**MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) STAKEHOLDERS COUNCIL TRAILS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD, THURSDAY FEBRUARY 11, 2021, AT 2:00 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED ELECTRONICALLY VIA ZOOM**

**Present:**  John Knoblock, Chair

Steve Van Maren

Chelsea Phillippe

Bob Kollar

Patrick Nelson

Dennis Goreham

Angela Lee

Barbara Cameron

Zach Gardner

Chad Smith

Richard Webb

Dick \_\_\_\_\_\_

Jack \_\_\_\_\_\_

Juan Arce-Laretta

James Hicks

**Staff:** Ralph Becker, CWC Executive Director

Blake Perez, CWC Deputy Director

Lindsey Nielsen, Communications Director

Kaye Mickelson, Office Administrator

1. **Introduce Meeting Attendees and Review Agenda.**

Chair John Knoblock called the meeting to order at approximately 2:00 p.m. He welcomed those present to the Central Wasatch Commission (“CWC”) Stakeholders Council Trails Committee. Participants were asked to introduce themselves.

The agenda for the meeting was reviewed. Discussions were had about voting members. CWC Executive Director, Ralph Becker reported that all decisions are consensus-based and will move forward to the full Stakeholders Council for approval. Trails Committee participants do not necessarily need to be members of the Stakeholders Council. He believed that anyone who wanted to participate in the Trails Committee would be welcome.

1. **Review and Approve January 14, 2021 Trails Committee Meeting Minutes.**

**MOTION:** Barbara Cameron moved to approve the minutes from the January 14, 2021, Trails Committee Meeting. Chair Knoblock seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

1. **Review and Approve the Trails Committee Mission, our Trail System Vision and Our Committee Goals.**

Chair Knoblock reported that the Trails Committee goals were discussed at the previous meeting. The Committee goals included:

* Provide input to Salt Lake City Watershed Management Plan, the Salt Lake County Natural Surface Trails Master Plan, and the U.S. Forest Service Tri-Canyons Trails Master Plan;
* Provide input related to trails and trailheads on the CWC Mountain Transportation System (“MTS”) plan and Visitor Management Study;
* Provide input to the U.S. Forest Service Trails Manager and Salt Lake City Watershed Manager on trail user education and signage; and
* Advocate for enforcement issues related to trails and trailheads.

Chair Knoblock thanked Barbara Cameron for the document she shared related to the scenic byways education and signage package. She reported that the information was from 2008 and went into detail about signage. Both the U.S. Forest Service and Salt Lake City Public Utilities were involved. Ms. Cameron noted that many of the proposed items were now coming to pass.

Dennis Goreham shared an additional Committee goal in the Zoom chat box regarding reaching a consensus and providing input on legislation. Ms. Cameron wondered if there was current legislation that dealt specifically with trails. Mr. Goreham reported that there was the Conservation and Recreation Area Act, Bonneville Shoreline Trail Advancement Act, and a bill that would potentially allow mountain bikes to be used in wilderness areas. Chair Knoblock added the following goal to the Committee goals list:

* Seek consensus and provide input on trails-related legislation.

Chair Knoblock shared the Trails Committee mission, which states:

* The mission of the CWC Stakeholders Council Trails Committee is to advocate for our trails system vision by working in partnership with the CWC, U.S. Forest Service Salt Lake Ranger District, Salt Lake County Parks and Recreation, Unified Police Department, local municipalities, ski resorts, and Salt Lake City Watershed.

Chair Knoblock outlined the trails system vision, which states:

* The trails system in the Central Wasatch area is interconnected, well maintained, has sustainable grades in construction, has directional signage at intersections, has adequate rule enforcement, services a wide variety of trail users, protects sensitive watershed areas, wilderness areas, and critical wildlife habitat and connects users to the many popular and scenic destinations in the Central Wasatch.

Chair Knoblock discussed the trailheads vision, which states:

* The vision of the trailheads is that they have adequate off-road parking, have year-round restrooms, are serviced by convenient year-round mass transit, and have directional, educational, and interpretive signage with accurate maps.

Patrick Nelson believed that a trails plan should mention some sort of fiscal component. Chair Knoblock suggested that the trails system vision could include an additional line that reads:

* Sufficient operations and maintenance funding on a sustained basis.

Ms. Cameron pointed out that it may be beneficial to concentrate on maintenance over the next few years rather than building new trails. Chair Knoblock commented that the suggestion would be added to a future Trails Committee agenda for discussion.

