



OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE ADVISORY COUNCIL DIVISION OF OUTDOOR RECREATION DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

*Minutes Of The Meeting Held on November 24, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.
Virtual*

HOST: *Utah Department of Natural Resources*
1594 West North Temple
Salt Lake City, Utah 84116
(Virtual meeting)

ATTENDEES

OHV Council Members

Present:

Jason Blankenagel (Chair)
Brody Johnson
Scott Wheeler
Mike Cook
Cheryl Butler
Nicole Nielson
Brett Davis
Dave Jacobson
Nathan Curtis
Russ Cazier

Absent:

Eric Nelson (Vice-Chair)
Kirk Chester

Division of Outdoor Recreation:

Rachel Toker
Maureen Casper
Deirdre Miller
Wade Allinson
Jason Curry

Division of Law Enforcement:

Jacob Hinton

Department of Natural Resources

Paul Gedge

Attorney General:

Nicole Hanna

Visitors:

Anna Sprout
Brett Stewart
Clif Koontz
Michael Bouck
Steve Bloch

Audio/video recording of this meeting is located at:

📺 Off-Highway Vehicle Advisory Council 11/24/2025

TIME AGENDA ITEM AND SUMMARY

0:00 1. WELCOME

1.1. Call to Order

The Off-Highway Vehicle Advisory (OHV) Council Chair, Jason Blankenagel, called the meeting to order, and OHV Grant Administrator Rachel Toker recorded the minutes. Ms.

Toker also took attendance of the council members present. With a quorum of council members in attendance, the meeting proceeded with its agenda.

1.2. Attendance and Introductions

Chair Blankenagel introduced himself to the council and everyone in attendance. He then asked everyone in attendance to introduce themselves. Council members provided their names and affiliations for the record.

04:30

1.3. Approval of August 20, 2025, Meeting Minutes

Chair Blankenagel opened the floor for a motion to approve the draft minutes from the August 20, 2025, meeting.

CHAIR BLANKENAGEL MOVED FOR A MOTION TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 20, 2025, MEETING MINUTES. BRODY JOHNSON MADE THE MOTION, SHERIFF CURTIS SECONDED THE MOTION. ALL WERE IN FAVOR, AND THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

05:15

2. OHV EDUCATION PROGRAM

Deirdre Miller, the Division of Outdoor Recreation's Education Program Manager, introduced herself to the Council and outlined her role within the OHV Program. She explained that she oversees education for both the OHV and Boating programs and manages required education courses offered both in person and online.

Wade Allinson, the Division's OHV Program Manager, informed the Council that members may contact Ms. Miller for assistance with outreach or education efforts.

Chair Blankenagel asked whether Ms. Miller maintains a calendar of upcoming education dates. Council Member Brody Johnson asked if she oversees all statewide education trainings. Ms. Miller clarified that all mandatory trainings and certifications, for both adult and youth participants, are administered through the Division.

11:45

3. ADULT OHV EDUCATION COURSE

Mr. Allinson provided an update on the adult education course, which has been available for the past several years. He asked the Council whether they felt the course content should be updated.

Chair Blankenagel inquired about the level of non-compliance the Division has observed. Mr. Allinson responded that the number of individuals completing the course exceeds the number of registered machines in the state, with approximately 300,000 individuals having taken the course. Jacob Hinton, Division of Law Enforcement, added that they encounter very few members of the public who are non-compliant with the mandatory education requirement.

Mr. Johnson stated he would like to see additional information included at the end of the course regarding applicable laws and the consequences of violations. Anna Sprout, Executive Director with Steward Moab, noted that the course provides educators with an opportunity to initiate productive conversations with riders in the field.

Council Member Mike Cook asked whether education certificates could be accessed through the Division of Wildlife Resources mobile app. Division Director Jason Curry explained that certificates are available through the Verify Utah app.

