MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION STAKEHOLDERS COUNCIL
MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19, 2019 AT 3:00 P.M., COMMUNITY ROOM, 227
EAST BENGAL BOULEVARD, COTTONWOOD HEIGHTS, UTAH

Present: Vice Chair Kelly Bricker, Sarah Bennett, Kirk Nichols, Brian Hutchinson, Will

McCarvill, Matt Kirkegaard, Jan Striefel, Carl Fisher, Dan Knopp, Nathan Rafferty, Del Draper, Michael Braun, Carolyn Wawra, Barbara Cameron, Annalee Munsey, Patrick Shea, Paul Diegel, Tom Diegel, Dave Fields, Wayne Crawford, Don Despain, CWC Attorney Shane Topham, Executive Director

Ralph Becker, Communications Director Lindsey Nielsen

On the Phone: Troy Morgan, Steve Issowitz

Alternates: Mike Maughan (Allen Orr), Julie Geisler (Nate Furman)

16 Excused:

Greg Summerhays, Stetson West, Bill Malone, Megan Nelson, Kurt Hegmann,

Randy Doyle, John Knoblock

A. OPENING

i. Dr. Kelly Bricker will Conduct the Meeting as Vice Chair of the Stakeholders Council ("SHC").

Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council Vice Chair Dr. Kelly Bricker called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

ii. The Stakeholders Council will Consider Approving the Meeting Minutes of Wednesday, May 15, 2019.

MOTION: Barbara Cameron moved to approve the minutes of Wednesday, May 15, 2019. Will McCarvill seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the council.

B. MOUNTAIN ACCORD AND CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION BACKGROUND 3:05-3:15

i. CWC Communications Director Lindsey Nielsen will Provide a Brief Overview of the Mountain Accord, the Central Wasatch Commission, including the Directive for the Stakeholders Council.

ii. Introductions for the Jurisdiction Staff in Attendance.

Communications Director Lindsey Nielsen referenced fact sheets provided earlier to the board members. She explained that the Mountain Accord process was formed between 2013 and 2014 and brought together hundreds of stakeholders with an interest in the Central Wasatch Mountains. The intent was to maintain economic viability, protect environmental quality, and maintain the recreational access and quality of the mountains. The process combined more than 20 organizations and 2,200 stakeholders to discuss a plan for the future to preserve the legacy of the Wasatch. The two-year process ended in the signing of the Mountain Accord charter (the "Mountain Accord"),

which laid out objectives, one of which was to create an interlocal government. It also provided a path forward for transportation in the Cottonwood canyons as well as federal legislation.

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The Mountain Accord was signed in 2015 and the Central Wasatch Commission ("CWC") was formed in July of 2017 through an interlocal agreement ("ILA"). Utah State Code allows existing governmental bodies to form another governmental body through an ILA. The vision of the CWC is to coordinate with the various stakeholders to continue to address canyon transportation issues, environmental protections, recreational stewardship, and economic viability and development as set forth by the Mountain Accord.

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The authorities of the CWC include the power granted through the ILA. Ms. Nielsen reported that at the first Stakeholders Council meeting, each member received a copy of the ILA. The CWC does not have authority over any commission jurisdictions. The CWC also does not have any regulatory, land use, or zoning authority. Similarly, they do not have taxing or condemnation authority. They do, however, have the authority to enter into contracts and hire staff. They can also collectively seek, hold, and distribute funds.

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18 Ms. Nielsen explained that the CWC's governing body is a 10-person board with nine jurisdictions 19 represented. The members were identified as:

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- 21 CWC Chair Chris McCandless – Sandy City Council Member;
- CWC Vice Chair Jackie Biskupski Salt Lake City Mayor; 22
- CWC Treasurer Jim Bradley Salt Lake County Councilmember; 23
- CWC Secretary Chris Robinson Summit County Councilmember; 24
- Jenny Wilson Salt Lake County Mayor; 25
- Mike Peterson Cottonwood Heights Mayor; 26
- Harris Sondak Town of Alta Mayor; 27
- Jeff Silvestrini Millcreek Mayor; 28
- Andy Beerman Park City Mayor; and 29
- Carlos Braceras Utah Department of Transportation Director. 30

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CENTRAL WASATCH NATIONAL CONSERVATION RECREATION AREA ACT C. ("CWNCRA") UPDATE 3:15-3:30

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CWC Executive Director Ralph Becker will Provide a Brief Overview of the i. Goals and Hallmarks of the CWNCRA, including Progress made During May and June.

