DIVISION OF OUTDOOR RECREATION
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Boating Advisory Committee Meeting

Meeting Minutes:

Minutes Of The Meeting Held on August 4, 2026 from 3 PM to 5:30 PM
Virtual

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

ATTENDEES: Jeff Salt, Dewitt Smith, Jenny Knudsen, Jason Taylor, Tim Herzog, Zachary Williams, George Sommer, Adam Eakle, Jason Curry, Patrick Morrison, Ty Hunter, Brain Kurta, Maureen Casper, Jorge Vazquez, Craig Walker, Nico Micheletti

MEETING MINUTES:

(0:00) Jeff Salt welcomed everyone to the meeting and Adam Eakle confirmed that there were 9 members to form a quorum.

(2:48) Attendees introduced themselves online and in person.

(5:22) Jeff Salt asks for a motion to approve or amend the meeting minutes. George Sommer noted that corrections needed to be made regarding leadership selection details and the adjournment time. Jorge Vazquez noted that those corrections will be made.

(7:07) Motion: George Sommer made the motion to approve the minutes. Dewitt Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

(7:50) The meeting moves to the public comment section of the agenda and mentions that public commenters get three minutes to speak. Eve Davies is representing PacifiCorp. Kent Singleton is present for public comment.

(8:07) Eve provided brief context regarding PacificCorp's role in managing Cutler Reservoir under FERC licensing, anticipating upcoming administrative rule discussions.

(10:41) Administrative Rule R650-215 (PFD Requirements): Ty Hunter outlined proposed administrative rule changes regarding Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) on Utah rivers; explained collaboration with stakeholders (American Whitewater, BLM, NPS, Forestry/Fire/State Lands).

- **(12:20)** Nico clarifies that the proposed rule flips the current default: river default becomes non-mandatory PFD wear except for explicitly designated/named flatwater and white water sections where wear remains mandatory.
- **(13:05)** Ty Hunter Detailed the agency review and submission pathway (DNR Commissioner, Outdoor Adventure Commission, Administrative Rules public comment period).
- **(16:06)** George Sommer asks a question regarding the amount of individuals not wearing life jackets and incidents because of that. Ty clarifies that there have been several incidences through multiple counties within the rivers, especially rivers with low head dams.
- **(19:20)** Discussion about insurance coverage within group events with life jacket requirements.
- **(21:27)** Jeff Salt asks what will be different in the details that will convince the committee to change their earlier position? Ty responds that they have worked to firm up the lines of where these safety margins are and that it will continue to be evaluated.
- **(24:51)** Ty Hunter explains that administrative rule updates are preferred over legislative code changes for public safety flexibility. Staff emphasized that handling boundaries and safety restrictions via administrative rules allows the division to adapt more quickly.
- **(25:36)** Procedural guidance on public comment protocols, open-meeting laws, and circulating draft documents without violating quorum rules. Staff cautioned council members against group email threads that could exceed quorum and violate open-meeting laws. Members were instructed to submit feedback individually or discuss draft language during formal public council meetings once administrative draft documents are published.
- **(27:42)** Consensus to place the rule change proposal on the next meeting agenda as a formal action/vote item. Committee members agreed that reading the full text prior to voting is essential. Passing a formal vote of support as an official advisory council will add significant backing when the

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proposal goes before the Outdoor Adventure Commission and state administrative rules.

(32:46) Cutler Reservoir Regulations & Zoning: Ty Hunter gave a historical review of Cutler Reservoir's depth constraints (average under 4 ft), pre/post-COVID rule changes, and horsepower limits. Staff explained how a post-COVID language cleanup inadvertently restricted all motorized watercraft on the entire reservoir to under 35 horsepower. The division is working to restore original intentions while clarifying rule text so future council transitions do not trigger similar misunderstandings.

- **(38:20) Reservoir Management Zones:** PacificCorp representative Eve Davies presented the three designated management zones based on shallow reservoir depths (averaging under 4 feet):

  Zone A (South of Old Railroad Dyke): Year-round wakeless speed and under 35 HP motor limit due to shallow marsh conditions (average reservoir depth is under 4 feet).

  Zone B (North of Dyke to Bear River Confluence/Dam): Open to all safe speeds and motor sizes, subject to narrow channel restrictions in Cutler Canyon.

  Zone C (Bear River Arm to FERC Boundary): Seasonally restricted (September through January) to wakeless speeds and under 35 HP motors to accommodate traditional waterfowl hunting.

- **(44:29)** Eve Davies and Ty Hunter address the transcription errors between administrative rules and physical signage, and legal nuances between private launch sites and navigable public channels. A law enforcement call by a user reading administrative rules exposed the discrepancy between posted site signage and statutory text. Council members discussed the legal complexity of enforcing state water rules where boater access depends entirely on private property launch sites surrounding public navigable channels. For now the council will wait for the official language to come out to move forward.

- **(51:20)** Overview of environmental considerations including FERC relicensing, blue-green algae, bank erosion, and sensitive nesting bird habitats. Discussion highlighted Cutler's complex ecosystem issues, including bank erosion from motorboat wakes, harmful algal blooms, and nitrogen sediment stirring. Eve Davies noted that zoning rules also protect sensitive wildlife,

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including 3% of the world's population of white-faced ibis and colonial nesting birds.

