



8
9 **MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) STAKEHOLDERS**
10 **COUNCIL ENVIRONMENT SYSTEM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD, TUESDAY,**
11 **MARCH 10, 2026, AT 3:30 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED BOTH IN-PERSON**
12 **AND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM. THE ANCHOR LOCATION WAS THE CWC OFFICES,**
13 **LOCATED IN THE BRIGHTON BANK BUILDING, 311 SOUTH STATE STREET,**
14 **SUITE 330, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.**
15

- 16 **Committee Members:** Kelly Boardman, Chair
17 Dan Zalles, Co-Chair
18 Adam Lenkowski
19 Meaghan McKasy
20 Brenden Catt
21 Maura Hahnenberger
22 Ella Abelli-Amen
23 Olivia Juarez
24 Jonny Vasic
25
- 26 **Staff:** Sam Kilpack, Director of Operations
27 Will McKay, Communications Director
28
- 29 **Public:** Joanna Wheelton
30

31 **OPENING**
32

- 33 1. **Chair Kelly Boardman will Open the Public Meeting as Chair of the Environment**
34 **System Committee of the Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council.**
35

36 Chair Kelly Boardman called the Central Wasatch Commission (“CWC”) Stakeholders Council
37 Environment System Committee Meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. and welcomed those present.
38

- 39 2. **Review and Approval of the Minutes from the February 10, 2026, Meeting.**
40

41 **MOTION:** Olivia Juarez moved to APPROVE the February 10, 2026, Meeting Minutes. Ella
42 Abelli-Amen seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the
43 Committee.
44

1 **COTTONWOOD CANYONS FOUNDATION TRAIL STEWARD PROGRAM**

2
3 **1. Cottonwood Canyons Foundation will Discuss Its New Trail Steward Program.**

4
5 Joanna Wheelton from the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation shared information about the new
6 Trail Steward program. The Cottonwood Canyons Foundation has been around for 27 years and
7 was formed in joint partnership with Salt Lake City Public Utilities and U.S. Forest Service. The
8 foundation focuses on stewardship and education in the tri-canyons. The Cottonwood Canyons
9 Foundation has a mission to promote watershed awareness and protection. Over the last 10 years,
10 there has been a trail steward and trail ambassador movement across the country. In 2025, a
11 decision was made to create a Trail Steward program within the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation.

12
13 The Trail Steward program objectives are to increase trail user awareness and trail user education.
14 To increase trail user awareness, the focus is on specific routes and trail user greetings. For trail
15 user education, the focus is on watershed protection principles, Leave No Trace principles, the
16 natural history of the area, and the human history of the area. Ms. Wheelton reported that there
17 was work done with the Forest Service to start this program, as most volunteer programs have to
18 be supervised. She explained that Trail Steward program volunteers must sign a Volunteer Service
19 Agreement, and the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation must check volunteers in and out each day.
20 As an organization, it has been an onerous process to manage the volunteers, but this is what the
21 Forest Service was comfortable with. It has allowed there to be a volunteer program that is not
22 directly supervised.

23
24 In addition, volunteers are also required to have a person in their life, such as a family member or
25 friend, who knows exactly where they will be and how long they are expected to be there. That
26 person can be contacted if the volunteer does not check back out. The Cottonwood Canyons
27 Foundation can speak to that person and find out what the volunteer had planned for the day. Ms.
28 Wheelton explained that this has worked well, but there are organizational resources associated
29 with this program.

30
31 Training is offered to all volunteers in the Trail Steward program. There is training with 10
32 modules used across all of the watershed education programs. Ms. Wheelton reported that the
33 training looks at watershed protection principles, ecology, natural history, human history, geology,
34 snow science, and meteorology. Volunteers wear a green trail steward shirt, because green is the
35 color worn by trail stewards and ambassadors across the country. Setting up the program took
36 most of the summer to do, so it wasn't until the fall that the program was fully underway, but it
37 has been meaningful. During the winter season, there was a tabling trail steward, where volunteers
38 had a table at Donut Falls each Saturday. It has been a productive program. The idea is to launch
39 the program again on March 15, 2026, which is when the volunteer portal will be live with the
40 various volunteer opportunities.