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CWC Executive Director Ralph Becker reported that the Mountain Accord is very specific in some instances and general in others. It is very specific with respect to legislation. The Mountain Accord calls for pursuing congressional legislation to create a new designation for the Central Wasatch Mountains. It would create new wilderness, identify the approximate wilderness areas, create a new protection area for White Pine Canyon, and create a limit on ski area expansion to the boundaries of the existing areas with a couple of exceptions. The exceptions for Brighton and Alta were described.

- Each of the ski resorts agreed to provide for mountainside lands outside of the ski area boundaries 45
- that were owned by the ski areas to be public and for those lands to be exchanged into the base of ski 46
- 47 areas where there is a mix of public and private land. As a result, more of the base area would become

48 private.

The legislation specified was pursued after the Mountain Accord was signed. The congressional delegation had been involved from the beginning and staff participated in meetings and discussions. In 2016, Congressman Jason Chaffetz introduced legislation. Mr. Becker reported that when he was hired on with the CWC one year ago, his first task was to get the congressional legislation passed. In June of 2018, they presented the last version of the legislation and invited public comment. Since then they have gone through three rounds of drafts, public comment, and refinement. There will soon be another legislation that will reflect the adoption of draft legislation by the CWC last November and include general cleanup of the bill. Another draft will soon be presented that will include a narrative.

Congressman Curtis has committed to pursue the legislation going forward but the timing was unknown. Mr. Becker explained that before the Stakeholders Council was formed, the CWC took the legislation up as their major initiative. Comments were welcome but a full review of the legislation was not anticipated because it is so advanced and the CWC has determined to keep it within their bailiwick.

D. <u>ENVIRONMENTAL DASHBOARD UPDATE 3:30-3:40</u>

i. CWC Communications Director Lindsey Nielsen will Provide a Brief Overview of the Environmental Dashboard, Including Progress Made During May and June.

Ms. Nielsen reported that once the environmental dashboard is online, it will serve as a tool for canyon users and decision makers at every level. It will serve as a broad look at the overall function and health of various environmental indicators specific to the Wasatch mountains. The various indicators were reviewed. The environmental dashboard was originally a project managed in-house by Salt Lake County on behalf of the Mountain Accord, which resulted in collection of the majority of the necessary data. The agreement for creation of the dashboard was held by Salt Lake County on behalf of the Mountain Accord in anticipation of the establishment of the CWC, and was assigned to the CWC following its formation.

The management of the project had pivoted from a Denver-based company to the University of Utah. Staff was working to bring the project to completion and entered into an ILA with the University of Utah. If the ILA is approved at the July meeting, work will begin again on the environmental dashboard. The ILA includes the attachment of a proposal that contains an estimated budget, scope of work, and timeline.

The proposal breaks the work up into two phases. Phase 1 involves the work necessary to bring the environmental indicator data to completion. The estimated timeline to complete the work was November or December of 2019. Phase 2 includes bringing the project fully online, which was expected to be January to July 2020. Staff has also engaged teams at ESRI, a global GIS data organization. Ms. Nielsen commented that it is a living document so there will be ongoing maintenance as data sets need to be updated. That had yet to be defined in the proposal included in the ILA but will be defined when there is a more fully formed Phase 2. If one of the indicators is not at a healthy level, this is a tool that will assist and facilitate conversations with the decision makers.

E. TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS PROCESS AND ROLES 3:40-3:55

i. CWC Executive Director Ralph Becker will Provide a Brief Overview of the Goals and Timeline for the Little Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Impact Statement ("LCC EIS"), and the Cottonwood Canyons Transportation Action Plan ("CCTAP"), including Transportation Work that Took Place in May and June.

