



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

Committee Members: Kelly Boardman, Chair
Meaghan McKasy, Co-Chair
Dan Zalles
Adam Lenkowski
Maura Hahnenberger
Ayja Bounous
Dennis Goreham

Staff: Sam Kilpack, Director of Operations

Others: Sandy Wingert
Jodi Gardberg

OPENING

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

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

2. Review and Approval of the Minutes of the August 11, 2026, Meeting.

The Meeting Minutes from August 11, 2026, were not voted on, as there was not a quorum present.

WATER QUALITY DATA DISCUSSION

1. Sandy Wingert from the Division of Water Quality will Share Information about Water Quality Management in the Central Wasatch.

Chair Boardman welcomed Sandy Wingert and Jodi Gardberg from the Utah Division of Water Quality, who are present to share information about water quality management in the Central

1 Wasatch. Ms. Wingert explained that she is the Basin Coordinator for the Provo and Jordan River
2 Basins. Ms. Gardberg is the Environmental Program Manager. There were questions received ahead
3 of the Environment System Committee Meeting and those will be answered during the presentation.

4
5 Ms. Wingert explained that the role of the Utah Division of Water Quality is to safeguard and enhance
6 Utah waters through balanced regulation. That means protecting water, whether it is ground water or
7 surface water. The intention is to be protective of how the water is being used. She reported that the
8 Utah Division of Water Quality implements the Clean Water Act as well as the Utah Water Quality
9 Act. In addition, there is a focus on providing community support through outreach and education.

10
11 Every water body in the State is assigned a Designated Beneficial Use. Ms. Wingert clarified that
12 this includes domestic drinking water, recreation, agriculture, or aquatic life. Water quality standards
13 are then set to protect those uses. A lot of these have been adopted from national standards, but it is
14 also possible for the Utah Division of Water Quality to adopt its own water quality standards.

15
16 Ms. Wingert reported that monitoring is conducted throughout the State. Every two years, the Clean
17 Water Act requires there to be an assessment of the water quality, which is called the Integrated
18 Report. It is often referred to as the Clean Water Act 303(d) List of Impaired Water Bodies. If water
19 quality standards are met, then it is considered fully supporting. If water quality standards are not
20 met, then it is considered impaired. When something is impaired, there is a Total Maximum Daily
21 Load (“TMDL”) study. Ms. Wingert shared information about point sources and wastewater
22 treatment facilities. There is also the Nonpoint Source Program, which deals with a separate type of
23 pollution. She clarified that the Nonpoint Source Program is non-regulatory.

24
25 Ms. Wingert reiterated that there is an assessment done every two years as part of the Integrated
26 Report process. The focus is on the listed waters on the 303(d) list. The Integrated Report for 2026
27 was recently completed, and it is for the entire State of Utah. There are over 700 assessment units.
28 The Utah Division of Water Quality assessed and looked at over 15,000 miles and over 1,700
29 monitoring locations. It was found that 54% of all of the assessed river miles are classified as polluted
30 or impaired. She shared a map and pointed out the areas that are considered impaired in some way.

31
32 Over 57% of the river miles that were assessed within the Jordan River watershed are impaired.
33 Approximately 30% is either fully supporting or there is no evidence of pollution. The Environment
34 System Committee previously expressed interest in hearing about Millcreek, Big Cottonwood, and
35 Little Cottonwood. Ms. Wingert reported that Millcreek is fully supporting, which means there are
36 no water quality problems that are above the water quality threshold. Big Cottonwood Creek is on
37 the 303(d) list and is impaired for E. coli. There was a zinc water quality study done in Little
38 Cottonwood Creek in 2002, but since then, it is also been impaired for several other metals, including
39 copper, zinc, cadmium, and pH. She explained that there are two permitted dischargers within this
40 area.

41
42 Ms. Wingert shared a map of Millcreek Canyon and pointed out the different monitoring locations.
43 Every blue dot on the map represents one of the monitoring locations. None of these sites indicate
44 there is water quality impairment. Chair Boardman believed Millcreek Canyon has a different use
45 category. Ms. Wingert clarified that Category 1 is an Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA”)
46 definition, which means it is fully supporting. The waters shown as Category 5 are included on the
47 303(d) list. She shared additional information about the Designated Beneficial Uses. Dan Zalles

1 asked for clarification about discharge sites. Ms. Wingert reported that there are two permitted
2 facilities within Little Cottonwood Canyon where the discharge of pollution is allowed.