41
42 Ms. Wheelton reported that the Trail Steward program ties in well with the other volunteer
43 programs. There is a Trail Crew volunteer program, a Plants Crew volunteer program, Wasatch
44 Wildflower Guides, and a Summer Naturalist program. Across all of the education volunteers in
45 the forest, there were 159 individual volunteers serving on 687 days for a total of 3,800 hours.
46 There was an effective volunteer program last year. Chair Boardman asked where the Trail

1 Steward volunteers will be this year. Ms. Wheelton explained that volunteers can choose any trail
2 within the Forest Service trail system. Volunteers are asked to be on one of the 81 official system
3 trails in the tri-canyons. There is a desire for volunteers to be on both heavily populated trails and
4 trails that receive less use. There are benefits to both, because when volunteers are located at a
5 popular trail, it is possible to encounter new visitors. There tend to be different user groups at
6 popular trails versus less popular ones.

7
8 Chair Boardman asked for additional information about the role of the trail stewards. Ms.
9 Wheelton reported that volunteers are asked to greet forest visitors and talk to them about the route
10 they are on and any challenges. Data has shown that coming across other pleasant users improves
11 the recreational experience. Trail user education is also something the trail stewards are focused
12 on. In the Cottonwood Canyons, there are watershed protection concerns, so it is important to talk
13 to visitors about why dogs should not be there and why visitors should not walk through the stream
14 at Gloria Falls. Having a friendly face to provide education can be meaningful for visitors in the
15 tri-canyons.

16
17 Co-Chair Dan Zalles asked if all education is done by the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation in
18 person. He wanted to know if there were pamphlets passed out to forest visitors as well. Ms.
19 Wheelton explained that the only physical document that is shared with visitors is the Junior
20 Ranger book. Other educational materials can be found online. She reported that there is a
21 sophisticated online education tool on the foundation website, Trails Online Resource Center. This
22 was built during the COVID-19 pandemic and is trail-specific. It was created for five different
23 trails in the canyons.

24
25 The Cottonwood Canyons Foundation is a community partner with Leave No Trace, so their
26 materials are relied on. In addition, for the last 25 years, Salt Lake City Public Utilities has had a
27 robust watershed protection diagram as well as relevant materials. Those have also been used by
28 the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation. Ms. Wheelton reported that there is a desire to grow the
29 Trail Steward program. It is beneficial to have volunteers available to provide basic user
30 information.

31
32 Additional discussions were had about the Trail Steward program. Ms. Wheelton reported that
33 there is a lot of situational training done. For example, there is training done on de-escalation.
34 The intention is to educate visitors without being confrontational. In the last five years, there has
35 been an increase in confrontational situations related to parking fees and dogs. The Trail Steward
36 program makes it possible to speak to visitors about the rationale for the parking fee and let them
37 know why it is not possible to bring dogs. She added that volunteers are invited to use a different
38 prompt each time they go out on the trail. As an example: “Did you notice how high the stream is
39 running today?”

40
41 Meaghan McKasy explained that the Environment System Committee has recently discussed a
42 survey about modifying visitor behavior. The idea is to increase knowledge and awareness through
43 the survey. Some of the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation resources seem applicable to that work.
44 Ms. Wheelton reported that there is a robust website at: cottonwoodcanyons.org/education. There
45 is a lot of information about the ecology in the canyons and there are various guides, including a
46 wildflower guide and a weed mitigation guide. There are also modules where visitors can learn

1 about specific areas of interest. There are active links to partner websites included on the website
2 as well.

3
4 Chair Boardman thanked Ms. Wheelton for attending the Environment System Committee
5 Meeting.