Council Member Scott Wheeler asked whether the Division has conducted research comparing hands-on and online education outcomes. Ms. Miller explained that the Division does not have quantified comparative data, only qualitative feedback. She noted that approximately 120 youth participated in hands-on courses in 2025, while thousands of youth completed the course online.

26:40 4. TRAIL AMBASSADOR PROGRAM UPDATE

Mr. Allinson introduced the discussion, noting that he had asked Ms. Sprout to update the council on the status of the trail ambassador program. Ms. Sprout, former Responsible Recreation Coordinator with Grand County and developer of the Moab Trail Ambassador Program, provided the update. She explained that the educational portion of the program has transitioned from the County to a non-profit organization, Steward Moab, where she now serves as Executive Director. She also clarified that Keltain Reece-Sullivan will remain with the County and described how program equipment will be divided between the County and the non-profit.

Chair Blankenagel inquired whether the OHV Program had concerns about funding the program now that it operates as a non-profit. Mr. Allinson responded that the program is well-established and that the OHV Program has no funding concerns. Mr. Wheeler asked for confirmation that the non-profit structure is fully in place, which Ms. Sprout affirmed. Cheryl Butler with the United States Forest Service expressed enthusiasm for the continued success of the program.

34:45 5. COUNCIL REQUESTS

Chair Blankenagel turned the discussion over to Mr. Allinson and Rachel Toker, OHV Recreation Grant Analyst. Ms. Toker explained that the provided slideshow addresses the questions submitted by the council.

Question 1: Mr. Allinson noted he has served as OHV Program Manager for six to seven months and invited input on potential improvements. Mr. Wheeler stated that two grant meetings and two separate issue meetings, in addition to regular updates from Mr. Allinson, are sufficient. Mr. Curry added that the Division will provide ongoing updates during the upcoming legislative session.

Question 2: Mr. Curry clarified the distinction between legislatively appropriated funding (e.g., Ms. Miller's position, the Division's Trail Crew, and OHV Recreation Grants) and discretionary funding not specifically appropriated by the legislature (e.g., Mr. Allinson's salary, other OHV Program staff salaries, and day-to-day operational costs).

Question 3: Ms. Toker presented OHV account revenue from 2023–2025. Mr. Curry explained that the fund balance reflects amounts not appropriated or committed to grants. Ms. Toker, Mr. Allinson, and Mr. Curry reviewed FY25 expenditures:

- Law Enforcement (LE): Mr. Curry explained the difference between summer and winter LE, noting that winter rangers also support state parks.
- Shop costs: Ms. Toker noted that OHV-specific items are charged to the OHV account.
- Grooming: Mr. Allinson highlighted multi-year agreements with agencies and non-profits. Mr. Curry and Mr. Allinson stated that average grooming costs exceed snowmobile registration revenue, justifying future fee increases. Monthly meetings with the snowmobile community confirmed their support for paying their share.

- Trail Crew: Ms. Toker explained that \$400,000 is appropriated for the OHV portion, with work split roughly 50/50 between motorized and non-motorized trails. Remaining expenses are covered by the Outdoor Adventure Fund.
- Education: Ms. Toker presented the funding breakdown.
- FY26 Budget: Ms. Toker presented operational and grant budgets. Mr. Allinson highlighted the Fishlake National Forest Trail Counter Program and the intention to hire a staff member due to Forest Service budget cuts. He also emphasized hiring two heavy equipment operators for trail work.

Question 4: Ms. Toker provided an overview of grant funding allocation across user groups.

Question 5: Ms. Toker explained funding received from each motorized group, based on registration data from tax.utah.gov. Mr. Wheeler inquired about street-legal vs. non-street-legal motorcycles. Mr. Allinson explained that only six motorcycles are registered as street-legal, and the program receives no funding from those registrations. Mr. Curry noted plans to educate dealers on proper registration.

