is what's most important then why is this going over to UDOT and not the Division of Outdoor Recreation? If it's mostly about access points, parking lots, and roads then yeah that falls under UDOT. If the output is more recreations then yeah it's not UDOT's responsibility.

Rep. Stenquest: If the genesis is basically the public has given input on access, I know that's a big issue in the OHV Community with roads, maybe we should focus on addressing some of those issues in our strategic plan and so forth. I think at the very least it should complement and enhance the work that we are already doing.

Travis Hair: I think that one of the very big questions that we all have in all of this is "How can we communicate better?" with things that are already happening? So this is part of the analysis of how there's things that all of these agencies could do to work together and to make the whole picture. So it's not saying that these pieces should go to DNR, or Division of Outdoor Recreation, or any of that, it's how can we link all of this stuff together so that we are doing it together.

Rep. Stenquest: Alright well thanks. Any other questions from the commission? No, alright. Thanks so much for your time and coming for your presentation.

Matt Ryan: Thank you for your time. I appreciate it.

Carly Lansche: Thanks.

4. Outdoor Recreation Initiative - Project Presentations - 11:58

Rep. Stenquest: Okay, the next item on the agenda is the Outdoor Recreation Initiative project presentations. Patrick, do you want to shepherd this part?

Patrick Morrison: Yeah, I would love to. So thanks to everybody for joining us and our presenters. One thing that is going to be fun today is we're gonna hear presentations not just on construction. We have some unique projects coming in this month and next month. So we are going to see just how effective this program can be in supporting some of the things that we can't traditionally be here in the division with our grants program. I don't want to take a ton of time, I will say that right now you all have your project prioritization sheets, you have your notes, but over the holiday I am going to supply everyone with a pretty detailed packet so that they can review all of these projects that you are hearing. I encourage all of you and anybody that if you have any questions about any of the projects from this month and next month to please reach out to me. If there is something that you want to learn more about these projects as we are looking at the prioritization sheets, please let me know. This is a unique cycle of what this program will ultimately look like but I think that this is a great way to get everyone's attention and effort as we review this. I want to save as much time as possible for our presenters. We will have some online and others from King County, Springvale, Emily Friedman, Evan Glenn, and Chad. Thank you all again and I will turn over our time to Evan. I do have the intended time on the agenda and I do believe that we are a touch behind but that's gonna be fine. I will ask that since we do have a lot to get through that we try to be efficient with our questions and without further due.

a. Bureau of Land Management - Evan Glenn - 40 minutes (2:10 PM)

Evan Glenn: Thank you Patrick and let me know if I need to speed up. Hi everyone, It's great to see you all and great to be here, and thanks for the invitation for us to participate. My name is Evan Glenn. I work for the Bureau of Land Management here in Utah and I oversee the recreation program statewide. So I work here in the State office here in Salt Lake City lucky enough to have my home office in Wellsville is actually my duty station, so I live in Cache Valley but represent the BLM statewide. I also represent BLM nationally on mountain cycling issues. Again I want to give a shout-out and thanks for the invitation. Over the past few years of being part of essentially an appendage, I feel like part of the Division of Outdoor Recreation as the state has just been so enlightening and watching what's going on. I do have to give this shout-out when people are watching "Wait you are working with the state to present and maybe partner on dollars. Alaska's like what are you doing, Oregon's like what are you doing?" You know this is so exciting what the state of Utah is doing, and what the commission is supporting. Thank you very much. I'm just going to jump right in. This is a picture of one of the projects that we are working on. This is the pathway along Highway 128 on the Colorado River in Moab. This is just another great example of some historical work that occurred through partnership efforts.

Just a quick introduction about BLM and where we stand and why I'm here in front of you seeking your partnership and financial support. BLM Utah manages a lot of acres. As you can 22 million compared to the eight million from the forest service and the two million. This is a starking comparison of the allocated funding that we receive at the federal level we get 79 cents per visitor. Where the Park service gets over five dollars per visitor. Feel free to ask questions as we go or whatever you need. I want to frame up why we are here and why we are asking for big dollars. I do want to mention that BLM is able to accomplish quite a bit with the small budget.

So moving into where we are this summer, Patrick, informed me that this was going on and we started queuing up projects so I did an outreach to our colleagues out at our offices in the field and within a few days we scrounged 45 projects that are like on the top of our findings need but we just don't have the funds to get them over to the finish line. These projects end up being around 44 million in unfunded opportunities. I would guess that if we were to take another hard look into this we would be able to double or triple this list. I did need something to share with the state. I am going to share about 5 projects that we think we could dive into if we were to receive support in 2024. None of our proposals involve any land acquisitions. All of our proposals are able to be adjusted up or down depending on the availability of support through that community. The base that we're talking about is the 5 projects that you're going to see today, which are completing the Colorado River Pathway, House on Fires access improvement projects, McCoy Flats New Campground, Calf Creek Recreation Site, and Iron County Mountain Bike Trails.

I was supposed to share with you every project and it was about a page long but considering we are short on time, I will have about 5 minutes per project, so I can happily provide more information to you later.

Completing the link on the SR-128 Colorado River Scenic Byway project in Moab - 19:25

Evan Glenn: This first project is the Riverway along the Colorado River and I hope you have had the joy to experience that. It is a lovely scene in that you can see parts of it are already in place from these pictures. It has a multimodal pathway that has a safety separation from the highway. What we are asking you to consider today is that we have about two and a half miles of the trail that has been left incomplete. There is a part in the middle that's left due to the complexity of the engineering and it's going to be the most expensive part of the trail. So what you see in the upper left picture is when folks leave the completed part of the trail they end up going back onto the highway which creates traffic issues and folks end up getting back up.

Rep. Stenquest: I have ridden this so many times and I want to know if this is just at the campground. Where do you end up going underneath the tunnel or is it basically that campground to the bridge? Is that the middle part?

Evan Glenn: No.

Rep. Stenquest: Ok, because I haven't gone further up the river. Is there more bike paths further up the river?

Evan Glenn: There is not.

Rep. Stenquest: Okay, so I think that this little section and just extending it to the campground would be a huge benefit, especially safety.

Jerry Taylor: How far is that?

Evan Glenn: The portion that we are talking about today is about .6 miles. It's not a lot.

Rep. Stenquest: It's a really busy highway and you're really on the road and it's really unsafe.

Jerry Taylor: The road is already narrow.

Rep. Stenquest: Thousands of people a year pass through that.

Jason Curry: It really shows the people riding on the shoulder of about this much. Yeah in that picture right there.

Evan Glenn: Yeah this picture is what the current situation looks like. Again, we've already gone two and a half miles. We are trying to finish the .6 miles. This will connect and tie very important pay pathways of the trail. This would really connect and tie a very important package of pathed pathways. The NEPA is complete and we are just looking for funding. We are hoping to get things going in 2024 and things done in 2025.

Pitt Grewe: Why was the not finished before? Why is the gap there?