Mr. Becker reported that several primary themes came out of the Mountain Accord such as the Federal Lands and Resource Area and Transportation. This last winter, transportation had become particularly challenging in the canyons. It is not a new issue and the potential solutions are not new. Some things have happened, however, that have led to taking action to move forward. The two major projects that are underway were described. One is the Little Cottonwood Canyon Environmental Impact Statement ("LCC EIS"). He explained that both Big and Little Cottonwood Canyons are State Roads so the State is the principal body with regard to decision-making on the roads. Last year they initiated an Environmental Impact Statement ("EIS") and realized that there were numerous ancillary and associated issues needing to be addressed. They stepped back last fall and approached the CWC and asked for help making decisions relative to funding received from the Legislature to make improvements to Little Cottonwood Canyon. To date, they have received \$80 million in funding to make improvements in Little Cottonwood Canyon.

Mr. Becker stated that the LCC EIS is narrowly focused on what UDOT will do while integrating public comments for both projects. He estimated that there had been dozens of studies and efforts dating back 30 years on transportation in the mountains. The effort was reinitiated and was moving forward. John Thomas from UDOT is leading the project and intends to use the Stakeholders Council as a lead advisory group in making recommendations and decisions going forward. Mr. Becker commented that the timing of the environmental dashboard will not necessarily tie in completely with the EIS but the work of the environmental dashboard will provide a common, comprehensive, and accessible database that will serve everyone well.

Mr. Becker explained that the EIS for Little Cottonwood Canyon extends down Little Cottonwood Canyon Road and Wasatch Boulevard to the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon and they are intensively engaged with Cottonwood Heights on improvements to the road. There will be design efforts so that what is decided upon is acceptable and desirable to Cottonwood Heights. The timeline for that decision-making is early 2021. In the meantime, they are planning a number of improvements that do not require a NEPA-type approval.

There was an effort to create a one-stop site with apps to provide canyon traffic information to motorists and visitors. This group was expected to play a major role and ties closely to the lands decision making. One of the conclusions of Mountain Accord was that it be a comprehensive approach to achieve the outcomes agreed upon.

Carlos Braceras has indicated that UDOT has been appropriated money. The expectation is that they will make decisions and start to solve the issues with the canyon roads. The more engagement the better the decisions will be. Procedural issues were discussed. Mr. Becker explained that the scope will identify the issues that need to be addressed in the EIS and be the subject of analysis and decision making. They will also identify criteria for decision making. Sequencing will be the same for both but the EIS will be very formal in nature. The alternatives will then be narrowed to a "reasonable"

range" after which a preferred alternative will be selected. Throughout the process, the Stakeholders Council and others will have opportunities to weigh in. Ultimately, a decision will be made in what the action will be. The Stakeholders Council will be intimately involved in helping guide those decisions.

Del Draper asked for further clarification on the process. Mr. Becker explained that the items associated with the CCTAP are not directly part of the LCC EIS. For example, tolling does not involve a physical change and is a policy decision. The same is true for transit. Those decisions, while critical in terms of what happens in Little and Big Cottonwood canyons, were being worked through the CCTAP and will impact what happens with the LLC EIS.

In response to a question about tolling, Mr. Becker explained that UDOT has the authority to toll in any way they choose as it relates to canyon roads. There are three sets of statutes in the Legislature to provide for tolling to ensure the range and breadth of authority to allow for tolling. They are looking to the CWC to help make that decision. Their expectation, however, is that the work of the CWC will guide their decisions relative to tolling.

 Mr. Becker explained that a timeline was set up so that both phases will work together. For example, a tolling study was to be completed later this fall. That gives the CWC, the Stakeholders Council, and UDOT the ability to time their decision on the LLC EIS. A process was developed so that the two are integrated from a timing and involvement perspective. It is incumbent on the CWC and the Stakeholders Council to match that timeline.

In response to a question raised by Pat Shea, Mr. Becker explained that UDOT is a cooperating agency in the EIS and they are allocating part of the budget to make sure they address the issues associated with water quality. All recognize that protecting the watershed and water quality is the number one priority.

