



Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

Thursday, December 21, 2023 | 2:00 - 3:30 PM

The Technical Advisory Committee meeting was conducted virtually, with an anchor location at:

Jordan River Commission Offices
Third Floor, Division of Water Quality
Utah Department of Environmental Quality
195 North 1950 West, Salt Lake City, UT

MEETING MINUTES

Marian Rice, Vice Chair, filled in for the Chair, who was excused, and conducted the meeting, and called the meeting to order at 2:02 PM.

1. Welcome & Committee Roll Call

Committee Members Attending

Marian Rice, Vice Chair, University of Utah Energy Futures Research Engine
Ali Avery, North Salt Lake Planning
Angelo Calacino, Salt Lake County Parks & Recreation
Cory Fralick, West Jordan Public Works
Dan Potts, Salt Lake Fish & Game Foundation
Eric Gardner, South Salt Lake Valley Mosquito Abatement District
Eric McCulley, Utah Reclamation, Mitigation & Conservation Commission
Heidi Hoven, National Audobon, Gillmor Sanctuary
Jonathan Anderson, Midvale
Keith Hambrecht, Utah Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands
Ken Brand, South Valley Sewer District, Jordan Basin Water Reclamation Facility
Laura Haskell, Utah Division of Water Resources
Melissa Lewis, Salt Lake City Parks & Public Lands
Mike Guymon, Salt Lake City Department of Public Utilities
Mike Willis, Salt Lake County Parks & Recreation
Morgan Faulkner, Utah Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands
Nathan Page, Riverton
Sandy Wingert, Utah Division of Water Quality
Taylor Dewey, Thanksgiving Point
Todd Taylor, Draper
Tom Beesley, Riverton
Tori Bird, Utah's Hogle Zoo Conservation

Commission Staff Attending

Rae Robinson, Jordan River Vegetation Project Coordinator
Soren Simonsen, Executive Director/Secretary
Rachel Turk, Communications & Outreach Manager

2. Public Comments

This is an opportunity for comments from the general public regarding any item on the agenda, or any other matters related to the Jordan River Commission and the TAC. Individual comments are limited to 2 minutes, and all comments are limited to 10 minutes total. Comments can also be sent by email to info@JordanRiverCommission.com (include subject line “TAC Meeting Comments”).

Notes: *There were no public comments.*

3. Committee Business

- a) Consider Adopting October 19, 2023, Meeting Minutes
- b) Consider Adopting a 2024 Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule
- c) Committee Officer Nomination Reminder (per Commission bylaws, formal nomination and election of officers occur during the first meeting of the new year in even years)

Notes: Meeting Minutes. *The Committee reviewed the October meeting minutes.*

Morgan Faulkner moved to adopt the October 19, 2023, meeting minutes. Eric McCulley seconded the motion.

There was no further discussion of the motion.

Voting was unanimously in favor of the motion by Committee members present.

2024 Committee Meeting Schedule. *Soren shared an overview of the proposed meeting schedule in 2024. Soren recommended a change in the meeting time due to conflicts with the afternoon. Some committee members favored the change, and others noted conflicts.*

Melissa Lewis recommended sending out a poll to Committee members. Soren liked that idea and suggested sending out a poll after the holidays, since some people may be already out of the office for holiday travel.

Eric McCulley moved to adopt the dates and topics for the 2024, keeping the January meeting at 2:00 PM, and considering an adjustment to the meeting time at the January meeting following the results of the poll. Dan Potts seconded the motion.

There was no further discussion of the motion.

Voting was unanimously in favor of the motion by Committee members present.

Officer Nominations. *Soren reminded Committee members that new officers will be appointed at the January meeting. The current Chair is automatically nominated as Past Chair, and the current Vice Chair is automatically nominated as Chair, per the Commission Bylaws. Any Committee members can be nominated for Chair or Vice Chair, but the Vice Chair is an open seat. Soren briefly outlined the duties of the Chair and Vice Chair. Eric McCulley encouraged Committee members to participate.*

4. Presentations & Discussion – Cooperative Weed Management Area

- a) Cooperative Weed Management Area Program & Project Updates : Rae Robinson, Jordan River Vegetation Project Coordinator, will share an update of her work since joining the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands staff and Jordan River Commission team in June. She will discuss her work in the following areas:
 - 1) Grant funded project updates
 - 2) Site prioritization for target species
 - 3) Information and data gathering and analysis
 - 4) Best practices for weed management and restoration

- b) Roundtable Discussion : This is an opportunity for general discussion of additional weed management and restoration related to the Jordan River Parkway, as time permits.

Notes: *CWMA Program & Project Updates.* Rae Robinson shared an update of the projects and programs since she joined the Division staff and Commission team earlier in the year. She began with an overview of the CWMA structure, which is a primary focus of the Technical Advisory Committee. She is working toward re-engaging the phragmites working group subcommittee. Rae also discussed the current use of the \$250,000 Cooperative Weed Management Fund annual appropriation, about half of which is distributed through a grant program to CWMA partners, and the other half has been used by the Division to do some pilot project work.

The CWMA focuses on four primary invasive species: phragmites, tamarisk, Russian olive, and puncturevine. Rae would like to work with the Committee to establish goals for the CWMA. She shared a framework from the phragmites working group that may apply to other invasive species as well.

Rae emphasized a survey that she distributed in the past week, and would like to gather the results in early January. She asked Committee members to complete the survey to help with the CWMA efforts.

