



**MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) STAKEHOLDERS COUNCIL MEETING, HELD WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2024, AT 3:30 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED BOTH IN-PERSON AND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM. THE ANCHOR LOCATION WAS MILLCREEK CITY HALL, 1330 EAST CHAMBERS AVENUE, MILLCREEK, UTAH.**

**Present:** John Knoblock, Chair  
Tom Diegel, Co-Chair  
Mike Marker  
Maura Hahnenberger  
John Adams  
Mark Baer  
Barbara Cameron  
Sally Kaiser  
Morgan Mingle  
Spencer Shaver  
Kelly Boardman  
Meaghan McKasy  
Dennis Goreham  
Adam Lenkowski  
Linda Johnson  
Hilary Lambert  
Brenden Catt  
Roger Borgenicht  
Patrick Shea  
Caitlin Curry  
Jonny Vasic  
Patrick Morrison

**Staff:** Lindsey Nielsen, Executive Director  
Samantha Kilpack, Director of Operations  
Mia McNeil, Community Engagement Coordinator

**Opening**

**1. Chair John Knoblock will Open the Public Meeting as the Chair of the Stakeholders Council of the Central Wasatch Commission.**

Chair John Knoblock called the Central Wasatch Commission (“CWC”) Stakeholders Council

Meeting to order at approximately 3:30 p.m. and welcomed those present.

**2. Chair Knoblock will Call for a Motion to Approve the Minutes from the July 17, 2024, Stakeholders Council Retreat.**

**MOTION:** Linda Johnson moved to APPROVE the Meeting Minutes from the July 17, 2024, Stakeholders Council Retreat. \_\_\_\_\_ seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Council.

Chair Knoblock reported that Spencer Shaver and Amber Broadway will become Ex-Officio Members of the CWC Board. This will ensure there is a balance of interests in the Ex-Officio Membership. Mr. Shaver noted that Save Our Canyons is committed to the Stakeholders Council, as it is an important component of the CWC. The intention is for Save Our Canyons to continue to contribute in some manner. He added that Council Members can reach out to him at any point. Chair Knoblock thanked Mr. Shaver for his contributions to the Stakeholders Council. Discussions were had about the Systems Committee attendance moving forward. Mr. Shaver explained that someone from Save Our Canyons will likely continue to attend Environment Systems Committee Meetings.

Director of Operations, Samantha Kilpack, informed those present that there are no satellite microphones at the current meeting. She asked those attending in person to speak loudly for the benefit of the virtual attendees. Executive Director, Lindsey Nielsen, shared some comments about Ms. Broadway becoming an Ex-Officio Member of the CWC Board. She explained that Ms. Broadway is the President of Solitude Mountain Resort. All four ski resorts and Ski Utah were approached about the Ex-Officio position. The CEO of Ski Utah, Nathan Rafferty, was considered, but ultimately, it was determined that someone with knowledge of the daily resort operations was best. Ms. Broadway will endeavor to represent all of the ski resorts in the Cottonwood Canyons.

**Mixed Breakout Groups**

Chair Knoblock explained that at the last Stakeholders Council Meeting, there were two Breakout Sessions held. The discussions related to the Mountain Accord and the issues that exist in the Central Wasatch. He asked how the Council can determine some relevant action items. Ms. Nielsen stated that CWC Staff can review the Meeting Minutes and the recording and bring applicable points to each of the subcommittees. The different subcommittees can spend some time considering action items. Chair Knoblock liked that idea. He pointed out that the goal of these discussions is to find ways to resolve issues and move various matters forward. It is important to determine appropriate actions.

**1. Discussion Prompt:**

- a. **What are the Benefits of the CWNCRA?**
- b. **What are the Drawbacks of the CWNCRA?**

Chair Knoblock reported that there will be two Breakout Sessions held during the current Stakeholders Council Meeting. He reminded those present that the intention is to interact with other members of the Stakeholders Council. There are several discussion prompt questions. The first set relates to the Central Wasatch National Conservation and Recreation Area Act (“CWNCRA”). He informed the Council that there is a Legislative Field Trip scheduled. Several Legislators will see

Big Cottonwood Canyon and Little Cottonwood Canyon and hear from representatives about the issues that are facing the CWC study area. The benefits of the CWCNRA will be highlighted as well.