Evan Glenn: Yes, thank you. You have queued up my next slide. I think a lot of people before were also like "Why did they stop there". Yeah, and here it is Pitt, it's because this last bit is going to cost about 5 million dollars. The reason that this was left for last is because it's in between the river and a cliffside. There is a lot that is going into this and it would be about 15 million dollars by the time that it finishes.

Rep. Stenquest: You included there that the trail network could have been a funding and option and I think that it would be a great opportunity.

Evan Glenn: Yeah, it would be and we have been working with UDOT on this as well.

Josh Van Jura: I was just texting Stephanie to get a status update on this. To see if it was brought up through the AOGA meetings.

Evan Glenn: Our federal partners are pursuing grants through the federal highways that have been unsuccessful so far but it is queued up with them as well. With the lack of time, I am not going to be hitting every one of these for the checklist. The key part of this is that we will just need money so that we can do the contracting work. Multimultile and how people are using these trails and we want to connect these trails. It is a really nice opportunity to connect this part of the trail.

Rep. Stenquest: Have you done a user count?

Evan Glenn: We have and I do not have that handy with me at the moment.

Rep Stenquest: I think it would be really important to get that count of how many bikes are going down because it would shuttle companies from dropping people off at the top and coming back down. I think that it would be a significant number of people that this would benefit.

Tara Mckee: When I am visiting Red Clips Lodge I often like to run all up these kinds of trails.

Evan Glenn: This project follows all the key points that were shared with us. It does offer Moab a great option for further promotion which some of us might be scratching our chins about but it's a world-class place. It's getting lots of visitation. This is a real opportunity to tie the system together again. I'm happy to share this information or you'll have all my slides, Patrick, if anyone wants to go through them and hit your alignment point and the prioritization checklist as it will go more in-depth. Any quick questions on the first project?

House on Fire Access Improvements in Bears Ear National Monument - 26:10

Evan Glenn: I don't know if any of you have visited House on Fire. I hope you have and I hope that you visit it again as it's an amazing place. We are seeking some support for safety and access to the House of Fire site. We did have another site that we wanted to present to the commission but another partnership that we're navigating is our new and amazing partnership with the Bears Ears Commission and why are we already worked that with the commission and the local county and so we had a project we felt was more shovel ready than what we actually thought. The project overview is that this is a site in Bear Ears and in San Juan County and there is very little parking and most visitors park on the side of the road. There are real safety issues with parking being on both sides of the road. We would need to relocate that trailhead and this plan would include about 30 cars. A bigger problem that we would normally have down there is on a busy day EMS would be struggling to get in because of all the cars on the side of the road. We are trying to tackle that and the trailhead is in a wilderness study area so we would need to relocate that trailhead. This NEPA should be done within the next couple of weeks and construction should be started in 2024 and completed in 2025. Patrick and I have started talks in other ways for how we can partner with the state and BLM other than just funding. This project should cost about \$ 330,000 for the purchase of labor and materials. We would essentially be asking for about \$230,000 in assistance. The labor would be queued up with the BLMs operations staff. Any of our projects that you are gonna be seeing today are going to be improving accessibility. These are really exciting components of this.

One of the great things about this is the Bears Ears Commission's work on this. We are seeing more visitation and because of this, we need to harden some of these sites and use the funding for direct use of these sites.

Jerry Taylor: So are you gonna do away with the old parking lot and build a new parking lot? Is there something that you could do to keep both?

Evan Glenn: They're probably a way to do that but I would have to get back to you on that commissioner. I would need to follow up on that but the plan is to essentially create a wide spot on the road and we are gonna be moving towards an architectural type.

Jerry Taylor: Okay, being able to get them off the road.

Evan Glenn: Yeah and you know we will potentially have cars on the road as visitation on the road. But yes we would abandon the lot and get away from that wilderness study area where we have fewer hard sideboards. Alright, the next project.

McCoy Flats Campground Project in Vernal - 31:40

Evan Glenn: McCoy Flats is a nationally recognized system of cycling trails in the Vernal, Utah area in 2019 through the Dingle Act. It received the first congressionally designated trail system. It's kind of unique where Congress just said we are designating this system. In this area, we have about 45 miles of trail and dispersed campgrounds. All of the things that are going on there in the spring for the international Mountain Trails conference. It is becoming a destination and we are planning to again harden sites to protect recreation opportunities and natural resources in this area. What we are looking for is to develop one long-term campground in the area. We are anticipating at least two campgrounds in the McCoy Flats area. Addressing the new user groups that are going to be there as it's a really fun trailhead. I used to

be a recreational planner in Vernal and it was a local destination. We have put in additional restroom facilities with the congressional designation. We are seeing many states represented in the parking lot of people participating in McCoy flats and I hope you have the opportunity to join us in the spring for the trails conference out there.

Pitt Grewe: Do you have any idea of the usage? Counters or anything to do with that?

Evan Glenn: I don't have that with me right now Pitt but let me see what I can pull together for you. As of right now, it is a newly discovered destination that doesn't have any hard plans for camping, but we do have people camping in the trees and in some existing camping areas.

Pitt Grewe: Are people camping at the trailhead?

Evan Glenn: People are camping at the trail and as of right now it's not a big problem. Giving folks an opportunity to go to a hardened site where people are close to a restroom again and where we can offer possible opportunities for people is a really important goal of ours right now. The NEPA is underway and their planning was finalized in January again. Most of the labor would come from the BLM office crew and they are queued up for that. We have partners with Uintah County and SITLA has interesting relationships with the landscape out there. We have an understanding of the management of the area and I believe that we are going to make a land exchange based on the Dingle Act to make a larger contiguous piece of BLM in the area. Once again the state's role would be direct funding assistance. The project cost would be about 1.5 million dollars and the request would be 1 million dollars for materials and support in contract work. The campground would hit the project checklist. We have been working with Uintah County and they have been really on board with work and really working at it. We are finding that the landscape is gonna need some help. Any questions on McCoy Flats?

Calf Creek Recreation Site Improvements Project in the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument - 37:50

Evan Glenn: Calf Creek, I hope you have been to this iconic site in the grand staircase and escalante national monument that was put in front of you. We are currently working on a very big project to bring Calf Creek up to contemporary standards. One of the major issues as shown on the upper left is gonna be the traffic flow and parking. If any of you has been there it's tight. It's just not very accommodating the current needs and this situation you see is where we have safety issues. I hope that we never find ourselves in any kind of EMS situation when somebody is trying to navigate this kind of issue with the emergency vehicle on the right side.

Jerry Taylor: On the right side it's straight off and on the left side it's straight up?

Evan Glenn; Yep, it sure is.

Rep. Stenquist: Is this a UDOT road?

Evan Glenn: This is Highway 12.

Jerry Taylor: It's the most beautiful highway in the world.

Pitt Grewe Its the best highway in Utah.

Rep. Stenquist: Yes that's fantastic, but it's under the jurisdiction of UDOT.

Jerry Taylor: It is a UDOT roadway.