Question 6: Ms. Toker confirmed that no overhead costs are charged to the OHV account. Mr. Wheeler asked about the proportion of motorized funding benefiting OHV vs. non-OHV users. Mr. Allinson emphasized that OHV users carry much of the load. Mr. Curry noted that the Division aims to balance recreation funding and will soon have statewide recreation trends from an upcoming study. Ms. Butler highlighted the diversified suite of grants supporting a broad range of recreation opportunities.

Question 7: Ms. Toker reviewed historical Recreational Trails Program funding vs. 2025 allocations. She noted ongoing grant presentations in southern Utah and upcoming northern Utah presentations, encouraging council members to help publicize funding opportunities for motorized recreation.

Question 8: Mr. Allinson stated that this report will be provided annually, a few months after the fiscal year ends.

Question 9: Ms. Toker presented a list of OHV recreation grants not yet completed. Mr. Allinson advised council members to contact Maureen Casper for questions on specific grant statuses.

Questions 10 & 11: Ms. Toker reported only one clawback and noted plans to hire a full-time compliance officer to oversee site visits.

Mr. Curry thanked the staff for collecting the data and acknowledged the council's dedication. He also noted that a legislative audit of the OHV Program is scheduled for FY26.

1:30:45 6. 2026 EXPECTATIONS

Mr. Allinson asked the council to share any specific goals they would like the OHV Program to prioritize.

He also provided an update on snowmobile registration fees. He explained that a public meeting is scheduled for December 2, 2025, and that the snowmobile community supports a registration increase. Currently, the snowmobile registration fee is \$22.00, with a

statutory maximum of \$26.00. The community has agreed to move forward with collecting a maximum of \$26.00. Mr. Allinson also noted that the non-resident registration fee is currently \$30.00, and the public meeting will address raising it by \$5.00 to \$35.00, aligning non-resident fees with resident fees.

1:44:00 7. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Blankenagel invited members of the public to provide comments. Ms. Toker asked Paul Gedge from the Department's AV team to assist by converting members of the public who raised their hands into contributors rather than viewers. Chair Blankenagel allotted three minutes per comment and invited participants to speak in the order their hands were raised.

- **Clif Koontz, Ride with Respect:** Mr. Koontz noted his understanding that the council can advise on OHV Account funding. He highlighted historical law enforcement (LE) spending from the account: 15% in 2014, 10% in 2018, 12% in 2023, and 16% in 2024. For 2025, LE was budgeted at 26% but spent 17%, resulting in a 7% increase compared to past years. He requested that the Division consider this when budgeting and balancing LE costs with other priorities that directly benefit OHV users.
- **Brett Stewart, Utah OHV Advocates:** Mr. Stewart referenced a discussion with Mr. Curry regarding the budget spreadsheet shared with the legislature. He noted that the registration revenue shows \$9M, while total revenue into the account ranges from \$10-14M. Mr. Curry and Mr. Allinson clarified that \$9M represents registration revenue only, and the total account revenue is approximately \$12.5M. Mr. Stewart expressed concerns about the proportion of funding allocated to OHV LE versus other program costs, such as the trail crew.
- **Michael Bouck, Top of Utah Snowmobile Association:** Mr. Bouck inquired whether the \$4.00 increase to the snowmobile registration fee (raising it to \$26.00) would directly fund the OHV Program. Mr. Allinson confirmed that the full increase will go into the program.
- **Steve Bloch, Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance:** Mr. Bloch thanked staff for allowing public observation of the meeting.

Following public comments, the council asked additional questions regarding the LE budget. Council Member Sheriff Curtis asked whether the Division's allocation is expected to offset costs borne by the OHV Program.

Mr. Stewart also noted that he invited Jacob Hinton from the Division of LE to address illegal activity on the Flint Trail, but Mr. Hinton did not attend or become involved.

1:49:15 8. ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business, Chair Blankenagel sought a motion to adjourn.

BRODY JOHNSON MADE THE MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING, AND MIKE COOK SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED.