

**Sand Flats Recreation Area (SFRA)  
Stewardship Committee Meeting Agenda  
156 E 100 N and via zoom  
Thursday, December 11th, 2025  
3:03 pm**

**In Attendance:**

SFRA Stewardship Committee members- Molly Taylor (MT), Mark Pope (MP) Mike Kelso, (MK), Tom Dillon (TD)  
Grand County Commission representative- Melodie McCandless  
BLM- Jennifer Jones (JJ)  
Sand Flats Director Andrea Brand (AB), and SFRA Recreation Technician Matt Olding (MO) via zoom.  
Anna Sprout, Steward Moab

**Call to Order**

**Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from September 11<sup>th</sup>, and from November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025. MP makes a motion, MT seconds it. AB- Any discussion? JJ- Under Discussion items - Fee Increase, please rephrase my statement concerning the annual pass to “this is a good value for the money” not “a steal”, that would be inappropriate. All vote in favor.

**Agency Reports**

**Budget Review 2025**

AB- Current income is 1.5 % above 2024. On the balance sheets for 2025 we have \$623,061.00 in the Combined Cash fund. Second page- Online sales on Recreation.gov compared with the Total Remit sheet this is less because some of November’s sales are missing. Expense reimbursement up because we sold some more books to CNHA and Utah Raptor State Park is interested as well. Third page- line items that are over: Vehicle maintenance, had to get a new set of tires. The tires that come on the lease vehicles are poor quality so the road dept. puts those tires aside, buys new tires and then puts the poor-quality tires back on when they trade the vehicle back in. We are doing that now too. Contract toilet services is over \$140. Printing and publishing are over due to printing books and more hang tags; however, we are getting reimbursed with the book sales. Supplies and equipment is over \$4,000, because we bought all the fire rings we need to switch out with old ones. Figured steel prices would be going up, might as well take care of that. Overall budget is under.

**Proposed Budget 2026 with updates on Administrative Fees**

AB- Last time we met we were looking at paying from \$88,000 to \$135,000 for County Administrative costs based on the methodology used. AB shows the administrative service fees sheet for Road, MOT, GCATT and SFRA. MT- This (\$52,000) looks like a good amount because SFRA was paying \$40,000. MM- I feel very confident that this is what will get passed for these four departments. \$52,000 for SFRA is not as detrimental as the 10%. This methodology is \$8.18 per hour per full time employee equivalent for County Admin costs. This includes Attorney, HR, IT, Maintenance, Clerk, Admin, Treasurer and Audit. Commission members thought that was too much this year and went

with \$4 per employee hour but at least we can show a methodology to the auditor which we did not have before. AB- In pen you can see that SFRA is equivalent to 6.25 full time employees or 13,000 hours times \$8.18 is \$106,390, which could be what SFRA may owe in 2027. MM- There are other departments that depend heavily on the General Fund, such as the Airport. If they ever become self-sustaining then they would pay these fees. Some commissioner's want the money to be taken out of the general fund for these departments and then be put back in for cleaner accounting. Others do not. Subcommittee will form by the end of this year to look this over. Maybe be at \$4.50 per full time equivalent employee hour, gradual increase in 2027. MT- Attorney fees seem high, maybe not include them? MM- Only 37% of the Attorney department time is spent in helping all other the departments. But some like IT and HR, 100% of their time is spent assisting other departments. Directors in those departments chose these percentages. MP- Does the 194 include all employees in the county? MM- Yes all employees. And you will know ahead of time, way before budget season. AB- An employee working at \$22 an hour, are they really costing the county \$8.18 in fees to other departments? MM- 2026 budget froze 27 positions. Some of the departments listed in these service fees, their expenses are not this high, because some of these positions are not filled. AB- This is the budget for 2026 but if each department does not spend this much then will our fees be reduced? MM- I believe so. AB- I was told by Gabriel Woytek that it would be actual. MM- This will ebb and flow depending on number of employees and hours. AB- SFRA was paying more percentage wise than any other department.

## **Citizens to be Heard**

No citizens to be heard.