Evan Glenn: So great points Jeff, we are proposing improvements on traffic flow and getting folks into more parking areas so that the traffic flow works better and so that it's in the recreation site. One of our partners on this is UDOT and we are gonna be working with the county. This is gonna be one of those situations here as we have seen so many

visitors on our popular recreation sites, We are gonna have to do roadside management right here because it's a serious issue. There are not a lot of places for people to essentially go and park.

Pitt Grewe: How many parking spots are there currently?

Evan Glenn: I don't know. I'm not sure.

Pitt Grewe: Probably no more than 20.

Evan Glenn: I was gonna say 25-30.

Jerry Taylor: Yeah, I would say 20-30.

Pitt Grewe: Okay.

Evan Glenn: Here is an example of what the parking space looks like as you can see. It's not well planned for the traffic flow and the issues are significant. When you get in there you are in and it can be a stressful situation. So I showed a few more slides to this project because I wanted to help you understand what issues were up against. This site was designed in the 1960s and has been functional for many years, but does need to be deferred maintenance overall. Structures and the overall site need to be improved into the modern era. This is one of the most visited sites in the Escalante area. NEPA is ready and we are looking to expand our overall portfolio. We are looking for state assistance for what we are calling phase two. Phase two would especially include things like relocating the main parking area, and installing fiber optic cable. Relocating the campsite hosts and we do have options to bundle some of these components together. We do have options to fuse and conduct some of the improvements, mix and match these things as we need to. We are looking at a total project cost of 5.5 million. We are requesting 3.3 million of support from the commission. I am going to hit your checklist but this really has an international scope and has significant cross-jurisdictional impacts with the impacts to the highway and bring our sites up to a higher level of accessibility standards. This would impact parking and traffic flows, these are really the big impact efforts here. It's an opportunity for us to impact users at the location that has positive benefits beyond the site impacts. The communities of Blouder are very direct, as I was on a call, folks said that people staying in the state park campgrounds would always visit Calf Creek. So this is very connected and important to the local community.

Scott Strong: Just a couple of questions.

Evan Glenn: Yeah?

Scott Strong: You mentioned that the project cost was 3 million dollars, was that what it was?

Evan Glenn: The project cost was 5.5 million and we are seeking 3.3 million. This could be broken down or increased as needed.

Scott Strong: Where is that rest of the 2.2 coming from?

Evan Glenn: It's coming from funds of the Great American Outdoors Act and we got a chunk of change from a grant from the state of Utah. We are scrounging up in every place that we can find to get you to know, that these big-ticket items are a challenge for the agencies to come up with five plus million or even 2 million dollars.

Scott Strong: I am just curious and I want to say that we are so appreciative of our state parks and our relationship with the BLM, but I am curious how much of the 2.2 is Federal funding vs State funding. Do you have that?

Evan Glenn: I do not have that but I could get it for you. I believe that the biggest chunk is gonna be from GOA which is going to be from Federal funding, but I don't have that answer for you. One of the downfalls of having the one voice and not the specialism. Let me see what I can tally those up and give you a bigger picture of that.

Pitt Grewe: What is the max on the grant?

Carly Lansche: Patrick is looking it up.

Patrick Morrison: Yeah, I was gonna say it was a restoration grant so it was 150,000 thousand.

Scott Strong: You collect the fees at the site?

Evan Glenn: Yes we do.

Scott Strong: What are the current fees?

Evan Glenn: Currently the camping fee is like \$20 and the day in a site is like \$7. Those won't change if those were going to change I would go through a different process. That's a great point Scott, both this project and McCoy Flats and actually the project in Bears Ears are all part of a fee area of sorts. So like in McCoy Flats you don't have to pay to ride your bike but if you were to stay in a hardened site like the campsite associated with that goes through our business plan process and our resource advisory.

Scott Strong: Okay, you have to forgive me because I'm unfamiliar with it, but how do the fees work? So you collect the fee at the site do they stay at the site to pay for operations and maintenance and facility building? What happens to that money after it's collected at the site?

Evan Glenn: You just described it. What these fees do, I think the most simple ones are the campground fees. They're collected at the site and are used to support recreation at the site and use them for the site where they are located. Sometimes we use them within the field office or the region that they are located in. This is a great example, if we don't receive funding through this we will be using funds gathered through fees to potentially build the McCoy Flats campground. We do this with a targeted approach from inside of the location and moving out, currently, we are not using those funds at a Statewide or national level, but we could if we needed to support the growth of the program. Going back to those numbers that I had shown you those are funds that we did get back from Congress. Utah by the way does have a really robust fee program and campground for the program and special recreation program within any state in the bureau as it's very successful and we think it serves the public and landscape very well.

Iron County Mountain Bike Trails Project in Cedar City - 49:11

Evan Glenn: Sorry I know I am behind but we will get that last project out in front of you. We are trying to provide you with a mix of opportunities to consider both in the landscape. They're spread across the state and there are some high-dollar projects down to some lower-dollar projects. This is one of our lower asks. We had our trails form a couple of years ago and it goes to show just a wonderful opportunity at what trails can do for our community where we are seeking to add support for additional trails. We call these community trails and Cedar City and they really are in their backyard. In this picture on the right, this rider very likely rode somewhere from town rather than having to commute there.

Rep. Stenquist: These are the ones that are very east of town, close to I-15. They have another trail system that is further out west and this is the one closest?

Evan Glenn: Yeah this is kind of the heart of the trail system of Iron Hills trail system and that is moving to the south as we develop trails down the canyon and there is another complex, Three Peak, out west of town. We've actually started new trails in Beaver and so the complexes are really growing. This trail system really started from the community with the funding from the transient room taxes and it's just been nice to see bikes in hotels. The community got together and said that this was important at the time. When I went to Cedar City, I started taking pictures of bikes on cars at hotels and said that this is really neat stuff. Something really unique about the mountain trails and some of the dollar figures

you see here is that these are really high scale durable professionally built trails. This is high-level stuff that will last a long time and will serve the community for a long time, this is based on community master trail planning. We currently have some money and contracts in place down there but what we are currently looking for or seeking is additional funding so that we can put 10, 15, or maybe 20 miles of additional trails for the community or visitors. The NEPA is complete and ready to go and we have all agreements in place.

Tara Mckee: Hasn't this won some awards?

Evan Glenn: Yes and thank you, Tara. This trail system is seeing national attention. They are the host of IMBA trail labs so they are bringing people from around the nation out to show not just trails in Cedar City but their unique as the community base that built those trails and has ownership of those trails. So turning the tides to how do we make a community trail system but also how Cedar City has been shown as the place to learn how to do it.

Pitt Grewe: I will argue that these are some of the best trails in Utah and maybe even in the country. I have had professional mountain bikers reach out to me to get information to come visit there to film and to do events here. They are world-class.

Evan Glenn: Thank you, Pitt. You know what fun about that "world-class" is that on the same given piece of tread, you can have an advanced rider having the ride of his or her life and their child has been riding for two years and is 10 years old on the same trail having the same adventure.

Rep. Stenquest: Because you got the A and B lines.

