

Meeting Minutes
Emery County Public Lands Council
May 7, 2024
10:00 AM
Emery County Courthouse
Canyon Conference Room

PLC: Rod Player, Les Wilberg, Kim McFarlane, Ray Petersen, Varian Allen, Leon McElprang, Bruce Wilson, Sherrel Ward

Absent: Ben Grimes

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

Visitors, Keven Jensen Commissioner, Jordan Leonard, Commissioner, Lynn Sitterud Commissioner, Clay Crozier (PLPCO), Marc Stilson (DWRi), Wayne Lundington (SRBCH), Darren Olsen (USFS), Jaydon Mead, and Kyle Beagley (BLM), Dal Grey (DOGM), Justin Hart (DWR), Darren Olsen (MLNF), Jay Humphrey (EWCD), Ryan Wilson (Canyon Fuel), Terri Bennett (Trails), Kent Wilson (Romney), Joan Powell, Scott Wheeler and Ed Geary (Public)

Electronically: No one

1. Welcome

Chairman Rod Player opened the Emery County Public Lands meeting, There were less agencies, and, public in attendance then usual.

2. Approval of Minutes for April 2024

Varian Allen motioned to approve the March meeting minutes, and Bruce Wilson seconded it, motion passed.

3. Agency Reports and Council Member Comments

○ **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)**

Kyle Beagley of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) announced that the Price Field Office Manager and the District Manager in the Vernal office are both vacant, as well as three park rangers. He said that the comment period for the San Rafael Swell Travel Management Plan will begin about the first of June and last for 45 days ending in mid-July. Beagley also announced the public open house meetings about the Skyline Mine expansion, May 7 in Huntington and May 8 in Mt. Pleasant.

He continued by stating that they are still working on the Little Cedar Mountain Bike Trail. Other information from the BLM included the interpretive signs at Jurassic National Monument, which are very informational. There will be new buildings built at the monument in 2025. .

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

Marc Stilson, State Water Engineer, then updated the council about the Cleveland Reservoir renovation. This will begin soon and is expected to take a couple of years. Electric Lake and Joes Valley Reservoirs are also needing repair as they were built before there were internal core regulations, also talk about High Hazard Alarm at Joes Valley.

Jay Mark Humphrey also spoke about all the reservoirs being full this year. They expected to spill and the San Rafael River is expected to be very full.

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

Dal Gray, Department of Oil Gas and Mining, reported that the Carbon and Emery Coal Collaborative Meeting had happened and that the AI Lithium mine in Green River now has a rig in place, checking production. He also added that Buzzard Bench has been sold to Urban Gas.

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

Justin Hart with the Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR) reported that the Gill netting at Milisite showed that Chubs have been placed in the reservoir, making the ecosystem of fish hard, if not impossible, to manage.

- **Trust Lands Administration (TLA).**

No one in attendance

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

Forest Ranger Darren Olsen reported that the Littles Creek Bike Trail is now ready to open. The majority of gates are still closed, except for wildlife gates on Horn Mountain. Sage grouse numbers are up and range conditions seem normal, normal season and normal numbers for permittees. Firewood permits will open on June 1. Seasonal workers are starting to work.

- **Utah State Parks**

No one in attendance

- **Utah Division of Outdoor Recreation**

No one in attendance

- **Utah State Department of Agriculture**

No one in attendance

- **PLPCO**

Clay Crozier working on Flat Canyon Lease open house. The governor's seat to save Coal Power Plant to save the power plant with the office of Energy.

- **Washington Delegation Staff**

Kent Wilson reports that Bidon is creating new rules and we are trying to push back.

Regarding Long Street our attorney Mike Olsen sent a letter to the land owner and there has been no response back. Kim McFarlane reported that they have locked the gates.

Fossil Rock Mine is opening.

4. Commission Comments on Public Land Items

Jay Humphrey stated that during April and May we lost 25% of melt with the wind blowing the snow so the average snow pack is not as expected. The end of May the San Rafael will have water, Joe's Valley will be spilling the first of June.

Commissioner Jordan Leonard brought up the building cabins at Cleveland Reservoir and the dam being raised and how that would affect the landowner who wants to build a cabin on the shore.

5. Additional Issues From Council Members

Sherrel Ward stated that the precipitation is low, not as much as last year and the wind has been blowing the snow off the mountain.

Les Wilburg stated that the wild horses are taking over, they are drinking all the water, concerned about how to manage them better.

6. Concerned Citizens with Emery County-related issues **Nothing at this time.**

7. Adjourn

Mission Statement

The mission of the Emery County Public Lands Council is to represent the interests of the public land of Emery County and its citizens and to perform an advocacy role for local users and stakeholders; to work in partnership with federal and state agencies in fashioning management decisions and policies affecting lands within Emery County; and to participate in the development, coordination, and implementation of the planning objectives of federal, state, and local entities to ensure harmony between the objectives of these various entities and the Emery County General Plan. It is the intent and purpose of the Emery County Public Lands Council to aggressively preserve the community heritage of Emery County by vigorously participating in and influencing all public land planning and decision-making processes on behalf of and under the authority of the Emery County Commission.