

Meeting Minutes
Emery County Public Lands Council
December 3, 2024
10:00 AM
Administrative Building
Canyon Conference Room

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

Excused: Ben Grimes, Les Wilberg

PL STAFF: Jim Jennings (ECPL),

Visitors: Jordan Leonard, Commissioner; Keven Jensen, Commissioner; Kyle Beagley (BLM); Jessica Mortensen (UDAF); Mark Chamberlain (USFS); Ryan Wilson (CFC); Dal Gray (DOGM); Chris Wood (DWR); Brian Kurta (DOR); Nicole Nielson (PLPCO); Wayne Ludington (SRBCH); Darren Olsen & Kevin Albrecht (USFS)

Electronically: Joel Brown (Sen Lee) ?

1. Welcome

Rod Player welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Approval of Minutes for November 5, 2024

Ray Peterson motioned to approve the November meeting minutes, with the change of the dates, and Varian Allen seconded it. The motion passed.

January 15th 3-4:30 or 5:30–7:00 Ethics Training here in the County Building for all board members.

On January 7th, the PLPCO Director will be here to discuss the lawsuit with BLM Land.

The names of new board members will be announced at the commission meeting on December 17th. Board members will start their four-year term in January 2025.

3. Agency Reports and Council Member Comments

○ **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)**

Kyle Beagley announced that the Price Office has a new field manager: Nick LaFavio, who comes from Idaho and has a background in law enforcement.

They have a plan and are acting on the fire at Kenilworth Mine: they will drill vent holes and fill them with foam. The program will take three weeks to complete.

Jurassic Monument will close the visiting center next year in June 2025 for the construction to be completed.

Someone reported vandalism at Rochester Rock, but the BLM could not find where it had occurred. There are cameras at that location; they will watch it.

A meeting will be held to discuss the San Rafael Desert and Swell management plans and 9-mile. The different places and options will be discussed.

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

No one was in attendance; follow up on who replaced Marc Stilson.

Emery County and Emery Town are still working on building a dam there. It will take a lot of money, so they are investigating different grants. The feasibility study was returned as unfeasible, so they are now investigating other sources.

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

Dal Grey reported they started the Kenilworth abandon mine project on that mine. State Forest is helping with this project to put out the fire and close it up.

It has been speculated that in 2019, there were hot spots but no flame, but it has started up again in the last few months.

Recycling rules go before the board and will be approved tomorrow and go into effect.

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

Chris Wood reported that the private owner of Cleveland Reservoir is installing metal gates and no-trespassing signs to keep people out. The County has discussed some arrangements to help keep this area in historical use. The public has well-attended this area, and the public and the County do not want to lose this access. With this change, there has been talk about losing our water storage rights. Commission Jensen encourages the County to fight for our right to keep this property.

December is capture season for mule deer; we are following them and putting GPS collars on them to track their movement. This will be done on the Manti side on December 17 and 18. If anyone is interested in helping with this, we would be happy to have your

help. This is part of a BYU study we have been doing for a few years. Big Horn Sheep survey on the North and South San Rafael. They are looking excellent, and there has been a 33% increase on the Northside. The south side stays normal. Check out our new website for more information on what we are doing. Proposals on the website and add comments.

The division is monitoring for chronic wasting disease. The La-Sal's is more of a hot spot than the Manti. You can drop your elk heads off, and we can check them for this disease. Are there many checkpoints where CWD has been reported? They are spending a lot more interest than usual, state-wide effort.

*(CWD is a fatal, degenerative neurological disease that affects elk, deer, and moose). Giving out \$10.00 Christmas tree permits. They still have pheasants permits and are doing the programs.

A new disease with elk in Colorado is that their hooves are growing very large and deformed. *(Treponeme-Associated Hoof Disease), a bacterial infection that affects elk hooves in the Pacific Northwest. They can curl upward or resemble claws and can lead to bloody stumps.

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

No one in attendance called and could not make it.

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

Darren Olsen signed the Ferron Range improvement DA, which includes water troughs and carrels in the central to southern part. The forest plan is still being developed, and we are working on a decision.

Three guzzlers were installed out on Horn Mountain, and we are seeing use with these. We are looking to install 12, so more to come, shoveling snow and looking to receive more snow. Making sure our bathrooms are pumped to stay open and doing more trail work while the weather permits. (Fixit Pass is now fixed pass) ;) lol.

Selling Christmas tree permits costs \$10, and selling them online costs \$12. Rilda Canyon is blocked, and the Forest Service is not blocking it; it is not our intent. The Forest does not know who is blocking it. You can get around the gate by horse or on foot. It is a County Road; something with the mine is why they think it has been closed after the fire and the flood by the mine. Reclamation of the mine has something to do with the locked gate. It should not be locked.

- **Utah State Parks**

Campgrounds with Tiny homes are being rented out, but we are trying to get more advertisements. The golf course is slow at this time, and Goblin Valley has also slowed down.

- **Utah Division of Outdoor Recreation**

Bryan Kurta stated that the fall was busy. An update is that Mr. Steely's HOV program is no longer with the HOV program. He has moved over to administration. Two others doing the HOV, Lt. Jacob Hinton and Mike Thomas, over the trails program. The grants team organized their annual grants workshop; if you need help, reach out. Working on an avalanche awareness program working on this week, an avalanche, 27" of snow fell. Asking everyone to be aware and prepared. Busy with people getting their Christmas trees. Fill out forms to help with trail maintenance, and contact Anthony in Moab or Nathan Condor. Snowmobile permits getting the word out. Larry Johansen has been hired again.

- **Utah State Department of Agriculture**

Water optimization grant open, Utah water code, reducing water use. Jan 1, 2025 Have to meet with water rights before you can come to us. Jan. 16 at the Rec Center in Castle Dale, the speaker is Mark Stilson, 5:00-8:00.

- **PLPCO**

Nicole Nielson stated that the lawsuit for the unappropriated land in Utah and one of the Attorney General's Office are online if you have questions. The Supreme Court will hear oral arguments on the Railways' resource management plan.

Leon McElprang asked for help with the ranges; the wild horses were just annealing the land. Can we get some help with this, anyone? The Rangers have no incentive to help with this; the Wild Horses/Burros are out of hand, and this needs to be looked at. It's a real issue. Does the BLM give out permits to catch them? They need to hear our general plan and be reminded about what Emery County wants, and they want agencies to manage their resources. Don't go in demanding that they do this and that; help them see the reason behind the concern and use Emery County's general plan.

- **Washington Delegation Staff**

Joel Brown stated that President Trump invited Senator Lee to work in the AG's office, and the Senator declined, saying he wanted to stay where he was.

4. Commission Comments on Public Land Items

Tell us about North Long Street. Commissioner Jensen stated that we are still waiting for their law firm to transition. They are ready to move forward; they are stalling. We have not forgotten about

it; we are doing what we can. Update on the solar panels on SITLA land: the solar company has backed out. They are now looking at a new location for the solar. Nielson's and TSJ want to mine limestone on SITLA land. They are looking near Hiawatha and talking about the south of Ferron near Dutch Flat and south of Emery.

Ray Petersen asked that they invite the new commissioner to the next meeting. He will be sworn in just before the public lands meeting.

5. Additional Issues From Council Members

I could not hear what Sherril Ward was saying about the water %. Please someone, let the new council members know they are on the board and are welcome to join.

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.