



Board of Trustees Tour Minutes

Wednesday, April 16, 2025

The tour attendees assembled at the Helper Maverik (5685 US-6, Helper, UT 84526) at 10:00 a.m. Agency staff confirmed that no members of the public were present who wished to join the tour. The group then departed for the first site visit.

Stop 1 – Urban Oil and Gas Field Office, 11:00 a.m.

Attendees:

Tiffany James

Mike Nelson

Mike Mower

Scott Bartlett

Keli Beard

Diane Lund

Naudia Gregerson

Kim Christy

Andy Bedingfield

Joelette Organista

Stephanie Barber-Renteria

Shawn Shipley

Chris Fausett

Marcus Chen

Kira Bennett

Liz Mumford

Nancy Kennedy

Troy Herold

Jim Davis

Bryan Togerson

Michelle McConkie

Al Egbert

Commissioner Dennis Worwood

Marla Kennedy

Rachel Boyack

Ms. Boyack introduced the Drunkards Wash Land Block, a trust lands parcel obtained in the 1990s through the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument land exchange. The block includes a coalbed methane gas play that has been in continuous operation since the late 1980s and currently generates approximately \$2M annually in royalties.

Mr. Davis introduced Urban Oil & Gas Group, LLC (Urban), and welcomed President Matt Kirby. Mr. Kirby provided an overview of the company, which has operated for 15 years and employs approximately 200 people, with 25% of its operations based in Utah. He noted their ongoing work in carbon sequestration.

Mr. Kirby introduced Field Foreman Kirt Rasmussen, who described the operations at Drunkards Wash. Urban currently manages 895 coalbed methane wells between Helper and Orangeville.

Of these, approximately 50% are located on trust lands, 16% are located on private mineral lands, and the remainder are located on public lands. Mr. Rasmussen also discussed Urban's 502 miles of pipeline infrastructure and explained the process by which methane is extracted from the Ferron Sandstone formation. He stated that the field is in a plateau production phase with an estimated 30 years of remaining life.

Mr. Rasmussen then introduced Michael Schneider, Urban's Director Subsurface. Mr. Schneider gave a presentation on the company's CO₂ sequestration project, which proposes the disposal of CO₂ in the Navajo Sandstone formation. The formation has favorable porosity and sealing characteristics. The project has received a CarbonSAFE Department of Energy grant and is pursuing additional funding. If realized, the sequestration effort could generate \$4–5M annually for the trust beneficiaries. He emphasized that the project requires significant capital investment and a streamlined Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) permitting process to be economically viable.

The group discussed regulatory challenges around EPA Class VI well permitting and the importance of Utah obtaining primacy. Commissioner Worwood emphasized that Emery County's economic development, including carbon sequestration and oil production, rely on regulatory progress. Mr. Mower asked about permitting delays; Mr. Kirby explained that federal inaction has slowed progress despite industry engagement.

Mr. Rasmussen then led a tour of a nearby well site and provided details on well operation and maintenance. He noted that each maintenance route includes 40–50 wells and that well performance is monitored via automated systems. While traveling back to the highway, Mr. Bedingfield pointed out a reclaimed gravel pit, noting that the site had been successfully restored and was no longer distinguishable as a former mining area.

Stop 2 – Hornshadow Solar, 12:20 p.m.

Attendees:

Tiffany James
Mike Nelson
Mike Mower
Scott Bartlett
Keli Beard
Diane Lund
Naudia Gregerson
Kim Christy
Andy Bedingfield
Joelette Organista
Stephanie Barber-Renteria
Chris Fausett
Shawn Shipley

Marcus Chen
Kira Bennett
Liz Mumford
Nancy Kennedy
Troy Herold
Jim Davis
Bryan Togerson
Michelle McConkie
Al Egbert
Commissioner Dennis Worwood
Marla Kennedy
Rachel Boyack
Doug Cox

Mr. Herold provided an overview of the Trust Lands Administration's renewable energy leasing portfolio, which includes approximately 40,000 acres under lease for solar energy, and 60,000 acres leased for geothermal. He introduced Liz Peyton, Head of Project Development at D.E. Shaw Renewable Investments (DESRI).

Ms. Peyton and other DESRI and Enyo representatives discussed the Hornshadow Solar Project, which encompasses 2,500 acres, approximately 600 of which are trust lands. The project contributes 300 megawatts to the power grid. Its design takes into consideration terrain and soil quality, with the goal of preserving high-value agricultural lands. Ms. Peyton highlighted the project's economic impact: 670,000 labor hours, \$105M invested in the local economy, and up to 450 workers on-site during peak construction. The facility will require three or four permanent staff, with additional support shared regionally. Battery storage will be installed in 2027 or 2028.

The group toured the facility with Ms. Peyton, who responded to questions about solar panel recycling. She acknowledged that recycling is currently expensive, but efforts are underway to reduce costs as demand increases.

Stop 3 – Emery Deep Mine Office, 2:00 p.m.

Attendees:

Tiffany James

Mike Nelson

Mike Mower

Scott Bartlett

Keli Beard

Diane Lund

Naudia Gregerson

Kim Christy

Andy Bedingfield

Joelette Organista

Stephanie Barber-Renteria

Shawn Shipley

Chris Fausett

Byan Harris

Marcus Chen

Kira Bennett

Liz Mumford

Nancy Kennedy

Troy Herold

Jim Davis

Bryan Togerson

Michelle McConkie

Al Egbert

Commissioner Dennis Worwood

Commissioner Jordan Leonard

Marla Kennedy

Rachel Boyack

Doug Cox

Mr. Bedingfield introduced Bronco Utah Operations, the operator of the Emery Deep Mine. He commended Bronco for their successful partnership with the Trust Lands Administration and introduced CEO Jon Hale.

Mr. Hale provided a presentation on the mine's operations. The facility supplies 90% of its coal to the Hunter Power Plant and 10% to Graymont Western US, Inc. The mine originally operated from 1968 to the 1990s and resumed operations intermittently thereafter. Recent trust land acquisitions through the Dingell Act added approximately 20 million recoverable tons of coal, extending the mine's life by 15–20 years, potentially generating \$132M in royalties. The mine employs over 200 individuals and 30 contractors. Coal is shipped without processing due to its low sulfur and ash content. Mr. Hale also noted the mine's water resources—approximately 1.3 million gallons are pumped daily—and the potential for data center development nearby, given proximity to water and fiber infrastructure.

The tour concluded at 4:20 pm.

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