Evan Glenn: Yeah because of that A and B line, it's just very well thought through which you don't get, on 15,000 miles. Were talking about \$50,000 a mile tread in Cedar City and its expensive but it pays back.

Rep. Stenquest: It looked like Jeff Harly had a question too.

Jeff Harly: I was just going to ask about the proximity to the Inland port. I only ask because the Inland Port has a lot of infrastructure funds available.

Rep. Stenquest: So the Inland Port site is a little bit west of town and this is on the east side of town. So it's kind of on the other side of Cedar City from where the Inland Port site is.

Kelly Goonan: It's probably only five or six miles.

Jeff Hartley: So again it has infrastructure funds like no one else in the state. So it might be worth considering connecting to the west side if it's possible. I know it is some beautiful rugged county out there.

Evan Glenn: Okay, a great point we will have to look into that. So we're looking at again for these additional miles for about a total cost of \$730,000 kind of shocking for trail miles, but we know that they don't come cheap right now. In our request today we are asking for 500,000. We have about \$270,000 on the ground ready to go that we can add to you and sleep our trail crews out there working. We understand that the trails don't come without cost. The key component of this project is planning for overcrowding. This is shovel-ready.

Pitt Grewe: I may sound like I'm advocating hard for this and maybe I am. The community members behind this, you talk to them about this and it's just like Christmas morning when you talk to them about it. They are so excited about this and I think that is important to measure the impact of just the infrastructure.

Evan Glenn: Thank you Pitt, and that's the point that I will hit I think that the health and community connection this trail system has built is exciting. To be able to support it and further that with more miles of world-class trails that not only

serve cyclists but trail runners as well. I know I am over time and I'm not sure if we have time for questions but that's what I have. I want to thank you for your time today and for bearing with me for the last 40 minutes.

Rep. Stenquist: Thank you so much for your time. Next up is Chad from the Utah Avalanche Center

b. Utah Avalanche Center - Chad Brackelsburg - 58:18

Chad Brackelsburg: Thank you all for having us here. Chad Brackelsburg here, thank you. Executive director of the non-profit study table. Chad Mark Staples is here with me who the forest service side. Utah really does have the Greatest Snow on Earth. For a lot of us, Utah provides the mental, and physical enjoyment and health that we all need in the summer. Were sort of limited to the traditional infrastructure and the trail the people built for us to recreate throughout the mountain ranges but one of the beautiful and unique things that winter travel is was not limited to those trails. We are here to provide education on how to travel throughout Utah and essentially pioneer your own path. We want to disperse the overall use and make it less crowded. It's important to know that these people want to feel safe and educated when wanting to recreate. Utah's population is growing quickly as well as the backcountry recreation, and when it comes to numerous questions people have to try to figure out is build that virtual trail. It gets overwhelming for anybody who has driven up the crowded cottonwoods on a busy powder Saturday knows that people are stressed out just getting to the mountains and so providing more education for people will help to improve the experience as well as decrease the impact on the crowded areas but also benefit the rural areas that don't have those services. Now we look at areas like the Oaker mountains the Tushers, and the Eastern Unintahs it currently don't have avalanche forecasts. We can provide those opportunities more people will travel to those locations. A motorized user thinks nothing of getting in their truck and driving for three hours riding snowball for five hours and driving three hours hour in day. So that puts someone from Salt Lake to Logan and the Skyline area. From Provo area down to the Tusher Mountains for a day of recreating.

The UAC is a unique organization. We are a great example of a successful private, public partnership. We have the forest service providing avalanche forecasting across the whole state of Utah. We have the non-profit providing strategy education awareness to make sure that people have all the combined education that they need to travel safely. We've been doing this for over 40 years across the state and it really reached millions of people during that time. We're a global innovator in avalanche education forecasting in 1996. We actually created the first allided education video until about two weeks ago. It was only available on VHS and is now digital. So were excited that we actually get to watch it, but that became used across all of North America and that was created right here. For the 2002 Olympics, we created the first set of icons used for avalanche forecasting, so we came up with Powder the Polar Bear which for some reason I always want to call it Polar the Powder Bear. Powder had five different iterations matching the danger levels and then we created icons to indicate where and what the dangers of avalanches were this was done realizing that there would be tens of thousands of non-English speakers that would be coming to Utah for the Olympics and we needed a way to communicate to them what those dangers were when they headed into the mountains. As I said these were the first icons used in the world and now every avalanche center worldwide uses these iconic to deliver avalanche information. So we can continue to innovate and we continue to look at what we do even in preparation for the next Olympics but even to reach people as the population grows. There is a lot of data that needs to be processed and when it comes to forecasting it takes a lot of time. We are looking for ways to pre-process this data so we can save valuable time for them having to manually pour through data to actually have a report in front of them and give them unique things that will impact their forecast.

UDOT is an important partner with us and it helps them with information to keep roads open and safe to the public. It's used by resorts to help them to keep the resort open and avalanche control work is done quicker and it's used by the search and rescue teams. So you know one of the downfalls of the increase of use in the past years is the impact on our

search and rescue teams as they are being stressed to the max. Education is considered a preventive search and rescue because if we can give people the education they need we can prevent those accidents from happening in the first place, but when they do happen the search and rescue teams can have the knowledge and the education that they will need to be able to safely access a scene or accident.

UAC Machine Learning Project - The Greatest Snow on Earth® Let's help more people enjoy it, On more days, In more places, More safely!

We continue to look at what we need to do to improve this. By using machine learning we can cut time and create more data that can be analyzed, we will be able to see other areas and get information in areas that have been harder to obtain. Avalanche education is considered a preventative measure that can save lives. Some of the benefits of this is that we need to know where snow fell, and how it fell. It will help us identify if the snow is stable. It will help us understand where the snow is stable and where it's unstable. It would allow us to create an avalanche forecast across the entire state. It would also allow us to create detailed avalanche danger maps.

The biggest part of the project is data, we need a lot of data and we need high-quality data. We've started this process already and so with the grant that we already got from the Division of Outdoor Recreation, we have installed weather stations up in Logan. Outside of the grant, we are implementing new instruments on some field weather stations. So really the first two phases are about the data. It's about getting data from the weather stations. It's about getting data from the public, getting more avalanche data, and understanding the correlations of current avalanche occurrences and weather conditions. It's about getting data from the ski resorts and Utah. When it comes together is phase four, which we don't know the cost for it yet, but that's where we start what we call predictive analysis. We start using machine learning to analyze all these different data sources and thousands and thousands of data points to understand what happening in every given location throughout the mountains. Currently, it's about a million-dollar project without the predictive analysis, we're asking about \$750,000 with the rest of that coming from our other partners and then raising the rest ourselves to match. It is probably one of the biggest avalanche centers that is being undertaken here in the U.S.