3
4 It was reiterated that in Millcreek Canyon, there are no water issues. There was a spike of E. coli in
5 Porter Fork back in 2023, but since then, the conditions have been low. Ms. Wingert shared additional
6 information about Big Cottonwood Creek. There were samples taken from the mouth of Big
7 Cottonwood Canyon all the way to the headwaters. She reported that there is not a lot of metal
8 contamination within the tributaries of the river, but there is a monitoring location just upstream of
9 Brighton and Silver Lake that is impaired with high levels of E. coli. There are three long-term
10 monitoring locations within Big Cottonwood Canyon. Ms. Wingert explained that there are two
11 standards set for E. coli, acute and chronic. She shared a graph with additional information.

12
13 Adam Lenkowski asked if there is a way to determine the source of the E. coli. He wanted to know
14 if the levels are caused by humans or animals. Ms. Wingert explained that there is a desire to better
15 understand the problem, so there is continued monitoring. The data graph shows the E. coli conditions
16 from the past five years. It is important to consider the land use and what is happening upstream.
17 She pointed out that dogs are already banned in the watershed, but human waste and recreation can
18 be sources. There is currently work being done to map out all of the septic tanks in Salt Lake County.
19 She reported that there are a lot of wildlife contributions in this case. E. coli is an indicator species
20 of recent fecal contamination from warm-blooded species, which can include certain animals.

21
22 Dennis Goreham wanted to know why there was a spike seen in August. Ms. Wingert explained that
23 this is something that is being considered. It is important to take the water flow conditions into
24 consideration as well as the water temperature. E. coli is not static like other pollutants. Seasonality
25 is something that will be looked into throughout this process to better understand potential sources.
26 Discussions were had about data collection and how often the samples are taken. Ms. Wingert
27 reported that the Utah Division of Water Quality is looking to conduct a synoptic test in the future.

28
29 Ms. Wingert shared information about Little Cottonwood Creek. This was first listed on the 303(d)
30 list in the late 1990s. The water quality study was completed in 2002. Since then, several other
31 metals have been identified. It is impaired for cadmium, copper, and pH, which impacts aquatic life
32 use. The two dominant tunnels that have been looked at are the Howland and Wasatch Drain Tunnels.

33
34 There are over 30 monitoring locations from Wasatch Boulevard through to the Albion Basin.
35 Ms. Wingert reviewed a map of the area and explained that the circles represent the areas that were
36 studied as part of the 2002 water quality study. She pointed out areas where there are impairments.
37 Every five years, permits come up for public comment. She offered to inform the Environment
38 System Committee when that happens so the Committee is able to review the permits and make
39 comments.

40
41 Ms. Wingert reported that the other impairments, such as cadmium, copper, and pH, have not been
42 priorities for the Utah Division of Water Quality. These are not drinking water concerns but can
43 create aquatic life use concerns. The conditions will continue to be monitored moving forward.
44 Mr. Zalles asked why these are not drinking water concerns. Ms. Wingert explained that there are
45 water quality standards set to protect drinking water and there are water quality standards set to protect
46 aquatic life. The cadmium, copper, and pH levels are higher than the strictest limits set for the
47 protection of aquatic life, but this has not reached the limits set for drinking water. Ms. Gardberg

1 explained that there needs to be a certain quality level before the water goes to the drinking water
2 treatment plant. That is the reason that a standard has been set that is specific to drinking water.

3
4 Mr. Zalles requested additional information about the discharge sites. He wanted to better understand
5 what is being discharged. Ms. Wingert shared information about drain tunnels and mineral rights.
6 Mr. Zalles believed that permits have been issued to those handling the drainage from the mines,
7 which was confirmed. However, there are certain conditions that need to be met. Ms. Wingert
8 explained that it depends on the entity, but often, the permit states that there are monitoring
9 requirements. Data will be collected four times per year, and the information is reported back. It was
10 reiterated that the permits are renewed every five years, so there is an evaluation process that occurs.