Kurt Nichols asked if there was a commitment to do a Big Cottonwood Canyon EIS. Mr. Becker responded that there is not yet any commitment but the expectation is that when they finish the LLC EIS and the CCTAP, Big Cottonwood Canyon will follow.

F. <u>CREATION OF SHC SUBCOMMITTEE - PILOT MILLCREEK SHUTTLE</u> 3:55-4:00

i. CWC Executive Director Ralph Becker will Provide an Overview of the Pilot Millcreek Shuttle Proposal, Prepared by Stakeholder Brian Hutchinson.

Mr. Becker reported that Brian Hutchinson and others have been working to initiate a pilot program for shuttle service in Millcreek Canyon. He has worked with several agencies to get it up and running and would like it to be a committee effort of the Stakeholders Council ("SHC"). Brian Hutchinson reported that Ms. Nielsen distributed the Millcreek Canyon Transportation Feasibility Study conducted in 2012. Jim Bradley and Mayor Silvestrini have brought it forward as well. Eight basic points were identified for the planning schedule. They are looking for SHC members to get involved in the process and help define the goals of the character of the canyon and the means to reach those goals. There are suggestions in the study that he encouraged the SHC members to read. The first meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, July 16 at 4:00 p.m. at Millcreek City Hall. Those interested were invited to attend.

G. VISITOR USE MANAGEMENT AND VISITOR CAPACITY; APPLIED TOOLS **AND CONCEPTS 4:00-4:45**

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i. Presentation and Discussion by Stakeholders Council Vice Chair Dr. Kelly Bricker on Capacity in the Tri-Canyon Area, including Potential Paths Forward for Consideration of Visitor Capacity, Q&A.

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Vice Chair Bricker explained that the presentation was not meant to lay the groundwork for a carrying capacity study but is intended to acquaint everyone with the concept. There was some hesitation that it is a theoretical academic exercise but all of the information is based on practical applied research. In the field, they collect data and use applied information to help managers and stakeholders make decisions. References were provided showing where the information came from.

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Vice Chair Bricker commented that various agencies collaborated and decided on common language, terms, and processes that could be applied to visitor expansion. She stressed the importance of visitor management. The effects of visitor use and increased used are biophysical and social. Visitor use management is used to ensure that recreational areas and special places and their benefits persist in the long term. They also want to protect resources and improve visitor experiences and support appropriate access for visitation. Ultimately, the goal is to ensure the long-term viability of the resources and social managerial conditions that make desired visitor experiences possible.

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Impacts vary with:

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- Type of use
- Timing of use
- Distribution of use
- Visitor expectations
- Environmental setting
- Number of visitors

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Site-specific factors 32

33 34 35 Visitor capacity is defined as maximum amounts and types of visitor use that an area can accommodate while achieving and maintaining the desired resource conditions and visitor experiences that are consistent with the purposes for which the area was established or reserved.

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The mission of the U.S. Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

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Visitor capacity was described as:

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- A management tool: and in some cases a legal requirement; achieving and maintaining desired conditions.
- A number: maximum amounts and types of visitor use. 44 45
 - Varies over space and time.
 - A necessary precursor to making allocation decisions.
 - Local conditions