(57:03) Pineview Reservoir Pipeline Replacement Project: Presentation by Justin Anderson (Ogden City) on the $100M+ culinary water pipeline replacement. Justin provided historical context on Ogden City's artesian wellfield at the bottom of the reservoir (dating back to the 1920s and 1934/1970 dam constructions). The aging 36-inch line passing under the reservoir supplies primary culinary water to Ogden and wholesale water to an additional 30,000 people.

- **(1:06:06)** Justification for accelerating the project to 2026 due to historic low snowpack, avoiding repeated drawdowns in future years. Ogden City coordinated with the Bureau of Reclamation, Weber Basin, and water user associations to take advantage of low water levels. Moving the timeline up ensures the reservoir only undergoes a single drawdown rather than impacting water levels across multiple seasons.
- **(1:08:11)** Technical details on installing the 48-inch HDPE line, slip-lining the 90-year-old steel pipe, and evaluating alternative construction methods. City engineers evaluated seven construction methods—including barges, directional drilling, and cofferdams—ruling them out due to high costs ($75M+ extra), wellfield contamination risks, and extended timelines. Slip-lining the old line provides essential redundancy so future maintenance can occur without shutting off city water. The lake would be refilled by January 1st.
- **(1:23:02)** Chris Penne, with DWR, provides an update on fishery impacts, emergency fish harvest limits during drawdown, and full Port Ramp reconstruction plans. Chris Penny (DWR) explained that while the 15-foot drawdown concentrates fish and warms water, Pine View's fishery is resilient and should recover within 5–10 years. DWR instituted emergency harvest limits to prevent fish die-offs. Justin Anderson confirmed that Ogden City's contractor will have everything complete, and the lake refill begins January 1st.

(1:39:42) Utah Boating Recreation Grant & Boating Access Grant Collaboration: Jorge Vazquez gave a presentation on aligning the state Utah Boating Recreation Grant with the federal DWR Boating Access Grant into a single streamlined workflow. Jorge and Craig Walker presented a unified grant strategy designed to eliminate redundant application steps for municipalities, maximize matching funds, and establish consistent scoring standards across state and federal funding pools.

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- **(1:41:33)** Both provided a detailed breakdown of overlapping eligibility including ramps, search & rescue equipment, drought mitigation, and invasive species decontamination. Craig Walker detailed federal grant eligibility (ramps, docks, breakwaters, land rights, invasive species decontamination, and dredging). Jorge highlighted unique state grant features, specifically funding search and rescue equipment (such as rescue boats) and non-motorized launch separations.

- **(1:51:34)** Jorge Vazquez clarified eligibility rules across both grant programs: planning/engineering costs are excluded from the state Recreation Grant by statute, and its search-and-rescue funding covers equipment only, not training. Regarding applicants, the state grant is limited to state entities, municipalities, and water conservancy districts (excluding nonprofits and federal agencies). Conversely, nonprofits may apply for the federal Boating Access Grant—often partnering with agencies like the Forest Service—provided they maintain long-term ownership of the infrastructure under a useful-life cooperative agreement.

- **(2:00:36)** Strategy to force applicants to separate design/permitting requests from shovel-ready construction projects. To prevent awarded grant funds from languishing across multiple fiscal years due to delayed environmental permits, the new process forces applicants to apply separately for design/permitting versus shovel-ready construction.

- **(2:04:45)** Council calendar alignment and decision to hold the grant evaluation meeting on November 10th (3:00 PM – 7:00 PM). Staff and council members mapped out application schedules: grants open September 1st, close October 16th, undergo joint agency review through late October, and come before the advisory council for a 4-hour review meeting on November 10th.

- **(2:14:57)** Discussion on making sure outreach covers both grant programs and the changes that are being made.

Public Comment:

- **(2:18:00)** Public comment from landowner Kent Singleton regarding property rights, driveway usage, and funding accounting for the Henefer-Taggart Weber River access point. Kent Singleton stated that public boater traffic and

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commercial outfitters are actively using his private driveway and parcels at Taggart. He requested a formal written financial accounting ($164,100 state request) and proof of legal site control submitted by Morgan County.

- **(2:24:51)** DWR responded, directing Mr. Singleton to submit a formal GRAMA records request. Craig Walker confirmed that a preliminary search of federal boating access grant records yielded no matching projects for Henefer or the Weber River, and provided his direct contact info so Mr. Singleton's formal GRAMA request can be processed through official state channels.

Future Items & Adjournment

(2:21:52) Discussion on the lease transfer and public access conditions at Lindon Marina on Utah Lake. Member Dewitt Smith mentioned that Lindon Marina's lease was transferred to a private developer, requiring sailors to remove deep-draft boats due to low water levels (<3 ft). Staff clarified that while the lease transferred, the underlying sovereign land remains public, guaranteeing ongoing public access rights.

(2:27:01) Announcement for the upcoming "Fishing Day on the Hill" event in February. Council members were invited to host an information booth at the State Capitol on February 12th to highlight boating recreation's role in state angling and outdoor policy.

(2:27:42) Formal motion made by George Sommer, Jason Taylor seconded, and unanimous vote to adjourn the meeting was made.

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