The reason the CWCNRA is a discussion prompt at the Stakeholders Council Meeting is to ensure that Council Members have an awareness of the CWCNRA and have talked through both the benefits and potential drawbacks. Chair Knoblock asked that each of the tables discuss the prompt questions. He reported that the second Breakout Session has to do with barriers moving the CWCNRA forward and ideas to overcome those barriers. These discussions could inform some of the future decisions.

Ahead of the Breakout Session, additional discussions were had about the Legislative Field Trip. Ms. Nielsen reported that there will be approximately 15 attendees. She offered to send out the list. Co-Chair Tom Diegel explained that it is important for the State Legislature to support the CWCNRA. Ms. Nielsen stated that it has been a few years since the State has heard from the CWC outside of the yearly appropriations requests. It is important to highlight the CWC work and the CWCNRA.

Council Members spent approximately 25 minutes reviewing the discussion prompt questions.

### **Mixed Breakout Groups Reports**

#### **1. Each Breakout Group will Summarize their Discussions for the Stakeholders Council.**

Following the first Breakout Session, a spokesperson from each group summarized their discussion. The first group shared comments about the benefits of a permanent framework and governance structure. Equity among different user groups was mentioned. Co-Chair Diegel explained that there is a desire to see more parity between ski resorts, private land owners, and non-ski resort recreators. There were also discussions about greater consideration of all canyon users. Group members also believe the Legislation could help guide the Utah Department of Transportation (“UDOT”) and the Utah Transit Authority (“UTA”) decision-making as it relates to transit solutions. Year-round transportation was stressed as well as recognizing all user groups, activities, and sports in the management. As for the drawbacks, it was noted that land exchanges have been lost over the years.

The second group summarized their discussion prompt responses. There were in-depth conversations about a few items, but the group mostly talked about wilderness designations. One of the benefits is the way the wilderness protections are expanded and the compromise with the Bonneville Shoreline Trail, allowing for mechanized use along there. A lot of time was spent discussing the management plan that would be in place within three years of the passage of the Legislation. This is something that could potentially be a strength and force problems to be solved rather than simply talked about. However, there were some areas of clarification desired. For example, it states that the United States Department of Agriculture (“USDA”) develops and manages the plan, which likely means the U.S. Forest Service. The question is what funding will be associated with the bill to assist the Forest Service in making and implementing pieces of the plan. Additionally, there is a desire to understand how the plan might engage groups like the CWC. There were also fire suppression discussions.

The third group reviewed their CWCNRA discussions, which had to do with traditional funding through toll fees. There were some questions about whether access would be made less equitable to visitors. There was another question about funding for the administration of programs. The group liked certain elements of the CWCNRA, but there were questions about local expertise and the proper management of these areas. There is a need to better understand how various items might stack on

top of one another, such as paid parking at resorts and tolls on the road. There were questions about fuel management and fire suppression as well as how the increase in wilderness areas would increase the cost of trail maintenance. Chair Knoblock pointed out that the Forest Service is starting to charge trailhead fees. He agrees that it is meaningful to consider all of the various fees and tolls.

The online participants reviewed their discussion prompt answers. John Adams reported that Mike Marker shared some history related to the original spirit of the Mountain Accord. It was pointed out that there are no degrees of measurement set up through this process and there are no capacity limits for what the canyon can handle with which to measure against. Potentially, the Forest Service could be the wrong group for management, as they have multiple use mandates. The group had questions about what the CWNCRRA enables and what it restricts, specifically for different user groups.

### **Mixed Breakout Groups**

Ms. Nielsen informed those present that the second Breakout Session will now take place. Each Council Member has been given a number and needs to find the table with the same number. The intention is to ensure that Council Members are able to speak with different participants. Discussions were had about the ideal size for each breakout group. Council Members located the correct tables.

#### **2. Discussion Prompt:**

- a. **What are the Barriers to Moving the CWNCRRA Forward?**
- b. **How Can We Overcome Those Barriers?**

Chair Knoblock reviewed the discussion prompt questions. He asked Council Members to discuss the barriers to moving the CWNCRRA forward and how to potentially overcome those barriers. Council Members were asked to consider issues that the Utah Delegation might have with the bill.

Council Members spent approximately 25 minutes reviewing the discussion prompt questions.