1. **Discuss Our Draft Committee Process.**

Chair Knoblock outlined the Trails Committee process. The drafted document states as follows:

* As the CWC Stakeholders Council Trails Committee is advisory only to the CWC Stakeholders Council, CWC Staff, and the CWC, we will:
  + Seek consensus and approval of our trails system vision from the Stakeholders Council, Staff, and CWC;
  + Make recommendations to the Stakeholders Council, Staff, and CWC on the Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, and U.S. Forest Service plans as they relate to trails in the CWC project area;
  + Make recommendations to the Stakeholders Council, Staff, and CWC on improvements for trail user education, signage, and enforcement issues related to trails and trailheads; and
  + Make recommendations to the Stakeholders Council, Staff, and CWC on trails and trailheads as they relate to the MTS plan and Visitor Management Study.

Ms. Cameron discussed the possibility that the Silver Lake Boardwalk will be replaced. She wondered what kind of input the Trails Committee would have. Chair Knoblock noted that one of the goals is to provide input to the U.S. Forest Service Manager and the Salt Lake City Watershed manager on trail user education and signage. He asked CWC Staff about the process for review and recommendations. Mr. Becker felt it was important for Trails Committee Members to determine whether it would be better to do something as an individual or through the CWC process. He noted that the CWC process required a Stakeholders Council review followed by a CWC Board review. However, it could be beneficial to have the weight of the Commission behind a particular recommendation or suggestion.

1. **Update on Salt Lake County and U.S. Forest Service Trails Master Plan Progress.**

Chair Knoblock reported that he spoke with Walt Gilmore from Salt Lake County Parks and Recreation. According to Mr. Gilmore, they had not successfully obtained funding to start the Natural Surface Trails Master Plan. A mid-year budget adjustment would take place at the end of June and they would request funding for trails planning at that time. However, there was pressure to create a Natural Surface Trails Plan in Dimple Dell Park. Chair Knoblock believed that the Dimple Dell plan may take priority as it was smaller and easier to do than a Natural Surface Trails Plan for the entire county. If funding was received for both, Mr. Gilmore would immediately hire a consultant to take on the Natural Surface Trails Master Plan. Work would then take place during the third and fourth quarter of the year. Otherwise, it would likely not be done until 2022.

Ms. Cameron asked about the money needed for the Natural Surface Trails Master Plan. Chair Knoblock reported that it was an estimated $150,000 to $200,000. He noted that the Salt Lake City Foothills Trail Master Plan involved many public outreach sessions and detailed GIS mapping, but cost approximately $76,000. He believed the estimates for the Natural Surface Trails Master Plan seemed high but pointed out that public outreach sessions added up quickly.

Chair Knoblock discussed the U.S. Forest Service Trails Master Plan. He reported that the Trails Manager for the Salt Lake Ranger District, Zinnia Wilson, and staff were continuing to work on the plan. With volunteer assistance from Save Our Canyons, user-created trails, social trails, and trails on private property had been documented. In addition, the U.S. Forest Service was working to identify the Forest Service designated trails. The goal was to determine the following:

* Which user-created trails could potentially become official trails;
* Which user-created trails should remain as user-created trails;
* Which user-created trails went through sensitive areas and should be eliminated.

Chair Knoblock reported that the U.S. Forest Service was moving forward on this work. They hoped to complete the plan by the end of 2021 but it may not be completed until 2022. He added that the Trails Committee could assist the U.S. Forest Service in the future by reviewing the trails plan.

Ms. Cameron asked about the Cardiff bridge and trail that had been in the works. Chair Knoblock explained that he asked Martin Jensen and Mr. Gilmore to provide a written summary of Mayor Jenny Wilson’s $1 million for trails to see what projects that money went to, what the budgets were, and what the expenditures were. He believed Ms. Wilson from the U.S. Forest Service would be spending that money with the exception of the Cardiff boardwalk and bridge. Chair Knoblock noted that the topic would be discussed further in the next agenda item.

Mr. Nelson discussed the Salt Lake City Watershed Management Plan. He reported that they were working to obtain a third contractor. The contractor would do work related to public engagement. Mr. Nelson clarified that the document was a water policy document and was not a trails-specific planning document. It would look at threats to water quality, such as crowding, climate change, and wildfires. Mr. Nelson hoped that the document would receive a lot of public feedback. Chair Knoblock asked about the timeframe for the plan. Mr. Nelson believed it would take place in mid to late summer to ensure that a lot of public input is received.