6 7 **VISITOR BEHAVIOR SURVEY DISCUSSION**

8 9 **1. The Committee will Discuss Modifying Visitor Behavior in the Central Wasatch by** 10 **Creating a Survey.**

- 11 a. **What Behaviors will be Targeted?**
- 12 b. **How Can a Survey Educate the Public?**
- 13 c. **Who Can We Partner With?**

14
15
16 Chair Boardman reported that the Environment System Committee has previously discussed the
17 idea of a survey related to modifying visitor behavior. It is important to have overarching goals.
18 She believes the main goals are to manage visitor expectations and to increase awareness of
19 personal impacts. This can result in better decision making and modifications to visitor behavior.
20 She noted that Co-Chair Zalles added some suggestions to the Google Drive. As for what
21 behaviors will be targeted, she mentioned the broad categories created by Maura Hahnenberger.
22 For instance, the impacts decisions can have on traffic, air quality, ecosystems, watersheds, and
23 other visitor experiences. Chair Boardman thought it made sense to create a survey that asks
24 questions, but also provides links to websites and other information. It is possible to educate users
25 through the survey.

26
27 Chair Boardman would like to see a partnership with other Stakeholders Council subcommittees
28 as well as other relevant organizations. There could be a QR code to the survey on trails, buses,
29 and at the resorts to ensure there will be a strong sample. The intention is to assist other
30 organizations with education and messaging. She asked for additional feedback from Committee
31 Members.

32
33 Ms. McKasy noted that at the last Environment System Committee Meeting, there was a comment
34 made that Utah Transit Authority (“UTA”) collected some data in the past. However, there was
35 uncertainty about what kind of data was collected. She asked if anyone on the Committee was
36 able to reach out to UTA about this. Having an understanding of what some of the larger entities
37 know already could be meaningful. Co-Chair Zalles pointed out that this particular survey would
38 focus more on education than data collection. Ms. McKasy agreed with that approach, but still
39 felt it would be beneficial to find out what kind of data has been collected already before the survey
40 is shared.

41
42 Ms. McKasy liked the survey that was shared by Ms. Hahnenberger. She expressed support for
43 the layout. It could be a model that the Environment System Committee is able to build off of for
44 this survey. The goal is introduced after the first question, and there are some thoughtful ways the
45 demographic questions are asked. That survey also had a simplistic format for a lot of the
46 questions, which makes it easier for survey respondents. During previous Environment System

1 Committee discussions about the survey, there seemed to be a consensus for the survey to be short,
2 direct, and straightforward. A similar format to the survey that was shared could work well for
3 the Committee survey, because that format could effectively direct survey respondents to existing
4 resources.

5
6 Co-Chair Zalles mentioned the questions he added to the Google Drive. If those were included in
7 the visitor behavior survey, there would be educational information that is relevant to the answers
8 provided. He asked how much of the actual information would be written by the Committee. Co-
9 Chair Zalles pointed out that it is possible to send survey respondents to existing resources, such
10 as the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation website. Alternatively, some of that information could
11 be sourced and included in the actual survey. He thought there should be a practical discussion
12 about the way information is shared. Chair Boardman pointed out that it would be best for there
13 to be communication with the organizations referenced to make sure there is support to link to
14 their existing resources.

15
16 Co-Chair Zalles thought it would be best to provide as much information as possible in the actual
17 survey. He wondered if the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation would allow them to include some
18 of their information in the actual survey. He added that the foundation could be a partner in
19 reviewing the survey to ensure that the information provided is accurate and represented well.

20
21 It was noted that the best practice for a survey is for respondents not to leave the survey. However,
22 in the climate survey that was shared, there was an interesting approach taken. Ms. McKasy
23 explained that including those links provided credibility. There needs to be an appropriate balance.
24 She reported that there should be enough information in the actual survey so respondents are
25 learning from it, but there can also be links to the partners who are the experts. The benefit of the
26 CWC is that it brings a lot of different groups together. The Environment System Committee
27 survey could include information in the body of the survey, but also link to relevant materials from
28 CWC partners.