### **Mixed Breakout Group Reports**

#### **1. Each Breakout Group will Summarize their Discussions for the Stakeholders Council.**

Following the second Breakout Session, a spokesperson from each group summarized their discussion. The first group identified several roadblocks, including the clash between private lands and public lands. Some solutions identified for that are to educate others and ensure there is fair allocation. There were discussions about how wilderness area designation would exclude mountain bicyclists. The group thought about building exceptions for trail connectivity for areas that are important to the mountain bicycling communities. Actively trying to seek dialogue with that community would also be beneficial. The group also talked about resistance to Federal control. It was noted that there might be resistance from the ski resorts if their boundaries are locked in and they are unable to expand in the future. It was difficult to brainstorm a solution outside of increased communication. Discussions were had about ski resort expansion and the existing ski resort terrain.

The second group discussed the State versus Federal tension in Utah as a potential roadblock. Patrick Shea pointed out that more recently, the State of Utah sued the Federal Government over unallocated Federal lands across the State. The group took time to discuss several possible questions and

1 solutions. It was suggested that there be an economic argument for the passing of the CWNCRRA. It  
2 is likely the only way there would be State-level support. If support was obtained, there would still  
3 need to be some lobbying power at the Federal level. There are questions about who would pay for  
4 that. The group also discussed ways to make progress on the action the Legislation is intended to  
5 take, even if the CWNCRRA is not ultimately passed. Several ideas were shared, such as pushing  
6 forward an environmental argument around watershed protection. It is also possible to  
7 recontextualize the parts of the bill relevant to the Olympic Games in 2034. For example, what needs  
8 to happen in preparation for the Olympics with regard to transportation and other relevant matters. It  
9 is possible to pull out actionable items from the bill and package them in the context of the Olympics.

10  
11 Mr. Shea believes merging the efforts with the 2034 Olympic Games could be a wonderful way to  
12 build public awareness. Additional discussions were had about the Olympics and the venues that  
13 were used in 2002. Chair Knoblock noted that the group feels it might be possible to use the Olympics  
14 as a way to advocate for the CWNCRRA and raise public awareness. In addition, it might be possible  
15 for the Forest Service to revise part of the Forest Plan related to the Central Wasatch. There could be  
16 a citizens committee involved and it might be possible to implement some items in the CWNCRRA.  
17 Mr. Shea stressed the importance of the CWC educating the public about how it is possible to have  
18 development but still focus on the other focus areas, such as water and the ecosystem. The Olympics  
19 in 2034 may provide an opportunity to move some of these efforts forward in a meaningful way.

20  
21 The third group summarized their discussions. It was noted that there were some similarities to the  
22 other group discussions. Group members acknowledged the general hesitancy to accept change.  
23 Unknowns can be a challenge for a lot of people. There were comments made about the ski resorts.  
24 A lot of the ski resorts are now part of these multi-ski resort conglomerates, which adds an additional  
25 challenge since there is no local ownership. Another challenge that has been identified previously is  
26 that the Federal Delegation will not be introduced without support from the State. There are multiple  
27 steps that need to happen in order for the CWNCRRA to move forward. In addition to the current  
28 lawsuits, there are potential lawsuits that could come from the Legislation moving ahead. Another  
29 barrier is the long timeline. It was pointed out that there has already been a long timeline, which  
30 includes the Mountain Accord process and the development of the CWNCRRA. One way to overcome  
31 this issue is through communication and public relations, which the CWC can assist with.

32  
33 As for communication, it is important to have strategic talking points that specifically address the  
34 concerns. Being able to connect on common ground is also a meaningful way to move forward. It is  
35 key to find elected officials to champion the CWNCRRA at both the State and Federal level. Looking  
36 into other states that may have done something that is somewhat similar might be worthwhile, as  
37 those can be used as examples. For stakeholders with an interest in the CWNCRRA, it might be useful  
38 to have some of the more enthusiastic supporters handle some of the strategic communication.

39  
40 The online participants reviewed their discussion prompt answers. Mr. Adams explained that several  
41 barriers were discussed, but a lot of those matters have already been mentioned by other groups.  
42 However, he noted that there might be some potential perceptions that the CWNCRRA could inhibit  
43 the economy in the sense that the economy can be seen as growing revenues. There could also be a  
44 perception that transportation will not be addressed or that the CWNCRRA will prevent transportation  
45 solutions from moving forward. There might also be some fear of Federal overreach. Mr. Adams  
46 agrees with the idea of considering the Olympics. He pointed out that people do not necessarily like  
47 change, but both the Mountain Accord and CWNCRRA are largely focused on creating change.