It is a huge collaboration for this to be successful, we are already working with Avalanche Canada, SLF Weather Service University, the University of Utah, and UDOT on some of this data gathering information. There is an amazing network of people interested and excited to be involved and help make this happen. There is a lot of campground engineering research being done at the university that ties right into this and so they are a huge partner in making machine learning algorithms work for this. UDOT has a lot of sensors in weather stations along with the national weather service that we will leverage for this Avalanche Canada and SLF which is the Swiss Avalanche service. They're the ones already a couple of years down the road on this and the groups are all coming together to collaborate to figure out how we make this work. In essence globally, but assisting us to make it work locally. It's saying the Cottonwoods have access to dozens of field reports, dozens of weather station guidebooks, route maps, and pretty much everything they need to head out and follow a dot and may or not be safe. Finding a place to go and recreate in the Tushers, as people just don't have that access. There is limited weather information to know what's happened and how much snow is there. Using all of these tools we will be able to disperse out into unknown areas and answer some of those questions on that first slide.

Our #1 goal is to help people enjoy the Utah mountains and to do this safely. We want them to have fun but enjoy and be safe. Our goal is to prevent avalanche accidents not just fatalities but all accidents so education is the big key to that. We want people to take advantage of what the Utah mountains have to offer in the winter but to do so safely and to get more places to get people to be able to spend more days out on the snow having fun.

So I tried to keep this pretty short, Patrick, told me I had a hard 10 minutes and I was afraid he might cut me off at that time. He also introduced this as we had some unique projects today and I believe this is what he might have been

referring to this is the non-traditional infrastructure, but I came out of the tech world. So for me, this is infrastructure because that is what computers and data centers are.

Rep. Stenquist: Jeff you had a question?

Jeff Hartley: Yeah, I just had a brief comment and brief question. The comment is that my firm represents the Utah Sheriff Association and you can't overstate how important it is about back county education from the search and rescue perspective in our rural remote counties and so what the Utah Avalanche Center does for that is super important. My question is do you or anyone know what happened to the dollars that President Needer had or secured for the avalanche shed in the Cottonwood canyons and if those dollars reside at UDOT?

Josh Van Jura: So no money was secured for avalanche sheds in Little Cottonwood. They remain unfunded at this point.

Rep. Stenquist: So I think that some money was allocated for it, basically transportation in the Little Cottonwoods, but I don't know that it has been put towards a specific project. Does that sound accurate?

Josh Van Jura: It was put sb2 specifically allocated a hundred and fifty million to improve and increase bus service, mobility hub tolling, and ski resort bus stops. So the specific line items were called out sb2 last year.

Rep. Stenquist: Okay so that sounds like basically phase one of Little Cottonwood.

Josh Van Jura: Yep, exactly. So the sheds for White Pine, Chutes, and Little Pine are currently unfunded.

Jeff Hartley: Thanks, Josh.

Pitt Grewe: Hey so question. I wish Chase was here but backcountry skiing is one of the fastest-growing sports in the country of them. I am curious about the numbers, I mean I know that registration for snow machines, and snowmobiles has gone up, you know potentially in the last few years as well. I'm gonna sound like the cheerleader for every project here, but obviously, I support this because I'm a heavy backcountry user as well in the winter, but I just to see the growth and if you're at the trailhead whether you are a skier, or a sledder or anything across the state like in at least ten years would be exponential to help people spread out. Honestly coming from a perspective it is so much easier to go to a place where you are comfortable or where you have good information compared to exploring new places if you have zero data or information to help you with that. The more information you get the more comfortable and safer you feel to go explore a new area instead of being like, well, you know, I know Little Cottonwood I'm gonna go up Little Cottonwood.

Rep. Stenquist: I have a theory that back-country skiing is becoming more popular because resort skiing is becoming more expensive. Once you know, there's an initial investment in equipment, but then you can go out and ski for a few hours and it doesn't necessarily cost you anything. The biggest barrier is the education and the safety factor for sure.

Pitt Grewe: Yeah the combination of that and the combination of the fun like there's nothing that feels better than snowmobiling when you're getting powder in the face. There is no better feeling in the world.

Chad Bracklesburg: It's about a 20% growth since the year 2000 of backcountry use. That's based on some anecdotal use but also some gear sales, SIA backcountry ski gear sales, that the largest growing sector of the growing sector. We look at it from our website visits, and it is about 20x from our class participation. All of those line up to about a 20% kind of use.

Rep. Stenquist: Yeah, and equipment is getting better too.

Pitt Grewe: Lowering the buried access as well.

Jason Curry: Just a little bit more on that too, so the total snow sports contribution to Utah's economy is in the 8.1 billion dollars is about 600 million. Snowmobiling is about 200 million. But the growth rate of snowmobiling is about 54% versus other categories overall which is about 29%.

Rep. Stenquist: Snowmobile purchases so that you can haul people up to backcountry skiing.

Jason Curry: How did you know about that?

Rep. Stenquist: Which is like a light bulb.

Pitt Grewe: That's living the dream.

Mark Staples: I just want to say what makes it sort of possible, to put a positive spin on it, on those really busy areas is that we understand avalanches which have come a long way in these last 20 years. This numerical model the Swiss have built they're ready to just give them to us. And then obviously with AI technology, just this world of technology and scientists come together. What makes us unique here and sort of the key, is we are taking advantage of this technology in these data-rich areas like the Cottonwoods. They're just so full of instrumentation and people where we can refine these models, this thing and give these rural areas some of these mountain ranges that might have one site. We can train these models and build these things over data-rich areas and that's kind of unique for us here and these other rural areas. It's so beneficial for these really popular areas.

Jason Curry: I appreciate that, I was gonna ask that question about Switzerland Canada if that technology can be leveraged and shared, so that's good news. I like the quote that said AI is not going to replace people but people who know AI are gonna replace people who don't know AI. I will add to that my thought is that maybe it won't slow down people but the need for additional people as we grow and get more forecasting. So that is something to keep in mind.

Chad Bracklesburg: If we were to do this with let's say weather infrastructure like Mark, was talking about, then that would be tens of thousands of dollars for every weather station and then that would still be a spot where you would install three to four in a range with machine learning AI. It's like putting a weather station in every drainage of every range of the State. You know that this is like if we had the same budget and it would buy maybe 30 weather stations. This will be like having 3,000 weather stations of data available to not only backcountry users but by forecasters, UDOT, search/rescue, and it's not just a recreational aspect at this point.

Rep. Stenquist: Great! Thank you so much!

Patrick Morrison: So now we have Emily Friedman next, and I did say that we do have unique ones certainly Chad, but we also, you know, well have a few NEPA requests. I think Rep. Stenquist or myself we've been talking to people like support for NEPA has come up time and time again. So that was one of the visions of this program and this would allow somebody with NEPA assistance and with that, Emily I will let you take it away.

Rep. Stenquist: With that, I would like to also say that I haven't been good about keeping us on track but we do have to move through this quickly so let's try to keep it moving along.

c. Zion Regional Council - Emily Friedman - 15 minutes (1:25:20)

Emily Friedman: Hello everybody. My name is Emily Friedman. I am the coordinator of the design regional collaborative. I wish I was there in person to join you all. I'm out in Vermont right now so that would be a little bit of a commute to get there. So thank you for listening in on Google Meet. I thought that I would like to begin with a brief background on the ZRC. The ZRC was an organization that was established in 2015. It's focused on informal planning centered around Zion National Park and really came into being in response to increased visits to the park and just about this decade visitation doubled to Zion National Park from around 2.5 million to nearly and capping out about 5 million. Our funding partners

are the City of Hurrigan, City of La Verkin, the Town of Virgin, Rockville, Springdale, Zion Forever Project, Iron County, and Washington County. We do benefit from some of the workshops, and depending on some of the projects that we are working on. The Division of Outdoor Rec and the folks there have been integral to our success as well as some of our non-profits like the Nature Conservation and PCA. So we are very grateful to be a very collaborative group operation in the Southwest and very successful for nearly a decade. One of our most recent initiatives is it trails committee which we established in 2022. I included the group's mission here, which is to use its resources and knowledge to support trails of all kinds of uses and ensure the long-term viability of our region's extensive trail network. There was a recognition that we were building quite a bit of trails and had really started making connections, but we wanted to make sure that those trails also had support in terms of advocacy maintenance and user education.

As part of our spring committee brought out a nice big map and started marking it up of a list of two dozen projects that we thought would be useful for the region those spanned everything from pre-planning to construction as I mentioned, user education maintenance access preservation and just ran the gamut. This project that I am presenting in front of all of you today which is the Guacamole Mason NEPA and Trailhead infrastructure was identified out of the expansive is the priority. We have a whole variety of projects and this one really floated onto the top. This is a popular single-track trail located on BLM property between the towns of Virgin and Rockville just north of SR9 the Guacamole Mesa Trails, almost directly with the Wilderness area in Zion National Park. The network itself consists of about five trails totaling eight miles but you can combine as you can see based on the map those trails into a bunch of different loops of varying lengths.

The ZRC is overall here to increase visitation to the park and it has increased visitation. There have been many agencies that have helped our success. This project that I am presenting is one of the highest priorities of all the trails. This trail network receives over 20,000 visitors. The gem trail head which receives under 20,000 a year. So again Guacmole Mesa one of the reasons it's a priority is because it's so heavily trafficked every year. The catch to this trail is that this was created illegally in the past, and this will require NEPA to do work on it. As Patrick had mentioned that's an ongoing need for our communities here and kind of the first hurdle that we need to address key concerns. We would like to conduct NEPA on the trail itself.

We would like to add restrooms, information kiosks, and signage. We would like to go beyond NEPA and increase infrastructure and increase overall camping. This proposal is completely community driven the trails group that I mentioned earlier is a group consisting of both private and public sector stakeholders. BLM sits on the group as do local bike shops, representatives from our municipal governments, including council members and mayors, county reps from Washington County and Iron County, and kind of an eclectic bunch of other planners and folks who can contribute to the overall vision of the design of the region. So we anticipate that continuing as we move forward. This project would be what the trail group has taken on so it also just symbolizes a great step forward as we hope to leverage more progress in our region. In terms of what we are looking for from the state. Certainly, we would appreciate the state's help and concerned partner for some of those further discussions. The CRC has taken on that rike in the past, but we also see enormous benefit in bringing the state into it as it has some of those difficult conversations around camping and around the impacts of enhanced infrastructure. The reason we think it would be useful is that it's rooted in the state's experiences with similar situations like that across the area. Beyond that applying for grants and then managing certain elements of this project. One thing that I mentioned earlier, the ZRC is a non-legal entity not an illegal entity, but a non-legal entity. We're not legally established. So we're not able to hold funds or higher contractors ourselves. We do that through inter-local contracts when necessary but having the state involved would also very much facilitate the process rather than having to corral a handful of community partners in the way we typically do.

Here is the proposed budget and this was based on a conservation that we had with the BLM. They're mentioning that there will be a class 3 evaluation for archeology as part of that work. So this would cover both ostensibly the trail and the trailhead.

The total cost of this project will be about 203,000, if this state doesn't cover this in full we would like to move forward with grants for this project. This project does hit the prioritization checklist such as its significant scope, beneficial to communities, addresses overcrowding, and those who are underserved, is cross-jurisdictional, shovel ready, and addresses backlogged maintenance. To build and support a collaborative process that is at the core of this ists origin and certainly what it's moving forward with, increasing the economic and health benefit generated by outdoor rec. This is a very cherished site by a lot of folks both residents and visitors alike. Proving awareness and education about safe and responsible recreation. One of the reasons that we are hoping to create some trailhead infrastructure is so that we can provide signage so that we can give support. Then finally increasing that access while protecting natural and scenic landscapes, there are a few landscapes, I think you could argue are more beautiful more scenic than that you can see from Guacamole Mesa. It's a stunning location and we like to protect it for the foreseeable future. There are human waste issues up there. There are parking issues up there and we want folks to be able to enjoy this site but also we want folks to enjoy that site to move forward into the future and that requires us to do some action right now to protect it.

All right, that is the end of my presentation, but I am happy to field any questions. I won't necessarily have all the answers for you right now, but would be happy to try my best.

Rep. Stenquist: Alright, any questions from the commission? Alright, I appreciate the presentation, and having just experienced that trail again, I've ridden it several times over the years and I definitely see the need and how it could be improved. Fantastic trail and is well known. You know when you go on these trails you run into people from all over the world oftentimes. Alright, thank you Emily for your time and your presentation on this. We will move forward with the Zion National Park Forever Project.

Guacamole, Mesa NEPA Support

d. Zion National Park Forever Project - Stephani Lyon, Natalie Britt - 15 minutes (1:39:50)

Rep Stenquist: Hello, and welcome.

Natalie Britt: Well hello, I am Natalie Britt. I am very fortunate to be the president and CEO of the Zion Forever Project. we are here representing the Zion National Park Forever Project. I am joined by Stephanie Lyon our director of development and with Parks acting Deputy superintendent, Amanda Roland who serves as the acting liaison. I just wanted to thank the commission for the opportunity to share our story about this incredible initiative and to represent Southwestern, Utah today. Really from the beginning to kind of give you guys a little bit of a background 30 years ago. Zion National Park recognized all of the things that we're seeing today. They anticipated the increased visitation, and they understood that there would be a compelling need to continue to improve and provide a compelling exceptional visitor experience. They recognized the eastern boundary of the park. There was a unique opportunity to address some of these complex issues by developing and installing a brand-new visitor center. What they also recognized was that there was no physical place within the boundary of the park to create this so from the start, they knew it would have to be a public-private partnership and we were blessed that there was a landowner on that side of the park that said hey, you know what I have landed there generations of Utahans have benefited from the economic engine that is Zion National Park. From day one this has been run by locals. It's been a collaborative process.