Rae reviewed the grant funded project in the 2023 fiscal year, which have wrapped up, and the 2024 fiscal year grant funded projects, currently in progress. Rae asked Taylor Dewey to share an overview of the Thanksgiving Point project, which includes treatment of about 6 acres of phragmites near the Thanksgiving Point trailhead. They also received a pollinator grant through a different program, and are doing pollinator plantings after phragmites removal. Dan Potts also shared information about the nature preserve improvement project the Foundation is working on for their property in Murray. They should be wrapped up in the spring or early summer. Nathan Page with Riverton shared that they are also grateful for the funding, and they are working to create a safer and more aesthetic experience on the river. Rae noted that the work with Thanksgiving Point allowed some testing of using a drone to spray for phragmites, which was successful.

Marian Rice asked what the capacity of the drone was for herbicide applications? Rae indicated that they had to refill the tank two or three times to treat all 6 acres. Keith Hambrecht noted that the typical capacity of the drone sprayer they used is about 2 acres per tank.

Rae shared work that happened over the summer and fall with Utah Conservation Corps crews in several locations. This is a good partnership that will continue in the next year.

The Tall Pot tree planting program is in progress. About 300 trees have been planted so far this fall, and there will be a few more plantings through the winter and spring. There were more requests for trees this year than availability. Keith was happy to hear that the demand for trees has grown with this program. Rae suggested that she may also be able to facilitate CWMA partners working directly with nurseries for larger quantities.

Rae shared that the Puncturevine Bounty program wrapped up for the season, and there was a lot of participation by organizations and individuals this year.

Rae discussed efforts to prioritize efforts with phragmites. The mapping work done last winter and spring was useful. Soren added that the mapping was very valuable to the grant application for the America the Beautiful Challenge Grant awarded in the last month. Keith indicated that he was initially skeptical about the mapping, but it has proven to be useful. Rae reviewed the prioritization criteria developed by the phragmites working group, and shared how the criteria is being used to establish priorities in several areas — 1) Bangerter Highway to 7800 south including the Galena Preserve where she is already working; 2) Joint Dam to Bangerter Highway; 3) the area around Turner Dam and Camp Williams; 3) Inlet Park to Thanksgiving Point. These priority areas already have numerous partners, like Thanksgiving Point, and the ability to bring in new partners, like Camp Williams. There is an opportunity to share contractors and UCC crews with these partners. Taylor said she appreciated the coordination with partners, because they are also learning and working together is very beneficial to their work.

Priority areas for Russian Olive and tamarisk may correspond with phragmites, since they are often adjacent. This could also treat areas where tall pot trees are being planted. Melissa Lewis noted that they had a crew that removed all of the Russian Olive at one in an area, and they noted that they lost all of the tree cover for some bird species. They are changing their approach to thin removal gradually and planting new trees as they go, in a more phased approach. Marian Rice commended this approach.

Rae asked if there should be a working group for puncturevine. There are some areas where they focused this year, but she would like to have a more coordinated effort to identify problem areas, and work more closely with partners. Soren liked the idea of creating a working group. Some governments have multiple departments doing similar work in different areas, and are not always implementing best practices consistently. He suggested a working group can both develop best practices for removal and revegetation. Eric added that the approaches for isolated plants and large infestations are different, and that revegetation is key. Soren noted that Parleys Trail has a “adopt a trail section” that has worked effectively for isolated plants, and has been a key to reducing small infestations from growing and spreading.

Rae has an opportunity to work with fire crews early in the year next year, before they are needed for other areas of focus. She is also planning to bring on additional UCC crews, and look at how they can support both the tall pot and puncturevine programs.

Rae is exploring some multi-year funding programs in the new year, and encouraged partners to watch for more information and a solicitation coming up.

Marian Rice highlighted a comment that Rae Robinson was recently presented with an award as the Forestry, Fire & State Lands Rookie of the Year employee. Keith Hambrecht said she has done a lot of great work in a short period of time.

5. Commission Staff Report(s)

- a) Director's Report
 - 1) Legislative Updates
 - 2) Grants & Funding Updates & Opportunities
 - 3) Upcoming Meetings, Events & Activities of Interest
 - 4) Other Commission Updates

Notes: *Soren Simonsen gave a brief update on a Riparian Corridors bill that is being drafted and updated by Representative Gay Lynn Bennion. That bill should be numbered and public prior to the general session in mid-January.*

Soren also highlighted a bill presented last week at the Utah Water Task Force meeting, where Representative Rosemary Lesser is presenting a pilot program to explore UDOT using some of its active transportation fund to possibly explore planning for canal corridors being converted into trails, like the Murdock Canal Trail in Utah County. This could result in substantial water savings, and expanded trail systems and removal of barriers that canals can create.

Soren added that Governor Cox's budget proposal includes a substantial proposal to expand homeless services and housing priorities, which could benefit the large and growing challenges associated with unsheltered individuals camping around the Jordan River Parkway, particularly in the Salt Lake City area of the river.

Soren concluded with a review of upcoming grant cycles in the winter and spring, and noted that the Commission and Seven Canyons Trust are planning to submit a grant of \$60,000 to \$75,000 through the Recreation Trails Program (RTP) grant for an major update and development of a mobile app related to the current MyJordanRiver.org mobile site.

6. Upcoming Committee Meeting

- a) Thursday, January 18, 2024

Notes: *The next meeting was confirmed on January 18, at 2:00 PM. Soren Simonsen asked for input from the Committee regarding topics or speakers for January.*

7. Adjourn

Eric McCulley moved to adjourn the meeting. Ali Avery seconded the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:36 PM.

A meeting recording, minutes, handouts and presentations, and other information are available to view and download at <https://www.utah.gov/pmn/sitemap/notice/880909.html>.