1	Agency guidance				
2	o Desired conditions				
3	o Professional judgment				
4	Based on desired conditions.				
5	o Iterative process				
6	 Considers social and biophysical factors 				
7	O Varies				
8 9	Based on a variety of inputs:Research				
10					
11	 Professional judgment, staff experience, expertise Lessons learned from comparable areas 				
12	 Public input 				
13	 Consistent with laws and policies (NEPA) 				
14	O Consistent with laws and policies (172171)				
15	Vice Chair Bricker explained that desired conditions provide a picture of the character, condition, and				
16	quality of an area's resources, settings, and visitor experiences.				
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18	Examples of the USFS desired conditions were identified as:				
19	 Opportunities for a wide spectrum of recreation experiences; 				
20	• Recreation facilities are constructed, reconstructed, relocated, eliminated or decommissioned				
21	as needed to provide a balance of safe, efficient, and environmentally responsible experience				
22	and opportunities; and				
23	 Minimizes conflicts between users. 				
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25	Indicators include:				
26	Track condition				
27	 Assess progress in attaining desired conditions 				
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29	A good indicator is:				
30	Connected to visitor use				
31	• Importance				
32	Sensitive to change				
33	Reasonable				
34	• Reliable				
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36	Thresholds were defined as:				
37	 Management decisions on minimum acceptable condition for indicators. 				
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39	Prerequisites for defining visitor capacity were identified as:				
40	Need a clear statement of desired future conditions to include; Cools describing resource and litions to be questioned even time.				
41 42	 Goals describing resource conditions to be sustained over time Based on a definition of the current amount and type of use 				
43	 Goals defining the experience to be sustained over time 				
4 3	o doars defining the experience to be sustained over time				
45	Visitor Use Level includes:				
46	Level of use				
47	Types of use				
т/	- 1 ypes of use				

1	• Timing of use				
2	 Location of use and behaviors/activities 				
3					
4 5	Terms of use in developing visitor capacity include:				
6	Facility Capacity				
7	• Restrooms				
8	• Parking lots				
9	• Trailheads				
10	• Roads				
11	• Campgrounds				
12	• Lodging				
13					
14	Physical Capacity				
15	 Canyons 				
16	• Cliffs				
17	Water surface				
18	 Shorelines 				
19					
20	Ecological Capacity				
21	Threatened and endangered species				
22	Riparian areas				
23	• Soils				
24	Water quality				
25	• •				
26	Social Capacity				
27	• Encounters				
28	 Crowding 				
29	• Behavior				
30					
31	Relationship between the Amount of Visitor Use and Biophysical Impacts				
32	Biological and physical impacts (biophysical attributes).				
33	• Magnitude of increase in impact that results from an increase in use can be relatively small.				
34	• Changes in recreation use characteristics (behavior and how it is managed) can have much				
35	more dramatic effects.				
36					
37	Area Extent of Impact/Intensity of Impact				
38	• Rely on logic, professional judgment, and based on an understanding of how recreationis				
39	use an area				
40	Infrastructure, management of the area				
41	• Environmental features				
42	 Distribution of attractions 				
43	 Ease of access 				
44	 Durability of sites 				
45	 Ecological attributes (fragile, etc.) 				
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1	miorma	mon Needs Relative to Biophysical Impacts			
2	•]	Number of users			
3	• [Type of use			
4	• Frequency of use				
5	Type of impacts of concern				
6	Regional availability of recreation experiences				
7	Management actions/infrastructure				
8		Monitoring (additional resources needed)			
9		ricinioring (additional resources needed)			
10	Recreational use and impacts on wildlife:				
11	Strategies and Tactics				
12	_	D 1 0.1			
13	 Modify the location of use within the problem areas 				
14	 Modify the timing of use 				
15	 Modify the thining of use Modify type of use/visitor behavior 				
16		Modify visitor expectations			
17		Increase the resistance of the resource			
18		Maintain or rehabilitate the resource			
19	• 1	vianitani of fenatimate the resource			
20	Social C	Carrying Capacity – Descriptive and Prescriptive			
21	Crowdin				
22		Personal characteristics of visitors			
23	-	Visitor motivations			
24		Expectations of crowding			
25		 Level and type of past experience 			
26	• (Characteristics of Other Visitors Encountered			
27		 Mode of travel 			
28		 Behavior 			
29		 Perceived similarity 			
30	• 5	Situational variables			
31		 Types of recreation setting 			
32		 Location within the setting 			
33		 Site design features 			
34					
35	Visual F	Representations or Simulations			
36	Conflict	t:			
37	• [Types of use present, rather than numbers of visitors			
38		Visitor or groups goal or expectation is not met, or is diminished			
39	•]	Motorized vs. non-motorized			
40	•]	Hikers and mountain bikers			
41	• ;	Skiers and snowboarders			
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43	Social Norms:				
44	• `	Vary by setting			
45	• [Timing of use			
46	•]	Many other factors			

