



MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) STAKEHOLDERS COUNCIL ENVIRONMENT SYSTEM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD, TUESDAY, JUNE 10, 2025, AT 3:00 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED BOTH IN-PERSON AND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM. THE ANCHOR LOCATION WAS THE CWC OFFICES LOCATED IN THE BRIGHTON BANK BUILDING, 311 SOUTH STATE STREET, SUITE 330, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.

Committee Members: Kelly Boardman, Chair
Dan Zalles, Co-Chair
Meaghan McKasy
Doug Tolman
Maura Hahnenberger
Brenden Catt
Ella Abelli-Amen
Olivia Juarez
John Knoblock

Staff: Lindsey Nielsen, Executive Director
Samantha Kilpack, Director of Operations
Ben Kilbourne, Community Engagement Coordinator

OPENING

1. Chair Kelly Boardman will Open the Public Meeting as Chair of the Environment System Committee of the Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council.

Chair Kelly Boardman called the Central Wasatch Commission (“CWC”) Stakeholders Council Environment System Committee Meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. and welcomed those present.

2. Review and Approval of the Minutes from the May 13, 2025, Meeting.

Chair Boardman reported that at the last Environment System Committee Meeting, there was a good discussion about the proposed parking lot at Solitude Mountain Resort and the letter that was written. There was also a discussion about Little Cottonwood Canyon transportation through the lens of the Mountain Accord. This included a mention of the Mountain Transportation System (“MTS”) Pillars document that came out of the MTS process in 2020 and 2021. At the last meeting, there was also a discussion about timber production and the potential impacts on the Central Wasatch.

MOTION: Kelly Boardman moved to APPROVE the May 13, 2025, Meeting Minutes. Doug Tolman seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

1
2 **1. The Committee and CWC Staff will Discuss Progress on Updating the Central Wasatch**
3 **Dashboard.**
4

5 Chair Boardman explained that the first Environment System Committee update relates to the Central
6 Wasatch Dashboard, which was formally called the Environmental Dashboard. She reminded
7 Committee Members that there is still an open survey. Meaghan McKasy noted that she has not
8 analyzed the data since the additional responses were received, but she can do that in the future.
9 Director of Operations, Samantha Kilpack, reported that she receives an email whenever there is a
10 new response to the survey. It has been some time since additional survey responses were submitted.
11 The Environment System Committee can discuss whether it makes sense to leave the survey open.
12

13 It was noted that the survey has received a total of 110 responses, which is an increase from the last
14 time the Environment System Committee discussed the survey. The last time there was a survey
15 response was May 8, 2025, so it might make sense to close the survey at this time. Chair Boardman
16 pointed out that the survey could be reopened when the Human Element section is built out more.
17

18 Brenden Catt believes it makes sense to close the survey at this time. It is also important for the
19 Committee to discuss whether there will be further adjustments made to the Central Wasatch
20 Dashboard. It sounds like Phoebe McNeally and the DIGIT Lab have made adjustments already.
21 One alternative for replacing the survey would be something less formal, such as a comment box.
22

23 Ms. Kilpack shared additional information about the Central Wasatch Dashboard update process.
24 There is a “Contact Us” section at the bottom of the Central Wasatch Dashboard where it is possible
25 to submit a name, email address, and message. There is another section where it is possible to provide
26 data recommendations. As for outstanding changes to the Central Wasatch Dashboard, there is an
27 effort underway to expand the Human Element with human ecology data. Phoebe McNeally from
28 the University of Utah is pulling together a group of experts to look at the data, assess what is there,
29 assess the needs, figure out how to approach this topic, and then add human ecology data accordingly.
30 That includes items such as impacts on geology and soil, vegetation, wildlife, water, and air quality,
31 and the trends of those impacts. This is a significant expansion that will happen through a contract
32 with the DIGIT Lab. The original plan was to start sooner, but the experts have a lot of tasks
33 scheduled in the early summer, so fall is a much better time for them to do this work. Once the work
34 starts in the early fall, it will be about a four-month process for Phase I. Phase I includes the
35 formulation of a plan and an assessment of the needs. Phase II will be mapped out from there.
36