1 Chair Knoblock noted that CWC Staff can consider some of this feedback ahead of the Legislative  
2 Field Trip. Co-Chair Diegel liked hearing all of the comments from Council Members. It was nice  
3 to hear other perspectives about the CWNCRA. He hopes there will be time to share relevant  
4 information during the Legislative Field Trip. This exercise is something he believes will be useful.

5  
6 Additional discussions were had about the Legislative Field Trip. A question was asked about  
7 whether it is the unanimous position of the CWC Board that the CWNCRA should be moved forward.  
8 Ms. Nielsen clarified that it has been some time since the Board Members were asked that question  
9 directly, but the reengagement process includes the Legislature as well as the CWC Board Members.  
10 That question will be the foundation of the discussions that take place during the CWC Board Retreat.  
11 She explained that the CWC Board Retreat is a public meeting, which means that anyone interested  
12 in attending is able to do so. It will take place at The River Oaks Golf Course in Sandy City. Ms.  
13 Nielsen reminded those present that the CWC was created to carry out the Mountain Accord items.

14  
15 Chair Knoblock thanked Council Members for their participation in the Breakout Sessions. The  
16 intention is to distill the discussion items down and find actionable items that can be moved forward.  
17 He noted that some comments were made during the sessions that it might be possible to move  
18 elements of the Legislation forward in case there are issues that might slow down the CWNCRA.

## 19 20 **Environmental Dashboard Survey**

### 21 22 **1. The Environment Systems Committee will Discuss a Survey They Have Developed to** 23 **Solicit Feedback on Improving the Environmental Dashboard.**

24  
25 Chair of the Environment Systems Committee, Kelly Boardman shared information about a survey  
26 that has been developed to solicit feedback on the Environmental Dashboard. She reported that an  
27 email was sent out to Council Members recently with a link to the survey. The survey was created  
28 by the Environment Systems Committee. She reviewed the Environmental Dashboard with those  
29 present and explained that it was originally part of the Mountain Accord. Ms. Boardman next  
30 reviewed some of the Environment Systems goals that were outlined in the Mountain Accord:

- 31  
32
- 33 • Protect, maintain, and improve watershed health, water supply, and water quality;
  - 34 • Protect and improve air quality for protection of public health, environmental health, and scenic visibility;
  - 35 • Protect and restore functioning and connected aquatic and terrestrial habitats and ecosystems;
  - 36 • Preserve additional lands to avoid loss of critical conservation values and restore existing degraded lands;
  - 37 • Mitigate the severity of climate change and develop adaptive capacity to reduce vulnerabilities to local climate change impacts;
  - 38 • Develop legal, regulator, financial, and integrated governance structures that provide long-term and sustainable support for achieving the environment systems goals.
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40  
41  
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43 All of those goals were considered when the Environmental Dashboard was contemplated. Ms.  
44 Boardman explained that the Environmental Dashboard includes data related to air quality and  
45 climate, geology and soils, vegetation communities, water, wildlife, and the human element. The  
46 Environment Systems Committee is asking the Stakeholders Council to look at the Environmental  
47 Dashboard and consider the associated goals. The Environment Systems Committee has been

1 discussing ways to improve the Environmental Dashboard to create a more robust planning tool.  
2 Council Members were asked to look at the Environmental Dashboard with a critical eye to determine  
3 if there is missing information or if there might be a better way to present the current data.  
4

5 There is a desire to build out the Human Element. Last fall, the Visitor Use Study information was  
6 added to the Environmental Dashboard, but the intention is to better represent the Human Element  
7 moving forward. Ms. Boardman reiterated that the Environmental Dashboard Survey was created to  
8 receive feedback from others about the Environmental Dashboard and how it performs. The  
9 Environment Systems Committee wants to better understand what additional data could be included  
10 and how the existing data could be better represented on the Environmental Dashboard.  
11

12 Meaghan McKasy has experience creating surveys and participated in the creation of the survey. She  
13 reported that Council Members received a link to the survey previously. Anyone who has not  
14 completed the survey is asked to do so. The idea is that it will be reviewed by the CWC Youth  
15 Council, Stakeholders Council, and CWC Board before it goes out to the general public. The survey  
16 asks whether someone is a member of the CWC. Based on the answer, there are questions about the  
17 level of involvement. Those questions will not be seen by members of the general public who answer  
18 “no.” If there are any demographic questions Council Members believe should be added to the  
19 Environmental Dashboard Survey, those can be recommended to the Environment Systems  
20 Committee. Ms. McKasy reviewed some of the question types currently included in the survey. After  
21 the Stakeholders Council has completed the survey, it will move forward to the CWC Board.  
22

