CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION

Date: May 6th, 2019

To: Councilman Chris McCandless, Chair (Sandy City)
Mayor Jackie Biskupski, Vice Chair (Salt Lake City)
Councilman Jim Bradley (Salt Lake County)
Mayor Jenny Wilson (Salt Lake County)
Mayor Mike Peterson (Cottonwood Heights)
Mayor Andy Beerman (Park City)
Mayor Jeff Silvestrini (Millcreek City)
Mayor Harris Sondak (Town of Alta)
Director Carlos Braceras (Utah Department of Transportation)

From: Ralph Becker, CWC Executive Director
Jesse Dean, CWC Deputy Director
Lindsey Nielsen, CWC Communications Director

Subject: Process Outline For Carrying Capacity Analysis

Background

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide background and some recommended next steps on the issue of carrying capacity as it relates to the Central Wasatch Commission (CWC) project area.

Despite decades of planning efforts and studies, research and ultimate decision making surrounding the recreational capacity of the Wasatch Cache National Forest remains a difficult task for the USDA Forest Service and others in the Central Wasatch Mountains. Through the Utah Department of Transportation's (UDOT) current EIS process, several stakeholders have asked that the issue of carrying capacity be looked at in concert with efforts to improve traffic congestion and transportation decision options.

At the April 17th Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council Meeting, CWC Stakeholder Pat Shea made a motion that the Central Wasatch Commission further study the issue of carrying capacity prior to the Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS and Cottonwood Canyons Transportation Action Plan work. The motion was supported by a majority of the Stakeholders Council membership present.

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Next Steps

In an effort to ensure the CWC Board is able to make an informed decision about additional carrying capacity analysis, CWC staff will be working with the USDA FS, UDOT and other jurisdictional staff members to provide information and a process for action. Below is a draft timeline for commission input:

June 19th, 2019 CWC Stakeholders Council Meeting: Presentation from Stakeholders Council Vice Chair, Dr. Kelly Bricker (Director, University of Utah Parks, Recreation & Tourism Department), on academic research surrounding carrying capacity concepts, surveys available, and potential approaches to capacity determinations as it relates to the Central Wasatch Mountains.

July 1st, 2019 CWC Public Meeting: Presentation from Stakeholders Council Vice Chair, Dr. Kelly Bricker (Director, University of Utah Parks, Recreation & Tourism Department), on academic research surrounding carrying capacity concepts, surveys available, and potential approaches to capacity determination as it relates to the Central Wasatch Mountains. Discussion led by the UWC National Forest Forest Supervisor Dave Whittikiend on carrying capacity as it relates to National Forest system lands.

July 17th CWC Stakeholders Council Meeting: Discussion led by the UWC National Forest Forest Supervisor Dave Whittikiend on carrying capacity as it relates to National Forest system lands.

August 5th, 2019 CWC Public Meeting: CWC staff will prepare a series of potential actions for CWC board consideration.

The CWC staff look forward to continuing to work with all stakeholders to reach consensus around public lands and resources protections in the Central Wasatch. If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact the team.