37 Ms. Kilpack next discussed the useability of the Central Wasatch Dashboard. There has been some
38 discussion about enhancements, such as an interactive map on the landing page and a table of contents
39 on each page. CWC Staff is in the middle of gaining access to the Central Wasatch Dashboard in
40 order to make some of the smaller adjustments rather than the team at the university handling those.
41 She believes it will soon be possible to make many of the smaller changes. The DIGIT Lab is still
42 working on the interactive map. She reiterated that there is a lot of work still in progress.
43

44 Mr. Catt mentioned the comment box on the homepage of the CWC website and asked if the comment
45 box included on the Central Wasatch Dashboard contacts the CWC. Ms. Kilpack reported that one
46 of the boxes on the Central Wasatch Dashboard mentions is to provide data recommendations. The
47 one next to it is a “Contact Us” box, which is the same as what is on the rest of the CWC website.
48

49 Executive Director, Lindsey Nielsen, reported that the “Contact Us” form on the footer of the CWC
50 website goes to the backend of the CWC website, which CWC Staff has access to. The data

1 recommendation form on the footer of the Central Wasatch Dashboard is the same. It is not the same
2 form, but it does come back to CWC Staff. In either case, the information will be reviewed by CWC
3 Staff. Data recommendations or generalized comments about the Central Wasatch Dashboard can be
4 forwarded to the DIGIT Lab team. CWC Staff can also make small amendments, if appropriate. It
5 was noted that the header can be updated to provide additional clarity. For instance, the language can
6 be amended to read: "Provide data recommendations or feedback on the Central Wasatch Dashboard."
7

8 Community Engagement Coordinator, Ben Kilbourne, reported that he recently wrote a short blog
9 post that explains what the Central Wasatch Dashboard is in an effort to drive people to the resource.
10 Discussions were had about the feedback form that is on the Central Wasatch Dashboard. There was
11 a question about whether it should be updated to something more specific such as: "How likely are
12 you to return to the Central Wasatch Dashboard?" Ms. Kilpack confirmed that this can be explored.
13

14 Chair Boardman suggested that the Environment System Committee spend some time analyzing the
15 current survey responses. It is possible to reopen the survey when the Human Element updates have
16 been made. Co-Chair Dan Zalles hoped the Central Wasatch Dashboard could provide some
17 education for interpreting different graphs and data. It is the educational component that is needed.
18 Ms. Kilpack confirmed that this is on the list of suggestions. To some extent, a lot of this information
19 is available for the public to interpret, but there could be some rudimentary explanation of how to
20 look at some of the data. Co-Chair Zalles noted that the survey results can be revisited to see if there
21 is evidence there are difficulties understanding the data presented on the Central Wasatch Dashboard.
22

23 **2. John Knoblock will Discuss Progress on Gathering Data for the Human Element.**

24

25 John Knoblock presented the methodology included in the Stakeholders Council shared folder.
26 Different Council Members were assigned to look for information related to items such as vehicle
27 counts, bus counts, parking spots, pedestrian use, backcountry ski use, resort skier use, mountain
28 bicycle use, rock climbing use, Oktoberfest numbers, Wildflower Festival numbers, and so on.
29 Various Council Members have donated their time to track down some of this information. There is
30 another spreadsheet in the same shared folder where the data collected has been added. All of this
31 originated from the Visitor Use Study that was conducted by Utah State University. The Visitor Use
32 Study provided some trail count numbers and other data, but there was some missing information.
33

34 Mr. Knoblock reviewed the information that has been collected so far. For example, the number of
35 annual Big Cottonwood Canyon bus riders is a little less than 200,000. The number of Big
36 Cottonwood Canyon vanpool riders is approximately 50,000. The number of Little Cottonwood
37 Canyon bus riders is approximately 141,000 and the Little Cottonwood Canyon vanpool riders is
38 approximately 100,000. The Utah Transit Authority ("UTA") vanpools are taking a lot of employees
39 off buses to make room for other visitors. Mr. Knoblock reported that work is still being done to
40 count the number of parking spaces so that data has not been entered into the spreadsheet at this time.
41