11
12 Chair Boardman asked if there can be more E. coli in Millcreek rather than in Big Cottonwood and
13 Little Cottonwood based on the standards. Ms. Wingert clarified that the standard is the same.
14 Ms. Gardberg explained that there are stricter standards for a submerged person than a person wading.
15 Chair Boardman believed that E. coli from Big Cottonwood Canyon and Little Cottonwood Canyon
16 mostly comes from nonpoint sources, such as leaking septic tanks and other recreational uses. Ms.
17 Wingert added that wildlife is also a factor. Mr. Lenkowski was surprised to see that Big Cottonwood
18 did not have elevated readings for metals compared to Little Cottonwood Canyon. Ms. Wingert
19 reported that there were elevated levels as of 2022, but the most recent data did not show them.

20
21 Ms. Gardberg explained that a lot depends on whether the metals are reaching the streams. Some of
22 the abandoned mines do not. EPA went out three years ago to look at whether the abandoned mines
23 were impacting water quality. Ms. Wingert explained that a lot was done in Big Cottonwood Canyon.
24 She shared additional information about the monitoring that is done and the data that is collected.

25
26 Ms. Wingert highlighted one of the projects that the Utah Division of Water Quality is working on
27 with the Salt Lake County Health Department. She shared a map of the septic tanks within Salt Lake
28 County but noted that the map is only 40% complete at this time. The goal is to reach approximately
29 90%. Chair Boardman asked if homeowners are required to check their tanks for leaks, which was
30 confirmed. Ms. Wingert explained that many different factors are taken into consideration.

31
32 Ms. Wingert discussed the 2025 Salt Lake County Integrated Watershed Plan. This is done every 10
33 years, and the EPA nine-element framework is used. Once these plans are in place, additional funding
34 sources that the State is authorized to use or manage become available. She reported that there is a
35 data gap in the metals data, so there need to be more data collection efforts done in Big Cottonwood
36 Canyon and Little Cottonwood Canyon. She will now answer the questions sent by CWC Staff.

37
38 Ms. Wingert reported that one of the questions asked was: “Who are the key players?” Salt Lake
39 County Health Department regulates and permits the on-site wastewater treatment systems. She also
40 mentioned Salt Lake County Watershed Planning and Restoration, Salt Lake City Public Utilities,
41 U.S. Forest Service and Greater Salt Lake Municipal Services District. Ms. Wingert noted that the
42 Utah Division of Water Quality provides technical water quality expertise, regulates point sources
43 and stormwater, develops restoration plans, responds to emergencies and spills, and monitors.

44
45 The second question asked: “How can the Committee assist with monitoring?” Ms. Wingert reported
46 that the Utah Division of Water Quality coordinates and funds Utah Water Watch, which is a citizen
47 science sampling program that connects local efforts. She noted that this is a volunteer opportunity.

1 It is possible to share more information about the program with the Environment System Committee.
2 Ms. Gardberg explained that the program is a meaningful way to learn more about water quality.

3
4 Ms. Wingert stated that she is not sure how much of the data that has been described has been added
5 to the Central Wasatch Dashboard. For example, she is not certain that chemical monitoring data is
6 shown. There can be coordination with CWC Staff to make sure that data can be included.

7
8 Mr. Zalles asked for feedback about the Central Wasatch Dashboard and the data that is currently
9 included. Ms. Wingert noted that the Central Wasatch Dashboard has come a long way. She offered
10 to compile some of her thoughts. Mr. Zalles explained that what motivated the current discussion is
11 the fact that water quality is an important and concrete metric. It can act as a warning system.

12
13 The last question from CWC Staff was: “How can the public protect water quality?” Ms. Wingert
14 explained that it is important to determine what information is already known, what questions need
15 to be answered, and whether there is an established monitoring program that can fill in the gaps.
16 Photo point monitoring is a meaningful way for the public to be involved. This is something that
17 could potentially be added to the Central Wasatch Dashboard. There can be an established stand and
18 then visitors can submit their photographs to a database. Over time, the differences can be seen.

19
20 Mr. Zalles asked if it would be possible to review the plan document that was discussed. Ms. Wingert
21 added a link to the document in the Zoom chat box. She thanked the Environment System Committee
22 for their interest in water quality management efforts in the Central Wasatch. Committee Members
23 expressed appreciation that Ms. Wingert and Mr. Gardberg were able to attend the meeting.