29
30 Ms. McKasy shared additional comments about the example survey that was shared. It covered a
31 heavy topic, but the survey had a positive approach. She believed the Committee survey should
32 have a similar approach. It could look at what needs to be done to protect the CWC study area.
33 Chair Boardman added that the survey could stress that each individual has the opportunity to
34 make choices that reduce the impacts on the environment. The survey can empower respondents
35 to make positive choices. Ms. McKasy reported that there were direct calls to action in the survey
36 that was shared with the Committee. There could be direct calls to action in the Committee survey
37 as well. As an example, there could be a link to the Trail Steward program that the Cottonwood
38 Canyons Foundation runs. There could also be a call to action to share the survey, or there could
39 be a social media challenge.

40
41 Co-Chair Zalles noted that there could be a question asked about whether survey respondents have
42 ever volunteered to assist in the CWC study area. That question could be educational, because it
43 would let respondents know that there are volunteer opportunities available. Chair Boardman
44 suggested that some Committee Members meet to create a draft version of the survey. Ella Abelli-
45 Amen, Olivia Juarez, Co-Chair Zalles, and Chair Boardman expressed interest in working on the
46 draft survey. Co-Chair Zalles reported that there is a Stakeholders Council Meeting scheduled for

1 next week. It is possible to share information about the proposed survey at that meeting and ask
2 for additional input.

3
4 **LITTLE COTTONWOOD CANYON EIS AND MOUNTAIN ACCORD DISCUSSION**

5
6 **1. The Committee will Discuss UDOT’s Plan to Move Forward with Phase 1 of the EIS.**

7
8 Chair Boardman shared information about the Utah Department of Transportation (“UDOT”) Little Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Impact Statement (“EIS”). The UDOT website states
9 that Phase I includes the mobility hub at the gravel pit, buses every 15 to 20 minutes during peak
10 periods, a new bus stop built at Snowbird and Alta, tolling in Little Cottonwood Canyon, and the
11 elimination of roadside parking. She asked the Environment System Committee to discuss the
12 UDOT plan to move forward with Phase I of the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS as well as
13 the response from Alta Ski Area. She also wanted to know if there is interest in asking the CWC
14 Board to weigh in.
15

16
17 Chair Boardman was encouraged when she heard that UDOT wanted to move forward with Phase
18 I of the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS. However, while there is a lot about Phase I that
19 she supports, there are still refinements needed. She reviewed some of the suggestions included
20 in the letter from Alta Ski Area. One is to enhance snow removal capabilities by putting storage
21 for snow plows up canyon, with apartments that snowplow drivers can stay in during storm cycles.
22 This would allow plowing to begin up canyon and then head down canyon. Co-Chair Zalles
23 thought that idea made a lot of sense. Chair Boardman clarified that the Phase I plan does not
24 currently talk about enhancing snow removal capabilities, but it has been proposed in the letter
25 from Alta Ski Area.
26

27 Co-Chair Zalles hoped the CWC Board is aware of the intention to move forward with Phase I as
28 well as the letter from Alta Ski Area. It would make sense for the CWC Board to discuss this
29 matter. He noted that the suggestions from Alta Ski Area appear to be reasonable and could be
30 incorporated into the Phase I work. Committee Members further discussed the issues and
31 suggestions outlined in the Alta Ski Area letter. Chair Boardman reported that the second
32 suggestion in the letter is to keep the main line open. There could be more frequent avalanche
33 mitigation and technology to reduce avalanche risk above the mainline, which would minimize
34 mainline closures and improve traffic mobility. The next suggestion was related to enhanced bus
35 service. There were several ideas outlined in the letter to improve efficiency and encourage visitors
36 to use buses instead of personal vehicles.
37

38 Adam Lenkowski noted that a lot of the comments in the Alta Ski Area letter have to do with the
39 location of Snowbird and the impacts of that. As for the Bypass Road closure comments, he was
40 not sure about the intention of that language. It sounds like the program might not be as robust as
41 it once was. Co-Chair Zalles pointed out that there does not seem to be support from Alta Ski
42 Area for tolling. He read the argument about equity concerns, but asked for Committee Member
43 feedback.
44