## **Presentation**

### **Updates on Trail Ambassador program by Anna Sprout**

AS- This past year we were working hard to develop a non-profit called Steward Moab. The Mission is to foster responsible connections to the Moab area public lands through education and collaboration that protect and enhance the non-motorized and motorized recreation experience for all. This covers our basis for future grant applications. Moab Trail Ambassador Program, transitioned assets to Steward Moab program and Grand County provided \$150,000 for first year. For 2026 the priority is hiking and OHV recreation. Mariah Ward is Program Manager, manages the day to day and Anna is the Executive Director. Mariah's position is still partially funded by the health dept. and she still leads the human waste initiative. Our priority is Mill Creek, Grandstaff, Corona Arch hiking trails and Hell's Revenge, Fins and Things and Poison Spider OHV trails. Prioritize education and if we move into trail work it will be light maintenance, raking tracks, righting signs, picking up trash. We are still on SFRA trails with decreased staffing. AB- How many motorized patrol folks? AB- Ryan and one more. We have about \$35,000 for OHV staffing for 6 months. Keltain is with GCATT orchestrating motorized trail work. Prioritizing returning staff, built a good team. Made similar contact rates in 2025 as in 2024 despite uncertainty and less staff. Part of grant writing will be matches and that is one reason I am here at this meeting. Anna has four grants due by March, may be asking for letters of support. CNHA did provide \$35,000 for the program for 2026 and we have the Honda too. Have 3 vehicles for the hiking program and one for the OHV program. Received a \$2,500 grant for spill kits. We can operate differently now with partners. Moab Guide Summit coming up this year on March 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, 2026. We have capacity to do business training as well but not funded. Looking for donations, volunteers. Shows website. MP- How dependent are you on private donations? Is this a data point for future budget years. AS- Will figure out what is donations, partnerships, sponsorships, grants. We have \$185,000 for overhead and full time staff. Have a grant from Health Dept. for part of Mariah's position. Have grants with County for part time staff. Well trained staff, able to mentor new staff. Donations could be set aside for matches in 2027. AB- Do you know what you will be looking for in matches from partners? AS- Not yet. MM- I was on a board with Jacques and Maddie and County attorney and others, met every week for almost 3 months. Steward Moab

has its' own board, Maddie and Keltain are on the board. \$16,000 and then \$150,000 too. MP- Non-profit as opposed to government, more entities will be willing to donate. AB- GCATT has a non-profit too, right? AS- No longer as active and was focused on non-motorized before. We had to invent our own because we have both non-motorized and motorized recreation. We have had conversations with businesses before but now that we aren't County, we can take donations and can put their brand on it. On our website you can donate to your specific user group. Donations will help us put more money toward staffing hopefully. Exploring foundation not projects yet.

AB- We have a patrol log, thanks to Anna, we copied their system. We can also see in the Trail Ambassador's patrol log where they have been. In this way we can check what is getting accomplished and where the holes are. We can communicate back and forth. AS- With Part- time funding we want to take on the light maintenance role- raking tracks, picking up trash, etc.

## **General Business- Action Items**

### **Discussion Items**

Follow up from previous meetings:

#### **Night Sky programs at SFRA**

AB- We had another Star Party. Moab City wanted to do something nice for all their volunteers that worked on heat monitoring this summer. The city had a monitoring device at the Hell's Revenge parking lot. I contacted Nathan Martinez from Green River State Parks and Zoe Prevost from Utah Raptor SP and fortunately the weather improved, after a heavy rainstorm, and it worked out well and we could use the telescopes.

#### **“Leaving a Trace” Play on Slickrock Bike Trail**

Sharing MO's photos from the play. It was amazing out there with the sun setting. Four different acts in four different locations. There was a cyclist in a velociraptor costume riding around. A UTV dressed up like a Stegosaurus, legs moved with the wheels. Shows after dark. One scene was about water, one at Woody's Cavern about development. People were laughing and crying. Lots of good music, such amazing local talent. Actors of all ages. Sold out quick, could only have 100 people a night.

#### **Old Growth Forest of Moab film update**

AB- Shows trailer from film. AB, MO and other staff helped with the film. Mark Finley was able to film a flock of Pinion jays in Castle Valley. 2026 Annual pass has a nice photo of Pinion Jays from the film. Members impressed by footage.

#### **Non-motorized Trails master plan**

AB- Reads from Katie Murphy's update. Plan was approved by the City, and County Commission will need to vote on it.

#### **Falcon Climb construction started**

AB- GCATT worked on Falcon Climb with some SFRA staff members and volunteers. A mile of trail was built this week. Around three miles completed up from the lower Falcon parking lot so far.

#### **Porcupine 4x4 road work update**

AB- The last meeting contractor Dave Cozzens with Cliff Koontz and Ride with Respect equipment, SFRA staff and MTC volunteers repaired first section, two more to go. Despite some issues with the mini X, Dave stabilized the drainage area with rock lining and repaired the road. AB shows photos.