We have federal, native, state and local, business, educational, and nonprofit organizations for this project. Everyone on here has contributed to this project either in hard cash donations, in kinda donations, or providing subject matter

expertise. We have and need to recognize that we don't know what we don't know. This was led by a conservation vision. We know that the park leans into the organic apps from the early 1900s and so that commitment to conservation by the park service and by the Forever project, have to start there and our landowner recognized that you know recognized the prosperity they've enjoyed for a generation due to Zion National Park, but they're also the keepers of this region and they recognized, to get this right so over 2,000 acres have already been conserved around the 18-acre campus and beyond 300. This project and people recognize that growth is inevitable but we can find sustainable economic solutions. So were compelled to protect and conserve those. We know that water is a precious resource, especially in Southwestern, Utah, and working with our local communities. We are working to conserve and protect critical watersheds and also wildlife we know wildlife migration quarters, do not recognize the boundaries between public and private lands and so by putting all that first you start to realize the economic development. From the CIB we have received 18.4 million, UDOT has put in 10 million, and 850,000 dollars from UORG. At the core of this project is outdoor education. If you were to ask Superintendent Brady Bond today, he wants them to go away with some kind of education.

Nobody does the education better than the National Park Service the iconic Junior Ranger program dark sky programming. Going to be able to take this portfolio of programming and put it on the East side and have a greater impact and I'm going to flex over to Amanda to talk a little bit more about that.

Amanda: So a couple of different things that we're taking on is we actually have a park ranger position that will be dedicated to this side. I'm currently doing interviews to fulfill commitment another component that we need to be thinking about is what can we actually do in the park as field trips. Unfortunately, there are a lot of limits not only because of the landscape but also of the visitation and kind of where we want to take that school bus, right so this side of the Discovery Center on campus not only will provide outdoor education opportunities that are unique and very immersive because of our partnership with the east side and the larger campus but also because of the playscapes so when you think about an outdoor classroom. The other big commitment we have out tribal partners, we also have University partners. So when you think about all the different stakeholders, there is a lot of opportunity for informal education that our tribal partners could potentially be leading. We also discussed the benefit of education from dark skies and other types of workshops. So when we think of the benefits of that campus it also takes a building and really transcends that experience to the outdoors and vice versa. I'm excited for like a night at the museum with Ranger Amanda.

Natalie Britt: So all right to this point one of the things we think about is overcrowding is dispersing. Locals have come to us and told us that they want a mountain bike system in the park as there is no mountain parking in the park. So we have 35 miles of trail. It will be a progressive mountain biking system 20 plus of that is open the rest will open in the next few years as far as equal access. The beauty of this is it is outside the park boundary, so guess what funding lapses and appropriations don't impact us. So we get to stay open regardless of serving the public which means that the field trip that you have planned for years doesn't get canceled. If we have a lab and appropriations being outside the park also means you don't have to go through the fee gate and so it's completely free. We have talked to the locals who have said we feel disengaged from the park. They have experienced this in their backyard in a prolific way as a Amanda mentioned we have to turn down field trips all the time to the park. We are outside of the park and we will be okay in case of shutdown, we have a free entry to use. We also want our NPS ranger to have time to educate the people that go through the park. The project is already underway. Right now we are in the master planning phase, assuming we get funding we are working with BNN stock natural playgrounds which Amanda will talk about in the budget. We are really looking at this facility being open and running by Spring 2025. Amanda will talk about how this budget was ground truth of how it came through with the current consultants that have been working on the project for quite some time.

Amanda: So a couple of the things that we wanted to look at was were truly building a process to a product if that makes sense, so a lot of the estimates when you look at the detailed budget, we have the opportunity work with subject matter experts not only within the park service. Local stakeholders bring in our tribal communities and so within the park service, we have Harpers Ferry, which is kind of our location where we work for all interpretive media. So when you look at the square footage of the Discovery Center, not only for indoor exhibits but also outdoor exhibits, Harper Ferry Center has an estimate per square foot. We worked with Harpers Ferry Center. We also ground through these estimates based upon a current project at Joshua Tree National Park where they worked with tribal partners and a visitor center in a different location. We also look at the Sonoran National Park as far as the larger conversation again of exhibits that were moderately complex so indoor out exhibits. When you think about the estimates from planning design into implementations, so we try to be very inclusive in this space. Another commitment that we really wanted to show was that we wanted to take the phases into that next juncture and so with bean and stock natural playscapes we've got the schematic design. We have some original renderings at this point, but we are pulling together work groups with our tribal partners that really critical to the process through that workgroup will not only be reviewing those designs with these groups, were actually going to be moving to the next phase of the drawing getting that feedback into fabrication and then install so that all included in this package.

Natalie Britt: Just very quickly as we think about removing and alleviating some of the congestion we are working on a master plan to move the shuttle system of the park. We are planning on moving the shuttle system to the east side of the park. We are going to need public transportation. The overall summary is that it is a significant scope, benefits local communities, addresses overcrowding, is underserved, cross-jurisdictional, and is shovel-ready. We also know that one of the benefits of this is reducing pressure on what is a huge deferred maintenance list for the park right now by moving out the public is not adding to that and that is super important to Amanda and the superintendent as well. Being thoughtful on time we have a video but we won't share it so that we can stay on schedule, but happy to answer any questions.

Rep. Stenquist: Any questions from the commission?

Vicki Varela: I just wanted to comment. I just wanted to say that this one is a game changer in a different way than we have talked about in terms of the positive impact it will have if we look generations out the way the public and private sectors have come together on this, is mind-blowing.

Pitt Grewe: I will say that we will not get another opportunity like this with the way that it's coming together with the families that are on the property, the Park Service and the communities are completely different for sure.

Natalie Britt: I will say when we can get politicians from four different counties in the room to agree on anything. We are doing something right and seeing that kind of collaboration breaking bread at Cordwood restaurant, which is owned by the Macaw family, and seeing how this does happen and Vicky, you know this around a table where there is chicken clocking around and grandchildren and generations is a unique experience. I think Southwestern Utah and its a beautiful and very unique thing and I think your point is precedent-setting for the state in the country.

Amanda: When you talk about seed collection sites and having an intergenerational opportunity where they can collect seed plant to plant learn about agriculture learn about native plants see a demonstration of how t make how to make a willow basket and then come back and potentially purchase that basket in the store. We are really providing a continuum in the state that was setting a precedence.

Rep. Stenquist: Thank you so much. This super exciting to see this project move up. Okay, Kelly, you are up next.

Experiential Corridor for the Zion National Park Discovery Center

e. Kane County Trails - Kelly Stowell - 20 Minutes (1:59:50)

Kelly Stowell: My name is Kelly Stowell. About a decade ago I took on the recreation projects in Kane County and just wanted to say that I really appreciate all the support and assistance that we received from the state over the year. Like I say we build them for the local community and we let the visitors benefit from it. So thank you. Our first project and second project all fit together and were trying to build a paved trail from Kanab to the east side of Zion. That's the project in a nutshell, and it's about 45 miles long. We need about 45 million dollars. About a year ago we received a grant from UDOT and we were able to work with Sunrise Engineering I'm happy to have Aaron here from Sunrise. They did a feasibility study for us and were finishing it and that laid the foundation for a robust backbone paid trail system. It fits right in with the red emerald initiative and we want to be the poster child for using state funds efficiently and effectively. Aaron, do you want to run through some slides?