45 Chair Boardman shared information about parking reservations. Since Alta Ski Area has
46 implemented parking reservations, cars that are heading to the resort know that there is a place to

1 park. Due to the parking reservation system, there is not a culture of competing for parking spaces.
2 Right now, Snowbird does not have parking reservations and has some roadside parking available.
3 Alta Ski Area is essentially stating that if there were parking reservations at both Snowbird and
4 Alta Ski Area, on peak days, there would only be vehicles entering the canyon that had secured
5 parking. In that case, the proposed tolling would become redundant. That is the reason for their
6 opposition.

7
8 Co-Chair Zalles believed the removal of roadside parking would significantly impact the Snowbird
9 operations. Chair Boardman pointed out that it might encourage Snowbird to implement a parking
10 reservation system. It might also encourage more visitors to use public transportation. It is
11 important to make the bus system as user-friendly and efficient as possible so visitors will want to
12 ride.

13
14 Co-Chair Zalles asked if Snowbird plans to start a parking reservation system. It was noted that
15 Snowbird currently has reservations for paid parking. Chair Boardman reported that the Alta Ski
16 Area letter mentioned equitable merging between Alta and Snowbird traffic. It seems Alta Ski
17 Area is interested in improving the way the canyon flows as part of the Phase I work.

18
19 Co-Chair Zalles wanted to know if the Alta Ski Area response to the Phase I work will be
20 considered at the next CWC Board Meeting. Ms. Hahnenberger reported that it is not on the
21 agenda, but it is possible to mention it during the Stakeholders Council Report portion of the
22 meeting. She suggested that it be discussed at the Stakeholders Council Meeting next week. If
23 there is a desire to mention it to the CWC Board, there should be a specific request made. For
24 example, the CWC Board could be asked to review the Alta Ski Area letter and consider their
25 stance on the outlined suggestions. Chair Boardman noted that there could be a letter asking the
26 CWC Board to consider Phase I refinements. She wants the Phase I work to appropriately serve
27 the population that will use the enhancements.

28 29 **LEGISLATIVE SESSION DISCUSSION**

30 31 **1. The Committee will Discuss Bills Being Considered During this Legislative Session** 32 **that Could Impact the Central Wasatch and Potential Action Items.**

33
34 Co-Chair Zalles asked if there are any Committee Member updates about bills that were considered
35 during the latest Legislative Session. Communications Director, Will McKay, reported that there
36 was an appropriations request submitted for a three year pilot program in Millcreek Canyon.
37 Unfortunately, the shuttle funding was not received, so different options will need to be considered.

38
39 Chair Boardman reported that there was a concerning bill about turning Millcreek Canyon into a
40 State Park. There was another bill related to fugitive dust mitigation. Mr. McKay reported that
41 Senate Bill (“S.B.”) 44 had to do with the Statewide Resource Management Plan. There is a
42 designated plan approved for each year, and in that, it states that the goal is to eventually have a
43 Millcreek State Park.

1 **PARLEYS CANYON GRAVEL PIT DISCUSSION**

2
3 1. **The Committee will Share Updates, if any, on the Proposed Gravel Pit in Parleys**
4 **Canyon.**

5
6 Co-Chair Zalles asked if there are any Committee Member updates about the proposed gravel pit
7 in Parleys Canyon. Jonny Vasic reported that he saw there was a request granted for an extension
8 of discovery in the lawsuit between Salt Lake County and Granite Construction. It appears that
9 discovery is open until mid-summer. It is anticipated that the Utah Division of Air Quality
10 (“DAQ”) will issue a permit any time now. Co-Chair Zalles asked if the litigation will cause
11 delays even after a permit is issued. Mr. Vasic believed it will slow down the process. It will be
12 interesting to see whether the DAQ issues a permit while there is a lawsuit pending. There are still
13 some unknowns.