42 There are approximately 500,000 people on trails in Big Cottonwood Canyon and a little over 300,000
43 people on trails in Little Cottonwood Canyon. Based on the bicycle shuttle vans, there are an
44 estimated 20,000 bicyclists that ride in Big Cottonwood Canyon. There is no road data for bicyclists
45 yet, but there is a methodology that can be used to determine that number. Mr. Knoblock shared
46 resort skier information and reported that in Big Cottonwood Canyon, there are just under 1 million.
47 In Little Cottonwood Canyon, there are just over 1 million resort skiers. On the Park City side, there
48 is an estimated 3 million total. He clarified that these numbers are simply estimates based on the
49 available data because Ski Utah does not break out the data by each individual ski resort. He added
50 that the estimated number for the Wildflower Festival is 4,500 attendees.

1
2 Mr. Knoblock shared information about mountain bicycling in Park City. Based on their trail counter
3 data, it is estimated that there are 700,000 mountain bicyclists there. He reiterated that data is
4 continuing to be pulled together and this is still a work in progress. Co-Chair Zalles asked about data
5 for road bicycling. Mr. Knoblock clarified that there is no data for road bicycling yet, but it might be
6 possible to separate that from the Utah Department of Transportation (“UDOT”) vehicle counts.
7

8 Chair Boardman reported that she listened in on another subcommittee meeting and there was some
9 discussion about methodology and the credibility of the data. Her understanding is that the Visitor
10 Use Study followed the U.S. Forest Service protocols while the Baseline Study process has more to
11 do with gathering data that already exists. Mr. Knoblock explained that there are not perfect data
12 sources for a lot of this information whereas trail counters are a little easier. He noted that some
13 backcountry skier data from Wasatch Backcountry Alliance can be added in the future. The intention
14 is to document where the data comes from so there can be comparisons made over time. Discussions
15 were had about the trail counters and whether there could be bicyclists in those counts.
16

17 Chair Boardman was hoping to see some trends but understands that this is a baseline gathering
18 process. Mr. Knoblock pointed out that what is currently being shown to the Committee is the 2024
19 tab, but it is possible to add more tabs in future years as data continues to be collected and compared.
20 Chair Boardman wondered whether it would be possible to obtain data from 10 years ago when the
21 Mountain Accord was signed to look at some of the changes that have occurred since then. Mr.
22 Knoblock noted that there were no trail counters in place at that time, but ski data might be possible.
23

24 Ms. McKasy expressed support for the Baseline Study work that has been done so far. She
25 understands that this is not a perfect methodology, but all attempts to gather data are worthwhile. As
26 for the methodology page that corresponds with this, she believes it would be wise to include notes
27 about the span of time for each of the data points. For instance, even if the tab is for 2024, the ski
28 counts would likely include data from one season. Everyone collects data during different windows,
29 so it might be useful to make note of that in the document so future comparisons are appropriate.
30

31 Mr. Knoblock reported that he spoke to Lora Anthony from the Mountain Trails Association. Park
32 City did a study based on their trail use counts as well as surveys at trailheads. It is estimated that
33 there is \$140 million in tax revenue generated from people who come to Park City for trail use. There
34 are a lot of people who visit Park City in the summer to mountain bicycle or hike and those visitors
35 tend to stay at a hotel and eat out for meals. That generates a lot of tax revenue for the area. Park
36 City has been focused on creating a world-class summer trail system. The Committee discussed the
37 trails that are available there and the popularity of mountain bicycling and hiking in the area.
38

39 Ms. Kilpack noted that there was a comment left by Ms. McKasy in the Zoom chat box. She suggested
40 making a note about qualitative information in the spreadsheet. For example, there can be a note
41 made if there is Federal Lands Access Program (“FLAP”) grant construction impacting the data, a
42 canyon closure day, or something similar. Ms. Kilpack agreed that it would be useful to include that.
43

44 **3. Chair Boardman will Provide Updates on the Proposed Solitude Parking Lot Proposal.** 45

46 Chair Boardman shared information about the proposed parking lot from Solitude Mountain Resort.
47 She has continued to see articles published about this, including one on May 18, 2025, in The Salt
48 Lake Tribune. Solitude is holding a town hall meeting on June 13, 2025, where it is possible to hear
49 about their future plans. Chair Boardman noted that Solitude is represented on the CWC Board via a
50 Special Advisor. Those on the CWC Board and Stakeholders Council are familiar with the Mountain

1 Accord, so it is confusing that projects like this are still being proposed by those associated with the
2 organization. Mr. Knoblock reported that there was a Big Cottonwood Canyon Community Council
3 Meeting held last night and a similar letter was proposed in opposition to the parking lot.

