

HABITAT CONSERVATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

for the Washington County Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)

A **regular meeting** of the Habitat Conservation Advisory Committee (HCAC) was held in the Washington City Council Chambers on **September 22, 2015**.

Committee members present were:

Chris Blake, Chairman	Environmental Organization
Chris Hart, Vice Chairman	Local Development
Larry Crist	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Henry Maddux	Utah Dept. of Natural Resources (UDNR)
Brian Tritle	Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Marc Mortensen	Citizen-at-Large
Bob Sandberg	HCP Administrator

Absent and excused were:

John Bramall	Mayors Association
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Also present were:

Lacey McIntyre	Washington County HCP – Recorder
Cameron Rognan	Technical Committee (HCP)
Ann McLuckie	Technical Committee (DWR)
Alan Gardner	Washington County Commissioner
Jodi Borgeson	Deputy County Attorney
William Swadley	Senator Mike Lee’s Office
Julie Applegate	St. George News
Susan Crook	Citizen’s for Dixie’s Future
Bob Brennan	Brennan Holdings
Jim Raines	Brennan Holdings
Kent Bylund	Sentierre
Jessica Mosley	Sentierre
Shawna Meldrum	Sentierre
Mark Draper	HCP intern
Keith Rigtrup	BLM Planner
Lisa Rutherford	Citizen
Paul Van Dam	Citizen

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Chris Blake called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. noting that a quorum was present.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

The Consent Agenda is a means of expediting routine matters which come before the committee for approval. The consent portion of the agenda is approved by one (1) non-debatable motion. If any member wishes to remove an item from the consent portion of the agenda, then that item becomes the first order of business on the regular agenda.

- a. **Approval of Agenda**
- b. **Review and Approve Regular Meeting Minutes**
 - 1. **August 25, 2015**
- c. **Next Meeting Date**
 - 1. **October 27, 2015**

MOTION by Henry Maddux to approve the Consent Agenda.

Seconded by Chris Hart.

Discussion: None.

Vote was taken: All voted aye.

Motion passed.

3. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

- a. **None**

4. PRESENTATIONS

- a. **Raven Predation in the Reserve – Cameron Rognan/Mark Draper**

Cameron Rognan and Mark Draper presented Exhibit 4-a-1 which discussed raven predation on the desert tortoise in the Red Cliffs Desert Reserve. Cameron and Mark visited all previously known nesting areas and searched for new sites. They also monitored nest activity and inspected all nest and roost areas for pellets and tortoise remains. Finally, they walked under all major utility lines, carefully inspecting below each pole for raven pellets and tortoise remains. They spent 65 hours surveying nests, covering 3,900 acres where they found 69 pellets and 6 tortoise carcasses. They surveyed utility lines for 25 hours, covering 60 Km where they found 26 pellets and 5 tortoise carcasses. Overall they discovered that ravens are, in fact, killing hatchling tortoises in the Reserve and the predation appears to be local and less than in other areas of the Mojave Desert. They recommend continued monitoring and taking control measures in the future, if needed.

- b. **Sentierre near Tuacahn – Kent Bylund**

Kent Bylund, who is a design team member for Sentierre, introduced the upcoming project as a 5 star resort adjacent to Tuacahn on the north and surrounded by Snow Canyon State Park on the other three sides. Representatives from Sentierre previously met with the Technical Committee regarding a new trail that would begin at the landmark boulder located within their property, extend outside their property, and

connect with the Toe Trail. They discussed plans to fence their development, create an interpretive center to inform the public and their guests about the Reserve, and incorporate public parking within their development. TC members will be taking a field trip to the site before their October meeting. The Sentierre representatives are interested in working closely with associated Reserve parties to get the best information they can to relay to the public and their guests.

5. UTILITY AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

a. Rocky Mountain Power maintenance of Ledges line

Bob Sandberg wanted the committee to be aware that the HCP and BLM have been approached by Rocky Mountain Power regarding upgrading of power lines. Exhibit 5-a-1 shows where they will be looking to upgrade portions of that line near the Turkey Farm Road running northwesterly to The Ledges/Winchester Hills. They are hoping to do the work this winter, during the tortoise inactive period.