14
15 **ROADLESS RULE RESCISSION DISCUSSION**

16
17 1. **The Committee will Discuss Concerns they would like to see Addressed in a Public**
18 **Comment from the CWC on the Rescission of the Roadless Rule when the Comment**
19 **Period Opens.**

20
21 It was noted that Doug Tolman planned to share information about the rescission of the Roadless
22 Rule, but he is not present at the Environment System Committee Meeting. Chair Boardman
23 reported that she did some research and it sounds like there is a plan to open another comment
24 period about this.

25
26 **CENTRAL WASATCH DASHBOARD LANDING PAGE REVIEW**

27
28 1. **The Committee will Review the New Landing Page for the Central Wasatch**
29 **Dashboard.**

30
31 Director of Operations, Sam Kilpack, reported that there is a new landing page for the Central
32 Wasatch Dashboard, which will launch soon. There are different layers that can be toggled on and
33 off. On the left side of the map, there is a key for the different colors. She explained that there
34 are traffic counter icons that indicate the locations of the traffic counters in the canyons. It is
35 possible to click on those and be relocated to the traffic section of the Central Wasatch Dashboard.
36 There are also webcam locations included on the map as well as a wildlife icon and different
37 boundary layers.

38
39 **MEETING CADENCE**

40
41 1. **The Committee will Discuss its Meeting Cadence Moving Forward.**

42
43 Chair Boardman reported that the Stakeholders Council subcommittees have recently discussed
44 their meeting cadence. The Environment System Committee currently meets once a month.
45 Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month from 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. A survey went
46 out and some wanted to meet every month while others wanted to meet every other month. The

1 CWC Staff suggestion was to schedule an Environment System Committee Meeting each month.
2 If there are pertinent items to discuss, then the meeting will take place as scheduled. If there are
3 no time-sensitive items that need to be discussed, then there could be a month where a meeting is
4 skipped. Committee Members expressed support for the CWC Staff suggestion. Chair Boardman
5 noted that there is a Stakeholders Council Meeting next week. It is possible to ask whether there
6 is Council Member interest in assisting with the visitor behavior survey. It is also possible to
7 discuss making a recommendation to the CWC Board. The CWC can be asked to weigh in on the
8 Phase I work.

9
10 **NEXT MEETING AGENDA**

11
12 **1. The Committee will Discuss Items for the Next Meeting Agenda.**

13
14 Ms. Hahnenberger reported that at the Stakeholders Council Meeting, there will be an activity
15 where ideas from the December meeting will be pulled out and assigned to different
16 subcommittees. At the next Environment System Committee, there can be a review of those ideas.
17 In addition, there can be continued discussions about the visitor behavior survey the Committee
18 has been working on.

19
20 **OTHER ITEMS**

21
22 Co-Chair Zalles shared additional comments about Phase I of the UDOT Little Cottonwood
23 Canyon EIS. As there are discussions at the Stakeholders Council and CWC Board level, it is
24 important to remember that it is not only the ski season that should be considered. Chair Boardman
25 agreed with this. She added that tolling might make people with lower incomes feel that they
26 cannot enjoy the trails in the summer. The canyon should feel accessible to all income brackets.
27 Ahead of the Stakeholders Council Meeting, she asked that Committee Members think about how
28 the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS Phase I work can better serve canyon users throughout
29 the year.

30
31 **CLOSING**

32
33 **1. Chair Boardman will Call for a Motion to Adjourn the Environment System**
34 **Committee Meeting.**

35
36 **MOTION:** Kelly Boardman moved to ADJOURN the Environment System Committee Meeting.
37 Maura Hahnenberger seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the
38 Committee.

39
40 The Environment System Committee Meeting adjourned at 5:00 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*
3 *Tuesday, March 10, 2026.*

4

5 Teri Forbes

6 Teri Forbes

7 T Forbes Group

8 Minutes Secretary

9

10 Minutes Approved: _____