4
5 Chair Boardman pointed out that the parking lot proposal violates many of the core principles of the
6 Mountain Accord. It seems to conflict with the guiding document of the CWC. She would like all
7 participants in the organization to understand the goals of the Mountain Accord rather than bringing
8 forward plans that are in direct opposition. Mr. Knoblock noted that one of the immediate issues
9 Special Advisor, Amber Broadaway, feels strongly about is the dangers associated with roadside
10 parking. Chair Boardman stated that there could be a focus on transportation solutions that fall under
11 the umbrella of the Mountain Accord rather than attempting to accommodate more vehicles.

12
13 Co-Chair Zalles wanted to better understand the perspective of Solitude. Doug Tolman believes he
14 understands the argument of Solitude fairly well at this point. The Environmental Assessment (“EA”)
15 for Big Cottonwood Canyon will be completed in the near future and will likely recommend the
16 removal of roadside parking in the canyon. Both the Environment System Committee and
17 Transportation System Committee can advocate for solutions that allow the resort to carry their
18 current number of skiers without adding to transportation and environmental issues. Co-Chair Zalles
19 wondered whether it would make more sense for Solitude to build up their existing parking lot and
20 turn it into a parking garage. Mr. Tolman noted that it might be against Code, but he is not certain.

21
22 Co-Chair Zalles asked whether Solitude owns the land that there is a desire to build the parking lot
23 on. This was confirmed. It is private land that does not have water rights associated with it. A map
24 of the area was shared for reference. Chair Boardman pointed out that there is an adjacent piece of
25 land that is protected for watersheds. Her confusion about the Solitude proposal is that it goes against
26 the Mountain Accord since the first intended outcome is to protect the watershed and the environment.
27 Additionally, she noted that a goal is to have fewer single-occupancy vehicles in the canyons. Chair
28 Boardman informed the Committee that the UTA vans are wonderful and she rides one almost every
29 day in the winter. However, the vans cannot be used on traction control days because they do not
30 have four-wheel drive. She stressed the importance of all of the UTA vans having four-wheel drive
31 so it is possible to use those on traction control days as well. It would also be beneficial to add to the
32 bus service in order to reduce the number of personal vehicles in the area.

33
34 Ms. Kilpack reminded those present that the Mountain Accord was signed approximately 10 years
35 ago. The people who signed the Mountain Accord were committed and believed in all of the
36 principles in the document. Many of the institutions that signed the Mountain Accord and joined the
37 organization are still with the CWC, but the individuals who occupy those positions have changed.
38 Ms. Kilpack added that the Central Wasatch National Conservation and Recreation Area Act
39 (“CWNCR”) was born out of the Mountain Accord, as the agreements were folded into the bill. If
40 there is a desire to pass the bill, it is important to have all different interests provide input. Co-Chair
41 Zalles shared comments about the amount of parking that is available at Brighton Ski Resort.

42
43 Mr. Tolman reported that the Stakeholders Council has submitted a letter to the CWC Board about
44 the proposed parking lot. As far as action steps, there is not much else the Council can do at this time.
45 It makes sense to wait until the CWC Board has discussed the letter before determining next steps.

46
47 Ms. Kilpack read a comment that Ms. Nielsen left in the Zoom chat box. It stated that a multi-level
48 parking lot at Solitude was not approved by the Forest Service. Mr. Tolman noted that the Forest
49 Service Plan that came out in 2003 states that ski area parking should remain at or below the existing
50 levels. The Forest Service cannot approve additional ski parking on Forest Service land. However,

1 what has been proposed by Solitude is a parking lot located on private land. Mr. Knoblock pointed
2 out that the Forest Service Plan has some flexibility due to the language that is included.