23 Ms. Kilpack asked that Council Members complete the Environmental Dashboard Survey by October  
24 8, 2024. Ms. Boardman explained that the Environment Systems Committee is looking to fine-tune  
25 the survey so the results will be useful and the Environmental Dashboard will be a robust planning  
26 tool. Barbara Cameron liked that there were both closed-ended questions as well as open-ended  
27 questions. It is nice to have room for both. Council Members were asked again to take the survey.  
28

29 Chair Knoblock referenced the CWC newsletter which includes a summary of the subcommittee  
30 discussions. Ms. Kilpack reported that it was published at the end of last month. She offered to send  
31 it out again to those interested in a refresher. Council Members were reminded that the newsletter  
32 replaced the Committee Reports section previously on the Stakeholders Council Meeting agenda.  
33

### 34 **Committee Membership and Leadership**

#### 35 **1. Stakeholders May Request to Join the Systems Committees:**

- 36 **a. Millcreek Canyon Committee.**
- 37 **b. Environment Systems Committee.**
- 38 **c. Transportation Systems Committee.**
- 39 **d. Recreation Systems Committee.**
- 40 **e. Economy Systems Committee.**
- 41
- 42
- 43

44 Ms. Kilpack reported that there are two new Stakeholders Council Members: Meaghan McKasy and  
45 Mark Baer. Chair Knoblock welcomed them both to the Council and thanked them for their efforts  
46 so far. Ms. McKasy wanted to officially join the Environment Systems Committee. Mr. Baer asked  
47 to join either the Transportation Systems Committee or the Recreation Systems Committee.  
48

Co-Chair Diegel noted that there was a Millcreek Canyon Committee Meeting held recently. The Acting District Ranger attended that meeting. Adam Shaw is there for four months to replace Bekee Hotze. Mr. Shaw stated that he is interested in the position and took the time to listen to the Committee.

**2. Announcement of Any Committee Leadership Changes.**

There were no leadership changes proposed.

**Staff Announcements**

**1. Stakeholders Council Membership Updates.**

It was reiterated that Ms. McKasy and Mr. Baer have recently joined the Stakeholders Council.

**2. Central Wasatch Symposium on January 9-10, 2025.**

Ms. Nielsen reported that the Central Wasatch Symposium will take place on January 9 and 10, 2024. Terry Tempest Williams will be the keynote speaker. Tickets and registration will open shortly.

**3. Forest Service Staffing Update.**

It was reiterated that Mr. Shaw is currently in the Acting District Ranger position.

**4. Youth Council Announcements:**

- a. Outdoor Film Festival on September 18, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.**
- b. Tabling Opportunities.**
- c. Other.**

Ms. Nielsen reported that Mr. Shaw, the Acting District Ranger, will be at the CWC Youth Council Outdoor Film Festival. The film festival will take place after the Stakeholders Council Meeting. She asked interested Council Members to attend the Outdoor Film Festival, which starts at 6:30 p.m.

**5. Next Board Meeting is October 7, 2024.**

The next CWC Board Meeting will take place on October 7, 2024.

**6. Board Retreat is November 1, 2024.**

The CWC Board Retreat will take place on November 1, 2024.

**7. Thank You to Millcreek for Continuing to Host our Meetings.**

Ms. Nielsen thanked Millcreek for continuing to host the meetings. She also thanked the Stakeholders Council participants, both in-person and online. The level of commitment and dedication is appreciated. The next Stakeholders Council Meeting is scheduled for November 20, 2024.



1 **Stakeholders Open Comment**

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3 Discussions were had about the new format for the Stakeholders Council Meetings. Ms. Nielsen  
4 explained that she will continue to check in to see that Council Members like the new format, which  
5 includes the Breakout Sessions. There was support expressed for the current meeting format.  
6

7 **Closing**

8  
9 1. **Chair Knoblock will Call for a Motion to Adjourn the Stakeholders' Council Meeting.**

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11 **MOTION:** \_\_\_\_\_ moved to ADJOURN the Stakeholders Council Meeting. There was no  
12 second. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Council.  
13

14 The Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council Meeting adjourned at 5:26 p.m.

1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central*  
2 *Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council Meeting held on Wednesday, September 18, 2024.*  
3

4 Teri Forbes

5 Teri Forbes  
6 T Forbes Group  
7 Minutes Secretary  
8

9 Minutes Approved: \_\_\_\_\_