

CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION

RESOLUTION No. 2025-32

A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING OPPOSITION TO THE RESCISSION OF THE 2001 ROADLESS RULE AFFECTING NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM LAND

WHEREAS, the Central Wasatch Commission (the “CWC”) is an interlocal entity formed in 2017 with the principal purpose to better assure the wise stewardship of the public lands in the Wasatch Mountain Range (the “*Central Wasatch*”) in Salt Lake and Summit Counties, which receives over nine million visitors per year—more than all of Utah’s national parks combined; and

WHEREAS, the CWC’s governing board (the “*Board*”) includes the mayors of Salt Lake City, Millcreek City, Sandy City, Alta, and Brighton, and a member of the Park City, Summit County, Cottonwood Heights, and Holladay city councils, as well as leaders of governmental service providers in and adjacent to the Central Wasatch; and

WHEREAS, the CWC also includes a 35-member advisory Stakeholders Council representing economic, environmental, recreation, transportation, and community interests along both geographical sides of the Central Wasatch; and

WHEREAS, the CWC’s core values include preserving and protecting the critical resources of the Central Wasatch—including its land and watershed, recreational areas and natural beauty—so that future generations can continue to benefit from that wonderful and integral part of Utah’s natural environment; and

WHEREAS, the Roadless Area Conservation Rule was enacted in January 2001 by President Clinton to generally prohibit road building and logging on national forest roadless areas, which are areas that provide exceptional recreation, wildlife and fish habitat, clean water, and other important ecosystem services to all Americans, along with significant economic benefits; and

WHEREAS, exceptions to the Roadless Rule include road building to access non-federal land inholdings and preexisting mineral leases, with logging specifically permitted to reduce fire risk or to improve habitat for endangered species within roadless areas; and

WHEREAS, on June 23, 2025, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke L. Rollins announced the U.S. Department of Agriculture is rescinding the 2001 Roadless Rule that prohibits new road construction and timber harvest on nearly 60% of the National Forest System lands in Utah with the stated goal of “allowing for fire prevention and responsible timber harvest;” and

WHEREAS, the rescission of the Roadless Rule would open 28,500 acres of U.S. Forest System land parcels along the Central Wasatch in Big Cottonwood, Little Cottonwood, Millcreek, Parleys Canyons that are proposed for inclusion in the Central Wasatch National Conservation and Recreation Area (“*CWNCRA*”) designation to unfettered road development and timber harvest; and

WHEREAS, the degradation of the wilderness quality of the lands in the Central Wasatch will threaten the eligibility of the lands included for designation in the proposed CWNCRA; and

WHEREAS, roadless areas within the Central Wasatch prized for recreation, wilderness, wildlife, scenic, and environmental qualities that would be opened to development include White

Pine, Days Fork, Mineral Fork, Cardiff Fork, and the proposed Mount Aire/Grandeur Peak Wilderness Area, which is immediately adjacent to the proposed limestone mine for Parley's Canyon; and

WHEREAS, the rescission of the Roadless Rule will impact vast acreages of federal land that are the critical municipal watersheds providing the majority of the water supply depended upon by nearly 500,000 people in Salt Lake City, Sandy City, Millcreek City, city of Cottonwood Heights, and City of Holladay; and

WHEREAS, opening forest service land in the Central Wasatch to road development and timber harvest contradicts the cooperative management, including restoration, natural resource management, and recreation investments between the US Forest Service, local governments, non-profit organizations and the ski resorts for the purposes of watershed protection and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the Roadless Rule rescission could threaten the current overarching land management priority for these watersheds to protect the water supply for current and future generations of Utahns; and

WHEREAS, the Roadless Rule rescission comes on the heels of Senator Lee's proposed mandatory disposition of public lands (June 2025), illustrating the urgent need for Congressional protection of the public land across the Central Wasatch; and

WHEREAS, a Congressionally approved law protecting the Central Wasatch like the proposed CWNCRRA would not be subject to federal administrative caprice; and

WHEREAS, fuels management and mitigation work is actively being done within roadless areas and ADA accessible trails exist in roadless areas, making the rescission of the Roadless Rule for Secretary Rollins' stated reasoning of "responsible forest management" unnecessary; and

WHEREAS, the leaders of the governments most proximate to the Central Wasatch Mountains that comprise the CWC strongly oppose the rescission of the 2001 Roadless Rule and consider it a threat to our public lands; and

WHEREAS, after careful consideration, the Board has determined that it is in the best interests of the CWC and its constituents to so act.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the Central Wasatch Commission that the CWC hereby expresses its strong opposition to the rescission of the 2001 Roadless Rule; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the Central Wasatch Commission that the CWC again implores the Utah Federal Delegation to act in a manner that will preserve and protect the critical resources of the Central Wasatch to the greatest extent possible by supporting the introduction and passage of the Central Wasatch National Conservation and Recreation Area Act, a locally driven, consensus-based bill aimed at protecting the public land, sources of our drinking water, preserving recreational opportunities for the future, and ensuring enjoyment of the Central Wasatch Mountains in the face of pressures from a growing population; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the Central Wasatch Commission that the Board implores movement by the Utah Department of Transportation and local governments toward coordinated lands protection and transportation action in the Central Wasatch.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 25th day of September 2025.

ATTEST:

CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION

By: _____
Christopher F. Robinson, Secretary

By: _____
Jeff Silvestrini, Chair of the Board

VOTING OF THE BOARD:

Ellen Birrell	Yea ___ Nay ___
Roger Bourke	Yea ___ Nay ___
Bill Ciraco	Yea ___ Nay ___
Emily Gray	Yea ___ Nay ___
Dan Knopp	Yea ___ Nay ___
Erin Mendenhall	Yea ___ Nay ___
Christopher Robinson	Yea ___ Nay ___
Jeff Silvestrini	Yea ___ Nay ___
Monica Zoltanski	Yea ___ Nay ___

DEPOSITED in the office of the Secretary this 25th day of September 2025.

FILED AND RECORDED this 25th day of September 2025.