The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) consists of the following:

- Three settings: Physical, social, and managerial
- Continuum of six classes
 - o Primitive
 - o Backcountry (Semi-Primitive)
 - o Middle Country (Rural Natural)
 - o Front Country (Rural Developed)
 - o Rural (Suburban)
 - o Urban

Marshall Alford reported that he serves as a Staff Officer for the U.S. Forest Service's Salt Lake Ranger District. He explained that the corridors are the highest use areas and the levels of visitation vary more significantly there. Vice Chair Bricker explained that the Forest Service conducts the National Visitor Use Management monitoring every five years. The last one was done in 2014-2015. They also have a biennial monitoring program where they look at indicators for the health reports. Two processes are in place with reports being done seasonally.

Carl Fisher commented that there is a known but the question is what is the impact on the variables being considered. Vice Chair Bricker stated that the capacity cannot be determined by the number of visitors.

Will McCarvill remarked that the SHC has had trepidations about transportation issues pertaining to solutions to the problems that exist in the canyons. He saw no reason to define the capacity when the Forest Service already has the data. Mr. Alford stated that the focus is on the management directions and choices and not the number.

Vice Chair Bricker suggested a subcommittee be formed to analyze the information and present it in a way that people can understand how the U.S. Forest Service is managing the canyons. She explained that there are limiting attributes in the canyons. One of the ways to accomplish this is not necessarily to increase parking. She explained that there are limits and some are already in place. The subcommittee can also answer questions and synthesize what is being done. It was noted that having infrastructure in place has an impact on resources. Having bathrooms, parking lots, roads, trails, etc. manages the impacts of the visitors.

 Mr. Becker commented on the LLC EIS and stated that as they examine what UDOT will do, some of the potential improvements could result in more people having access. He questioned how those improvements can be managed to achieve the desired results. Physical improvements can be made such as tolling, transit, or trailheads. With regard to the decisions UDOT will be making, they want the SHC to help decide how well the road can be managed in the future to accomplish what is desired. Their objective is how to relieve congestion and build and manage infrastructure. Mr. Becker indicated that UDOT wants to discourage motorists from parking on the road. If parking is not permitted on the road, it becomes an enforcement issue.

Dave Fields reported that currently, UDOT manages parking on the highway in the winter based on avalanche conditions. If they are low, they allow parking on the highway and manage it on a daily

basis. The statistics on accidents and accidents with injuries are related to driving conditions in the canyons by a significant margin.

Vice Chair Bricker stated that her presentation would be made available in its entirety on the CWC website.

Lance Kovol identified himself as the Special Projects Coordinator for Uintah Wasatch Cache and the Forest Service Liaison to UDOT and the Central Wasatch Commission. He explained that any carrying capacity study would have to go through the U.S. Forest Service. It would need to be consistent with existing policy regulations and management. The procedure that would be followed was described.

Michael Braun asked what the resolution would be if there is a determination of capacity. Vice Chair Bricker commented that limiting use is a last resort. They first try to determine if the desired conditions are being provided for. Mr. Alford explained that they recognize that much of what influences user perception about capacity and crowding is subjective and can be influenced by the quality of infrastructure and other definitions of capacity. Possible alternatives were discussed. Mr. Becker explained that if an alternative is provided for increasing parking capacity, at that point it could potentially change in terms of impact on the forest. Mr. Kovol remarked that because the alternatives are not fully developed, they are preparing the surface plans. Based on the monitoring, it was the leadership's belief that the limiting factor is infrastructure.

H. OPEN DISCUSSION 4:45-5:00

I. <u>ADJOURNMENT</u>

MOTION: Will McCarvill moved to adjourn. Don Despain seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Council.

The Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council meeting adjourned at approximately 5:28 p.m.

1 I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate and complete record of the Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholder Council meeting held Wednesday, June 19, 2019.

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4 Teri Forbes

- 5 Teri Forbes
- 6 T Forbes Group
- 7 Minutes Secretary

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9 Minutes Approved: _____