1. **Review U.S. Forest Service Trail Project Plans from Forest Supervisor’s 2020 Annual Report.**

Chair Knoblock reviewed the Forest Supervisor’s 2020 Annual Report with the Trails Committee. He reported that there were several items on the list related to trails projects that were either in progress or designated as future items. Those projects included the following:

* Priority projects:
  + Temple Quarry Trailhead;
  + Bridge Trailhead;
  + Lisa Falls Trailhead;
  + Quartzite Trailhead;
  + Mill B Trailhead;
  + White Pine Trailhead;
  + Butler Fork Trailhead;
  + Grizzly Gulch Trailhead;
  + Cardiff Fork Trailhead;
  + Catherine’s Pass Trailhead;
  + Cecret Lake Trailhead;
  + Solitude Trailhead;
  + Scott’s Pass Trailhead;
  + Silver Lake Trailhead;
  + Silver Lake Boardwalk; and
  + Bonneville Shoreline Trail.
* Ongoing and upcoming projects:
  + System Trail Inventory and Trail Management Objectives;
  + Tri-Canyon Area Master Trail Plan;
  + District-wide Trailhead Kiosk and Sign Design/Install;
  + Neffs Canyon Trailhead and Heliwell;
  + Mile High Trailhead NEPA;
  + Upper Millcreek Bike Closure;
  + Millcreek Canyon Kiosk Sign Design;
  + Albion Basin Off-Trail Closure Area;
  + Mountain Bike Trail Plan at Ski Area;
  + Silver Lake Trail and Boardwalk;
  + Albion Meadows Trail Reroutes;
  + Red Pine Trail Reroute;
  + Blanche/Pipeline;
  + Rattlesnake Trail and Access to Bonneville Shoreline Trail;
  + Wasatch Crest Trail Reroutes and Construction;
  + Dog Lake Reroute;
  + Upper Pipeline – Phase 3;
  + Bonneville Shoreline Trail – Big Cottonwood to Ferguson Canyon;
  + Trail Bridge at Elbow Fork;
  + Donut Falls Access Trail, Bridge, and Boardwalk;
  + Willow Lake Trail;
  + Twin Lakes/Lake Mary;
  + Guardsman Trail Access;
  + White Pine Trail Bridge Erosion Repair;
  + Jacob's Ladder Trail; and
  + Lower Big Cottonwood Canyon Climber Restoration Initiative.

There was discussion regarding signs in the canyons. Mr. Goreham reported that the U.S. Forest Service has a Stewardship and Messaging Focus Group dedicated to signs. He noted that Marshall Alford from the Salt Lake Ranger District was in charge of that group. Chair Knoblock felt it was important for the Committee to work in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service.

Chair Knoblock noted that the U.S. Forest Service is not allowed to ask local municipalities to help with funding. He reported that it is a federal crime for the U.S. Forest Service to advocate for funds. However, partners were able to provide funding if they chose to do so. Chair Knoblock stated that the U.S. Forest Service had several projects on their radar but there are only eight full-time U.S. Forest Service employees. Chair Knoblock felt it was important to determine how the Trails Committee could help the U.S. Forest Service meet their objectives.

1. **Brainstorm a List of Existing and Potential Future Short Family-Friendly Hikes.**

Chair Knoblock asked Trails Committee participants to think about possible family-friendly hiking trails in the area. Mr. Goreham wondered whether there were specific criteria to consider. Chair Knoblock suggested that family-friendly hikes should have approximately 1,000-foot elevation and a 2-hour or less round trip. He also noted that a scenic overlook would be beneficial.

Chair Knoblock reported that Silver Lake Trail is an existing family-friendly hike. Ms. Cameron made note of Donut Falls. She commented that there was also a cut over that from the Donut Falls Trail into the Spruces Campground. Chair Knoblock stated that the cut-over was useful for people staying at the campground. He added that Willow Lake Trail is also a very popular and family-friendly hike. Ms. Cameron agreed but pointed out that there are no restrooms and parking issues in the area. She added that families can hike from Silver Lake Boardwalk to Lake Solitude. It is steep in certain places but the hike would be good for families. Chair Knoblock commented that there would need to be better signage. Additionally, the lower section could use additional trail work.

In Little Cottonwood Canyon, there is the Albion Basin to Cecret Lake hike as an existing family-friendly trail. Chair Knoblock noted that many of the existing trails are already heavily used. If additional short, family-friendly hiking trails were developed, some of that use could be better dispersed. This would improve the overall user experience.

Mr. Goreham suggested the Circle All Peak Trail. He commented that it was a little bit longer but was a good family-friendly hike. Mr. Goreham also suggested the Mule Hollow Trail. It offered excellent views of the Storm Mountain area. Chair Knoblock agreed and noted that there was a beautiful viewpoint. He added that the area above the Storm Mountain Picnic Area might be appropriate as well. It wasn’t a well-used area but the trail could be improved and signage could be installed. Ms. Cameron noted that it was a nice trail but was difficult to access when the picnic area was open. Chair Knoblock believed that the trail could be looked into. He noted that it was lower down in the canyon, which would reduce traffic further up the canyon.

Other suggestions included Days Fork Trail and Silver Fork Trail. Ms. Cameron noted that there had been a lot of children on the Spruces winter trail. She believed it would be nice to see historical markers there. Chair Knoblock agreed that it could use signage. Mr. Nelson reported that Matt Hales from the Salt Lake Ranger District was working with Louise Haven at the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation. He believed they were making interim signs for the winter trails at Spruces.

