DIVISION OF OUTDOOR RECREATION
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Meeting Minutes: Outdoor Adventure Commission

Minutes Of The Meeting Held on May 4, 2026 at 3:00 p.m.- 5:00 p.m.
Virtual

HOST: ***Utah Department of Natural Resources***
Division of Outdoor Recreation
1594 W. North Temple
Salt Lake City, Utah 84116
DNR Auditorium
(Virtual meeting)

IN PERSON ATTENDEES: Jason Kyle, Natalie Randall, Kate Bradshaw, Tyson Roberts, Josh Van Jura, Greg Jensen, Lori Maughan, Bill Winfield, Jason Curry, India Nielsen, Carly Lansche, Emily Meadows, Patrick Morrison, Maureen Casper, Morgan Smith

MEETING MINUTES:

(0:00) The meeting was called to order with a quorum present both in person and online.

(0:40) New Commissioner Introduction: Greg Jensen was introduced as a new commissioner representing Sevier County (currently in his fourth year, running unopposed for a second term, and a local independent insurance agency owner.

(1:10) Kate Bradshaw made the motion to approve the minutes from the previous November 2025 meeting and they officially approved via a unanimous vote.

(1:40) Recreation Participation Trend Study Update

Presenters: Jeremy Sage and Jake Jorgensson (RRC)

- **About RRC:** A 40-year-old outdoor recreation and social science market research firm that works extensively across Utah and nationally.

- **Study Motivation:** To understand the vital role of outdoor recreation in Utah's economy and track shifting participation patterns (e.g., e-biking trends, post-pandemic behavior shifts, population growth) using a data-driven framework.
- **Key Goals:** Identify emerging trends, assess economic/social/health impacts, improve community quality of life, and deliver actionable recommendations for local counties.
- **Standardized Data Framework:** Integrating administrative data from various land management entities (National Park Service, Forest Service, BLM, State Parks) into a centralized, apples-to-apples Utah Recreation Data Repository.
- **(10:30) Case Studies / Pilot Sites:** Five diverse sites will be piloted starting late May/early June through fall 2026 to capture data via trail/parking counters, intercept-based on-site surveys (10-day windows), and anonymous mobile location data:
    1. *Valley of the Gods:* Remote, motorized use landscape (Late May/Early June).
    2. *Sand Hollow Reservoir:* High-demand, motorized/non-motorized water-use site (June).
    3. *Hole in the Rock Road:* Medium-demand, mixed-use access corridor (Early Fall).
    4. *Pahvant Trail System:* Destination non-motorized biking trail network (Late Summer/Early Fall).
    5. *Guardsman Pass:* High-demand, multi-use alpine recreation space (Fall/Leaf-peeping season).
- **Resident and Visitor Surveys:** Launching a panel-based online survey targeting Utah residents and visitors from the past two years to gauge behavioral perspectives and displacement patterns (e.g., how overcrowding impacts spillover behavior).
- **(21:04)** Commissioner Natalie Randall (Utah Office of Tourism) asked about forward-facing predictive forecasting. RRC noted that categorizing sites by supply/demand helps predict future infrastructure impacts. Commissioner Jerry Taylor (Garfield County) asked about tracking data on Hole in the Rock

Road; RRC explained they use roaming physical surveyors with tablets, QR codes on trail signage, and seasonal cell phone data mapping.

(25:37) Legislative Session Update

Presenter: Director Jason Curry (Division of Outdoor Recreation)