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

a. Update on land acquisition efforts – Bob/Brian

Bob reported the BLM received approval from the Washington office to move forward with the Long Valley exchange. BLM, the County, and Bob Brennan have signed an agreement to initiate that exchange.

b. Update on permit renewal – Larry/Bob

Larry mentioned state contractor Mark Capone is in the process of finalizing the status review. Larry hopes he can provide that to the committee soon.

c. BLM Planning and Northern Corridor Update – Keith Rigtrup

Keith Rigtrup (District Planner for the BLM) presented PowerPoint Exhibit 6-c-1, providing an update on the draft Resource Management Plans (RMPs) for the Beaver Dam Wash and Red Cliffs National Conservation Areas as well as the draft St. George Field Office RMP Amendment. He discussed how this is a legislatively-mandated planning process (Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009) in which the BLM is required to develop RMPs for the Beaver Dam Wash and Red Cliffs National Conservation areas, amend the St. George Field Office RMP, and complete a comprehensive travel and transportation management plan.

In regards to the RMPs for the Beaver Dam Wash and Red Cliffs National Conservation Areas, he explained how there is a range of alternatives. Alternative A is a no action alternative. Alternative B is the preferred alternative that is a balanced approach to

management and restrictions on land use to achieve NCA purposes. Alternative C is a conservative approach to management and has more restrictions on land uses to achieve NCA purposes. Alternative D has the greatest management flexibility and fewest restrictions on land uses while achieving NCA purposes. He discussed the key planning issues in the two NCAs and specified options under all four alternatives for livestock grazing management and recreation and transportation in the Beaver Dam Wash NCA and lands and realty management in the Red Cliffs NCA. The Lands and Realty Management section in the Red Cliffs NCA contains alternatives for the proposed new corridor.

For the St. George Field Office RMP Amendment the BLM will identify areas where biological conservation is a priority and undertake activities to conserve and restore species and natural communities within such areas. Keith also discussed four alternatives for the following: RMP Amendment, priority biological conservation areas, and OHV area transportation and access.

Keith explained the steps in the planning process and said they are currently in the public comment period until October 15, 2015. The next step is to prepare proposed NCA RMPs and the RMP Amendment, release those proposed RMPs and amendments, have a 30 day protest period and Governor's consistency review, then prepare and sign three records of decision before implementing, monitoring, and evaluating.

d. HCP Administrator's Report - Bob

1. Potential field trip to ARS seeding plots

Bob asked the committee if they would like to take a field trip in the next month or two to the Turkey Farm to see the seeding trials and plots Agricultural Research Service (ARS) has been working on. The committee would like to see the plots when the seeds ARS is planting begin to germinate. Bob will keep the committee up to date and schedule a field trip at that time.

2. Potential Education Center draft site plan

Bob reported the HCP has worked with MRW Design to come up with a site plan (Exhibit 6-d-2) for a potential education center on Red Hills Parkway. There is also an opportunity to work with Snow Canyon State Park for an information center out in Snow Canyon. The County may potentially build a new administration building where the current HCP office is right now, so the HCP has been looking at options for a new building in preparation of that possibility taking place.

3. Draft engineer estimates for irrigation line to Confluence Park

Bob mentioned the HCP has worked with Alpha Engineering who put together a preliminary draft design and cost estimate (Exhibit 6-d-3) for getting an irrigation pipe line into Confluence Park to irrigate existing agricultural fields.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

This item is reserved for items not listed on this agenda. No action may be taken on a matter raised under this agenda item (three minutes per person).

a. Bob Brennan mentioned the Long Valley exchange is moving forward, and he suggested all his land issues have the potential to be taken care of by land exchanges.

b. Lisa Rutherford spoke regarding the time available for comments on the BLM RMP.

8. MEMBER REPORTS & REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

a. None

9. ADJOURN

MOTION by Chris Hart to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded by Larry Crist.

Discussion: None.

Vote was taken: All voted aye.

Motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.
Minutes prepared by Lacey McIntyre.