24
25 There was additional discussion about the collected data and the Integrated Report. Ms. Wingert
26 reiterated that chemical data is currently lacking on the Central Wasatch Dashboard. She reviewed
27 the E. coli levels in various monitoring locations and noted that it is possible for Committee Members
28 to review the collected data. Committee Members reiterated their appreciation for the presentation.

29 30 **VISITOR BEHAVIOR SURVEY WORKSHOP**

31 32 **2. The Committee will Continue Work on a Visitor Behavior Survey.**

33
34 Chair Boardman thanked Co-Chair Meaghan McKasy for her efforts on the visitor behavior survey
35 so far. The nuances of the canyon were considered and there was information about the CWC
36 provided. She likes the questions and the conversational quality of the survey. Co-Chair McKasy
37 reported that the survey was put into Google Forms. There are some filtered questions included.
38 Mr. Goreham sent some questions that he thought would be meaningful to add. One was related to
39 operating personal drones in the Wasatch, and another had to do with shortcuts on switchbacks. She
40 thought those would be solid additions to Question 8, which focuses on activities in the Wasatch.

41
42 Toward the end of the survey, there is a question about whether there is an interest in learning more
43 about the Central Wasatch. Co-Chair McKasy does not have anything written there yet, but there are
44 some organizations listed. She requested additional Committee Member contributions. Mr. Zalles
45 suggested that there be communication with the rest of the Stakeholders Council about this. Co-Chair
46 McKasy agreed that it makes sense for Council Members to provide feedback on that question.

1 The Environment System Committee discussed the order of the questions on the visitor behavior
2 survey. Co-Chair McKasy suggested that before the next meeting, there be outreach to determine
3 what organizations would like to be highlighted in the survey question. She offered to make the
4 previously mentioned additions to Question 8 ahead of the next Environment System Committee
5 Meeting. Committee Members were encouraged to review the survey and think about the flow.

6
7 Mr. Goreham suggested that the proposed question about shortcuts on switchbacks be added to the
8 question about trail etiquette. He mentioned the one-page document created by Barbara Cameron for
9 the Recreation System Committee. It is possible to link to that document within the survey. Director
10 of Operations, Sam Kilpack, offered to send the one-page document to members of the Committee.
11 The Recreation System Committee is meeting on Thursday and plans to discuss the visitor behavior
12 survey. Members of the Environment System Committee are able to attend that meeting.

13 **CWNCRA Discussion**

- 14
- 15
- 16 1. **The Committee will Discuss Takeaways from the September 2, 2026, Stakeholders**
17 **Council Meeting.**
- 18 2. **The Committee will Identify Ways the Group’s Expertise Could Support the CWNCRA.**
19

20 It was determined that the Central Wasatch National Conservation and Recreation Area Act
21 (“CWNCRA”) discussion will take place during the next Environment System Committee Meeting.
22

23 **MILLCREEK CANYON DISCUSSION**

- 24
- 25 1. **The Committee will Share Updates or Raise Topics Related to Millcreek Canyon, as**
26 **Desired.**
- 27

28 There was no additional discussion about Millcreek Canyon.
29

30 **NEXT MEETING AGENDA**

- 31
- 32 1. **The Committee will Determine Whether it will Meet Next in October or November.**
33
- 34 2. **The Committee will Discuss Items for the Next Meeting Agenda.**
35

36 The next Environment System Committee will take place on October 13, 2026. At that time, there
37 will be a discussion about the CWNCRA, and there will be additional survey discussions. Mr. Zalles
38 offered to look into the water quality links that were shared during the presentation. It is possible to
39 continue the water quality conversation at the next Environment System Committee Meeting as well.
40

41 **OTHER ITEMS**

42
43 There were no additional items discussed.
44

1 **CLOSING**

2
3 1. **Chair Boardman will Call for a Motion to Adjourn the Environment System Committee**
4 **Meeting.**

5
6 **MOTION:** Dan Zalles moved to ADJOURN the Environment System Committee Meeting.
7 Meaghan McKasy seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the
8 Committee.

9
10 The Environment System Committee Meeting adjourned at 4:57 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 Tuesday,*
3 *September 8, 2026.*
4

5 Teri Forbes

6 Teri Forbes
7 T Forbes Group
8 Minutes Secretary
9

10 Minutes Approved: _____