3
4 Additional discussions were had about the resort parking that is currently available. Mr. Tolman
5 reported that the zoning is FR-0.5 and it allows ski resort operations as a conditional use. A
6 conditional use is not permitted outright but is permitted unless it can be proven that the negative
7 impacts cannot be reasonably mitigated. He argues that the impacts on watersheds cannot be
8 mitigated.

9
10 Olivia Juarez asked whether it is possible for the Stakeholders Council to initiate a conversation with
11 Solitude. It is possible for the Council to suggest that the Conditional Use Permit be held off until
12 the Big Cottonwood Canyon EA is released. It will be possible to reassess the need after that point.
13 Committee Members expressed support for that approach. Mr. Knoblock reminded those present that
14 Ms. Broadaway is a Special Advisor on the CWC Board. He anticipates that there will be some
15 discussions about the proposal and the letter from the Stakeholders Council at the next meeting.

16 17 **LITTLE COTTONWOOD CANYON TRANSPORTATION DISCUSSION**

18 19 **1. Committee Member Pat Shea will Discuss Transportation Alternatives in Little** 20 **Cottonwood Canyon.**

21
22 Chair Boardman reported that Pat Shea was not present at the Environment System Committee
23 Meeting. She hopes that there will be an opportunity to discuss transportation alternatives at the next
24 meeting.

25 26 **SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS MODEL DISCUSSION**

27 28 **1. The Committee will Discuss the Concept of a Sustainable Business Model in the Central** 29 **Wasatch.**

30 31 **2. The Committee will Discuss Sustainability Plans and Efforts of Businesses in the Central** 32 **Wasatch.**

33
34 Chair Boardman asked Committee Members to look at the Ski Utah website. There are links to
35 sustainable plans that some of the ski areas have in place. She would also like to look at other
36 businesses in the canyons. Not all of the businesses are of the same scale in terms of the volume of
37 business. After listening in on some of the Economy System Committee Meetings, it seems there is
38 a bit of confusion about what a sustainable business is versus a business with a goal of growth for the
39 sake of growth. It might be worthwhile to bring in some Council Members who are affiliated with
40 businesses so they can share information about the sustainability efforts that are taking place.

41
42 Chair Boardman believes the future Olympic Games provide an opportunity to highlight
43 sustainability. Co-Chair Zalles asked whether sustainable means the viability of the business long-
44 term or environmental sustainability. Chair Boardman clarified that both are included in that. There
45 is a desire for businesses to do well and for there to be quality experiences offered, but there is also a
46 desire to protect the environment for future generations. The Mountain Accord is not anti-business
47 but expresses a desire for the different systems to work together. Co-Chair Zalles expressed support
48 for bringing in business owners to discuss sustainability. Chair Boardman feels it would be beneficial
49 for there to be a conversation about what is good for the economy and environment.

1 **NEXT MEETING AGENDA**

2
3 **1. The Committee will Discuss Items for the Next Meeting Agenda.**

4
5 Chair Boardman suggested asking Ms. McKasy to revisit the survey results to see if there is anything
6 that stands out that could be brought to the DIGIT Lab team. Those results can be discussed at the
7 next meeting. Chair Boardman hopes that Mr. Shea will be able to attend the next meeting. It is also
8 possible for the Committee to further discuss the sustainable business model concept. Discussions
9 were had about potential guests to invite to the next Environment System Committee Meeting.

10
11 **OTHER ITEMS**

12
13 Ms. Kilpack noted that Committee Members can attend the next CWC Board Meeting. It is always
14 possible to share a comment directly with the CWC Board during the public comment period. She
15 reminded Committee Members that the next CWC Board Meeting is scheduled for June 23, 2025.

16
17 **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

18
19 There were no public comments.

20
21 **CLOSING**

22
23 **1. Chair Boardman will Call for a Motion to Adjourn the Environment System Committee**
24 **Meeting.**

25
26 **MOTION:** Kelly Boardman moved to ADJOURN the Environment System Committee Meeting.
27 Doug Tolman seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the
28 Committee.

29
30 The Environment System Committee Meeting adjourned at 4:17 p.m.

1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central*
2 *Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council Environment System Committee Meeting held on Tuesday,*
3 *June 10, 2025.*
4

5 Teri Forbes

6 Teri Forbes
7 T Forbes Group
8 Minutes Secretary
9

10 Minutes Approved: _____