Aaron Averett: You guys are really familiar with this part of the state if you happen, Kanab in the lower right-hand corner and this active transportation plan that we're just completing now. I've been amazed by all of the collaborations that have come together. The different pieces and parts and looking at the planning and what it takes to get these pieces and parts to come together are impressive. So this is the map that shows the parts of the project that we are trying to take on right now. So from the East side where the visitor center and the trail that connects and goes towards Zions National Park this would take from that connection point and start running east from Mount Carmel Junction down to Kanab and then North along Glendale because obviously, the overall goal replaces like the Utah Trail network and other places is trying to interconnect the state and so this is Kings County version of getting the ball rolling and trying to get things working here. So the different colors on the map here represent the different phases. Now one thing that we are running up against and this is partly why we are here is when we bring all those pieces and parts together the collaboration that gonna be required for this project is huge. We cross BLM and private lands and a lot of back and forth along the whole corridor. UDOT is the main glue that brings it all together because those are already corridors that are already there, but that's part of this project that we are talking about is the NEPA and the design. So the hardest part of this project is this section when you leave Zion there's a wilderness study on the south side of Highway 9 and we have to work through things with the BLM to work that out. Now those conversations have already started, we think we have some solutions there but once those solutions are agreed upon then the paperwork and the NEPA documentation has to be gone through.

We do have a very optimistic timeline on how long it will take to do that input into coordination. One thing that I was impressed with and when the trail coordination happened in Kane County the BLM comes to the trail meetings. The BLM is actively helping to get lots of these projects done and this is a very aggressive timeline. The design aspect of this is that you know the NEPA to a lot of the NEPA process. It is a heavy lift as NEPA compliance goes through the process with the BLM, through the process with UDOT is going to take a good chunk of design and money. UDOT is still working through standards. The worst part of projects like this is that when you get to a point five years down the road and say I wish I would have started this project five years ago so that we'd be able to start construction now. The need for the infrastructure and providing the active transportation route is going to be upon us pretty quickly. That should be it on that first one.

Kelly Stowell. Kane County has about a population of 8,000 people and we do want to gain the support of the commission. We have broken up the plan into different components and phases. One of the priorities is connected to Best Friends its about eight miles from our Best Friends Animal Sanctuary its our largest employer in the county with about 450 people. They bring in about 40,000 visitors per year, not more than that. It's a big deal to our economy and having this connection would be a real asset for us. It will help us with economic development and tourism.

Aaron Averett: We bring up this map to show the alignment of the trails. This would be with the UDOT corridor, about this time next year will be about when this project does take off. Next year is when groundbreaking could happen for this section of this project, so there are a lot of the section there pictures, little teeny pictures on the right. You can see that if you've driven and are familiar with it, there are tight areas where it would be similar to the north of the National Park entrance where the trail kind of comes close to the road. All of those pinpoints that are there are points of interest along that route that are specifically to where a lot of tourism takes place. The overcrowding in this area is starting to become an issue there as well as the other parts of this same corridor as it is multi-use. There's a lot of overlap between hiking and OHV and then the visitor for Best Friends. I think, Kelly, it was 40,000 visitors in what time frame here?

Kelly Stowell: In a year.

Aaron Averett: And the second ask here is the cost section and we can just talk quickly about it. Again this is another part where it could be done or the whole thing all at once was showing that it's almost nine million, but this could be broken into parts. As low as two million dollars to get outside of Kanab and up to the Canal Creek Crossing. So to get to the Wind Caves is about 4.5 million, and that's what's shown on the application or the interest form that we turned in.

Rep. Stenquist: Alright, any questions? Nope, I don't see any questions. So I think that is good. Thank you so much.

Complete design and NEPA compliance for transportation connectivity between East Zion and US-89

Kanab to Best Friends Trail

Rep. Stenquist: That was our last presentation for the day. So do we have project presentations next time or is it just discussions?

Patrick Morrison: Yes we do have other project presentations for our next meeting. For the next one, we will be looking at land acquisition and some planning and we have one construction one.

Pitt Grewe: Okay, so Jeff. What's the deadline for appropriations, you know like do we have to have recommendations?

Rep. Stenquist: I think that in that January meeting, we're gonna have to have that ironed out and so I think we'll get some preparation ahead of time where basically have everything on a list and we can discuss amongst ourselves so come. Make sure we have some materials ahead of time with the lists so that we can you know work off that in the next meeting.

Vicki Varela: On how all of these really relate, we have the term shovel ready in some of our guidelines and so where does that put NEPA review on that side of thing? I think it would be good to have all of these ready and a framework so we can be fair to everybody and are still in this invention process and so guidance from the team would be great.

Rep. Stenquist: So you will see that in many of the presentations they had it, you know we told them, these criteria looking at based off the strategic plan. You know we as a commission haven't decided how much we're gonna give you know accessibility and various other criteria.

Pitt Grewe: Infrastructure vs planning.

Rep. Stenquist: Infrastructure vs planning. I mean it's up to the commission members to decide for themselves, which ones you feel, you know based on that criteria, but we might have other criteria in the back of our minds like, we have a whole, you know do we want to really invest in projects in the southern part of the state vs northern. All of these things and every commission member will have their own list of what they feel is the most important and we get to argue that out and make our case for well, I think this project should be funded over this project. Are timeframe is very

compressed and hopefully we will have more time to go through some of these projects and we also don't have to spend all of the money in this fiscal year. We can maybe save some money and spend it for future years.

Pitt Grewe: Are we spending? Are we reallocating the money from the last session or the coming session?

Rep. Stenquist: No, so we really recommend for the 2024 fiscal year and the 25 fiscal year. Yeah, so its really two years' worth of money.

Pitt Grewe: It would be great to do this again next fall.

Rep. Stenquist: Yeah, maybe.

Vicki Varela: I'm just trying to clarify because I thought we were gonna allocate 19 million in January and 19 million in July. I understand from you now that we could allocate that 19 million plus 19 million in January.

Rep. Stenquist: Yes, because the fiscal year that we are currently in and we haven't allocated that money for the current fiscal year, and in addition to that will be recommending the next fiscal year.

Pitt Grewe: So we can allocate 19 million and in a suggestion that says in July these other projects could be funded.

Rep. Stenquist: So we are doing two fiscal years at the same time.

Jason Curry: The general session will be asking them to appropriate the money that would come in the 26 fiscal year that following July.

Pitt Grewe: It will be a lot of money to recommend at least we do. I mean we have a lot to fund and potentially recommended for this summer time line. Some of these projects might get to better fit into that timeline-wise.

Jason Curry: They would like probably 35 million but I was talking to our finance folks today. There has been some money lapsed back from some of the one time that was taken out from 2022, so maybe more.

Rep. Stenquist: Any lapse money from 20 and you know money from 22 plus 23, I think that we know those numbers pretty well 24, the 24 fiscal numbers will be based on the revenue projections.

Jason Curry: So at least 53%.

Rep. Stenquist: Yeah exciting times. I will take one final motion.

Final motion

Pitt Grewe: motion

Motion passed unanimously