Mr. Nelson wondered whether the creation of additional trails would increase demand. He commented that he would like to see something happen at Donut Falls Trail to keep people away from the water and make the trail safer. Mr. Nelson noted that the trail was slippery in certain sections and mentioned accidents that had taken place in the past. Chair Knoblock stated that it may be beneficial for there to be a viewpoint that the Donut Falls Trail led to rather than the trail leading to the water.

Chair Knoblock discussed the need for better signage at trails near Snowbird, particularly into Mineral Basin. He also reported that when a service road was put in, the lower section of one of the loop trails was damaged. Chair Knoblock noted that his attempts to reach out had been unsuccessful on an individual level. He believed that as a group, it may be possible to convince Snowbird to fix the trail. However, he noted that the trail was on private property.

Chair Knoblock asked the Trails Committee participants to continue brainstorming possible family-friendly trails. The item could be revisited in the future.

1. **Review Mountain Accord Trails Plan and Note Gaps from U.S. Forest Service Program of Work.**

Chair Knoblock asked CWC staff to share a map of the Mountain Accord Trails Plan. He reported that during the Mountain Accord process, there had been two trail subcommittee sessions. The second session was led by Will McCarvill and focused on improving the interconnectivity of trails. Chair Knoblock overviewed the Mountain Accord Trails Plan map with the Trails Committee.

In Little Cottonwood Canyon, the Mountain Accord Trails Plan proposed a continuous trail down Little Cottonwood Canyon. Chair Knoblock noted that there was clearly user demand for this recreational resource as the U.S. Forest Service and Save Our Canyons had tried to eliminate several user-created trails. If there was a designed trial that went all the way down the canyon, that would be beneficial. In the lower part of Little Cottonwood Canyon, a separate bicycle trail from the Little Cottonwood Creek Trail (sometimes referred to as the Temple Quarry Trail) could potentially reduce user conflicts. The Mountain Accord Trails Plan also included a trail in Little Cottonwood Canyon that would connect Snowbird to Alta and a designated trail that went through Grizzly Gulch and up to Twin Lakes Pass.

In Big Cottonwood Canyon, the Mountain Accord Trails Plan proposed a continuous trail up Big Cottonwood Canyon that would connect from Silver Fork through Solitude and then all the way up to Silver Lake. It also proposed improvements to the Pipeline Trail at the bottom of the canyon as well as a trail that connected Brighton to Guardsman Pass. Discussions were had regarding a trail at the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon below Storm Mountain. Mr. Nelson was not sure who owned the land or what it is connected to. He noted that parking in the lower portion of the canyon was very limited. Chair Knoblock reported that the Mountain Accord Trails Plan also included some proposed improvements to the Honeycomb Canyon Trail.

In Millcreek Canyon, the Mountain Accord Trails Plan proposed connections from Elbow Fork up to Big Water Trail. Chair Knoblock reported that the trail would be finished this spring and was a critical connector. The Trails Plan also envisioned a trail that connected to Lambs Canyon from the top of Millcreek Canyon. However, Chair Knoblock noted that this could be difficult because the area was located on various properties.

In Parleys Canyon, the Mountain Accord Trails Plan proposed increased trail development to relieve pressure on the tri-canyons area. He noted that there would be easy access because I-80 was nearby. The plan suggested a trail from Mountain Dell up to Parleys Summit. Chair Knoblock also mentioned the Great Western Hiking Trail that went up to the ridgeline above the Little Dell Reservoir. He commented that a designed trail that came from the Lambs Canyon exit up to the Great Western Hiking Trail would be an improvement.

Chair Knoblock reported that Summit County has a robust municipal trails program. He mentioned the Utah Olympic Park Trail that had been completed. Mr. Nelson commented that he and Chair Knoblock should discuss the land in Parleys Canyon during the trails planning process. He added that the Lambs Canyon Road was narrow. Directing any sort of use to that area may cause issues. Chair Knoblock noted that one of the reasons to connect from the Lambs Canyon exit was so more people would park at the exit instead. That would reduce vehicles going up the sub-standard road.

Chair Knoblock discussed future agenda items for the CWC Stakeholders Council Trails Committee. He commented that he would reach out to participants for suggestions ahead of the next meeting. Communications Director, Lindsey Nielsen reported that the next Trails Committee Meeting would take place on Thursday, March 11, 2021.

**MOTION:** Barbara Cameron moved to adjourn. Chair Knoblock seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

The Central Wasatch Commission Transportation Committee Meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

***I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central Wasatch Commission Transportation Committee Meeting held Thursday, January 14, 2021.***

Teri Forbes

Teri Forbes

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Minutes Secretary

Minutes Approved: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_