Members impressed. It was treacherous before. The equipment is now up north for repairs. Work should be done before spring.

### **Dinosaur Track Site barrier project along Hell's Revenge trail**

AB- Shows Google earth photo of site and where barricades will be placed. AB will be ordering steel this week. Cable purchased. Work will start in January. Dr. Emily Lessner, BLM paleontologist said EA will be done by end of the year. MO- What about a hiking trail from Slickrock to the track site? We spoke about this last time. I am not sure if it ended up on the Master plan or not. Discusses project.

### **MTC project Hell's Revenge trail**

AB- Shows location in photo. MT- Thought they would want to repair Lake Michigan issues. MP- Problem is things are backing up here. MT- I heard that people's machines were hitting.

### **MTC Trail proposals BLM process updates**

See below under BLM updates.

JJ- Did Sand Flats staff go on a field trip to Utah Raptor State Park?

AB- Yes, myself and SFRA staff did a tour with ranger Zoe Prevost who helped with SFRA star programs this summer. We went to the quarry where the Utah raptor was found and on the interpretive walk that compares the experiences of the CC camp members and those held in the Japanese internment camp there a few years later. Letters, books and photos were used to tell the story. The visitor center is amazing, well worth a visit and free. We drove through the campgrounds and saw the bathrooms and showers. Each site has shade structures, water and electricity. Very impressive.

## **New Topics**

### **Festive tree event**

AB- The tree is lit with power from a solar panel and then a battery hidden behind the tree. Comments have been positive. MT-Is this MOT funds? MM- This is funded with promotional money that we need to spend. AB- It is being promoted on national TV.

### **BLM updates**

MTC proposals are in process, EAs are underway. Hell's Revenge proposal being completed by Emily Lessner should be shorter. Appreciate you bringing this to the BLM's attention and being super proactive in getting things going and getting the materials and supplies. Big Thanks there. On another note, there is concern about a route that is not designated that was discovered during the Slick- Fins survey. AB- Yes, Katie Stevens called me about this. We would like it to remain open. AB shows where it is on the map. JJ- Frank, new GIS person met with Katie and they have been going over NEPA and GIS map layers and finding a few issues. Discuss the north Fins change, also in process. 250th anniversary celebrations are being planned. Also 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Jeep Safari. MP- Discusses fencing project out on north Fins and Things with Jeep. Let's target early February for eyes on the ground, ok? AB- Yes and also Nena Barlow contacted me. The last few years Jeep has held an event at Navajo Rocks but now they want to stage it out of the Fox campground and on the little alternative loop behind the campground. Who would they get the permit through, recreation? JJ- No it is a lands permit through Reed or Lisa. AB- My concerns are that it is not a very big area. Nena was going to park 40 vehicles at Raptor parking. Too many and there wouldn't be any room for mountain bikers. She suggested Radio tower road but we need to speak again. JJ- I also spoke to Reed, apparently there are some cultural resource concerns by the tree. Reed wants a barrier put in front of

the tree. AB- Tree is lit 5 to 8 pm each evening. I met with Quinn and Ali today and MOT is working on putting up a barrier. The email said that if the barrier didn't work then the BLM wants there to be a monitor there each night. Ali said if that is the case then they will just remove the lights. MM- Are people messing with it? AB- No, no one is messing with the tree so far but if folks don't stay behind the barrier then they will remove the lights. Which would be a shame because people are really liking it. It is on the Slickrock bike trail and there is a dry wash in front of it. (GC commissioner) Brian Martinez said that he rode the trail with his sons and when they came back the tree was lit. MM- I have a video from Brian I can share with you. JJ- I was amazed how busy SFRA was on Thanksgiving evening and it was slamming busy, people were loving their public lands, all user groups.

### **GC Commission updates**

MM- Shows short video of the tree from Brian. The tree idea was developed by Camp stories, our marketing company. This is in contrast to the Rockefeller Xmas tree but never cut down, live tree with solar lights. These TRT promotional monies also paid for the lighting out on the pedestrian river bridge in collaboration with Chamber of Commerce. Bring people to Moab in the winter. JJ- Very busy in town. MM- Didn't hear any complaints about the change in the direction of the parade. Other updates- Commission brought budget down 2.2 million dollars to \$96,000 with the hiring freezes. I guess this is my last meeting, because Jacques Hadler will take my place. MO and others- do we get to vote on that? Group is pleased to have MM stay on if possible.

## **Adjourn**