- **HB 12 (Outdoor Recreation Accessibility Amendments):** Broadens the definition of "infrastructure" in grant eligibility to include adaptive equipment (e.g., specialized access chairs for the adaptive community).
- **HB 30 (Wildlife Management Area Recreation):** Establishes a cooperative process/mechanism for non-hunting/fishing recreators (mountain bikers, trail runners) to utilize and monetarily contribute to WMAs.
- **HB 54 (Boating Amendments):** Establishes a mandatory annual boating safety education course regarding right-of-way, speed, and buoy rules. Features a "test out" option to minimize time.
- **(30:16) HB 381 (Electric Bicycle Amendments):** Clarifies rules surrounding personal electric vehicles, safety structures, and younger riders.
    - Directs the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to build an online safety course for ages 8–15. Allows independent riding on public roads for ages 8–15 with a certificate (or supervised without one). Requires helmets for riders under 21 on public roads (fines capped at $25).
    - Bill took effect May 6th, though the final course deadline is May 5th, 2027.
- **HB 567 (Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Grant Program):** Broadened infrastructure definitions to allow grant funding for harmful algae bloom mitigation treatments (e.g., projects funded at Willard and Mantua).

(40:38) Outdoor Recreation Initiative (ORI) Program

Presenter: Patrick Morrison (Division of Outdoor Recreation)

- **2025 Recap:** Received 51 project submissions across 5 regions requesting $55 million. Ultimately awarded $21 million to 38 projects across the Wasatch Front, Southwest, Central, Eastern, and Northern regions.
- **Meeting Restructuring:** Based on past feedback, the program is pivoting away from 2-hour monthly virtual meetings. Instead, they will shift to long-form, 4-to-5-hour in-person regional visioning workshops in June to identify funding priorities, an optional mid-summer site visit, and an in-person ranking meeting in October.

- **Timeline Reminder:** Project approvals are slated for the Commission meeting on November 16th, 2026.

(49:20) Outdoor Recreation Planning Assistance (ORPA) & Regional Planning

Presenter: Emily Meadows (Division of Outdoor Recreation)

- **ORPA Success:** The program helps understaffed or rural communities boost recreation planning capacity. The last cycle awarded $1.5 million across 21 applications. Funding has increased to $2.5 million for the current cycle (which closes mid-May with 60 drafts in progress).
- Actively drafting a statewide *Trails Planning and Design Handbook* with SE Group.
- **Long-Range Planning:** Currently piloting a 10-to-15-year regional recreation master plan in the Central Region (garnered 1,500+ survey responses, 6 county stakeholder meetings, and detailed mapping assets). Northern and Southwest regional plans will kick off this year, with a goal to have the entire state mapped by 2028.

(59:51) Northwash Boat Ramp Funding Request

Presenter: Carly Lansche (Division of Outdoor Recreation)

- **Project Context:** Located at Cataract Canyon takeout. A critical regional asset being safely upgraded via partnerships with Glen Canyon, Jones & DeMille Engineering, and Brown Brothers Construction. It will allow the National Ability Center to bring back adaptive programming for veterans and mobility-limited groups.
- **The Request:** An additional funding request of $140,200 to cover project cost overruns due to high freight costs for non-local materials (articulating concrete block mats) and extra site safety additions (jersey barriers). The funding will be drawn from prior fiscal year rollover funds.

(1:12:34) Kate Bradshaw made the motion to fund the additional request, it was seconded, and passed unanimously.

- *Note:* Ribbon cutting is scheduled for June 4th.

(1:13:49) Mud Springs Trail System Phase 2 Scope Change

Presenters: Commissioner Lori Maughan & Bill Winfield

- **Project Context:** A highly active mountain biking network spanning Grand and San Juan Counties that hosts NIAA high school racing events drawing 5,000 to 10,000 visitors.
- **The Request:** A request to adjust the scope of work to redirect already-approved Phase 2 trail expansion funds toward critical infrastructure: building a brand new, safer access road and preparing a 15-acre parking lot subbase. This moves the ingress point further down the highway to prevent a dangerous traffic backup criticized by UDOT.

(1:25:55) Motion: Motion made by Natalie Randall, seconded by Jerry Taylor, and passed unanimously.

(1:26:40) Closing Remarks

- **Next Meeting:** Scheduled for Monday, November 16th, 2026, from 2:00 to 5:00 PM for official ORI project approvals.

(1:27:15) A motion to adjourn was made and passed unanimously.