

CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION

RESOLUTION No. 2022-15

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING A RESTATEMENT AND RECOMMITMENT CONCERNING THE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE MOUNTAIN ACCORD

WHEREAS, the Central Wasatch Commission (the “CWC”) is an interlocal entity formed in 2017 whose principal purpose is to better assure the wise stewardship of the Wasatch mountain range (the “*Central Wasatch*”) in Salt Lake, Summit and Wasatch counties—including its watershed, recreational areas and natural beauty—so that future generations can continue to benefit from that wonderful and integral part of Utah’s natural environment; and

WHEREAS, one of the CWC’s key objectives is to advance and implement the concepts promulgated by the Mountain Accord, which is the 13 July 2015 joint written statement that was the culmination of a years-long, consensus-based planning dialogue among a host of public and private entities and individuals interested in the future of the Central Wasatch (the “*Accord*”); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to its Resolution 2022-06 the CWC’s board of commissioners (the “*Board*”) authorized and directed the CWC to enter into a consulting agreement with Common Ground Institute (“*CGI*”) for a situational assessment and facilitation for a path forward on the terms and conditions specified in that agreement (the “*Agreement*”); and

WHEREAS, on 7 March 2022 CGI presented its final report to the Board, entitled “Central Wasatch Commission Situational Assessment and Recommendations” (the “*Report*”); and

WHEREAS, one of the Report’s key recommendation is for the Board to focus on the more timeless values and principles of the Accord and adopt a restatement and recommitment to those values and principles in substantially the form that is attached as an exhibit to this resolution (the “*Restatement*”); and

WHEREAS, on 7 March 2022 the Board met in regular session to consider, among other things, adopting and approving the Restatement; and

WHEREAS, after careful consideration, the Board has determined that it is in the best interests of the CWC and its constituents to so act;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the Central Wasatch Commission that the attached Restatement be, and hereby is, adopted and approved by the CWC.

This Resolution, assigned no. 2022-15, shall take effect immediately upon passage.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 7th day of March 2022.

ATTEST:

CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION

By: _____
Jeff Silvestrini, Secretary

By: _____
Christopher F. Robinson, Chair of the Board

VOTING OF THE BOARD:

Roger Bourke	Yea ____	Nay ____
Jim Bradley	Yea ____	Nay ____
Max Doilney	Yea ____	Nay ____
Dan Knopp	Yea ____	Nay ____
Erin Mendenhall	Yea ____	Nay ____
Christopher Robinson	Yea ____	Nay ____
Jeff Silvestrini	Yea ____	Nay ____
Michael Weichers	Yea ____	Nay ____
Jennifer Wilson	Yea ____	Nay ____
Monica Zoltanski	Yea ____	Nay ____

DEPOSITED in the office of the Secretary this 7th day of March 2022.

FILED AND RECORDED this ____ day of March 2022.

A RESTATEMENT AND RECOMMITMENT CONCERNING THE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE MOUNTAIN ACCORD

March 7, 2022

The Central Wasatch mountain range is beloved by those of us who live along both sides of its ridgeline. We live, we work, we hike, we bike, we ski, we discover wildlife, we ramble and amble and find solitude amid one of the world's most spectacular backyards. And even as these mountains are a source of peace and spiritual renewal, they are also our source for water and, literally, the reason life is possible in Utah's arid climate.

Amid threats from population growth and related increases in summer and winter use of the canyons, climate change, development pressures, and piecemeal decision-making, we know that we need to take action now to ensure we have clean water, a thriving economy, and an exemplary quality of life — not only for current generations but for those that come after us. The time has come to truly consider the future of this precious landscape.

By adopting this Restatement and Recommitment of the Values and Principles of the Mountain Accord (this "*Restatement and Recommitment*"), we hereby state the values and principles that we hold as foundational to any actions affecting the Central Wasatch. This Restatement and Recommitment does not restate the negotiated outcomes of the Mountain Accord charter. Implementation of negotiated outcomes of the Mountain Accord charter remains a priority of the Central Wasatch Commission to the greatest extent achievable. We are committed to promoting transparent decision-making processes with robust public engagement that result in consensus-based solutions to the challenges facing our canyons.

We urge public and private entities to heed these principles as they contemplate policies or actions within or directly affecting lands within the Central Wasatch.

RECITALS

WHEREAS, the Mountain Accord Charter, developed through an extensive two-year public engagement and consensus-building process and signed in August 2015 by the Mountain Accord Executive Board and over 150 stakeholders, represents a consensus position of the signers of the values and principles to guide decisions relating to the Central Wasatch mountains and also stated specific negotiated interrelated actions stakeholders committed to pursuing in order to resolve specific challenges and still maintain the delicate balance of priorities for the Central Wasatch; and

WHEREAS, the Central Wasatch Commission is a governing body whose purpose is to serve as a multi-issue, cross-jurisdictional, stakeholder-inclusive forum created pursuant to the Mountain Accord charter and charged with developing recommended solutions with consensus support consistent with the values and principles embodied in the Mountain Accord charter to challenges facing the Central Wasatch, including implementing the negotiated outcomes of the Mountain Accord charter, and whereas the Central Wasatch Commission created the Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council to receive frequent and ongoing input with the numerous non-governmental stakeholders of the Central Wasatch mountain range; and

WHEREAS, the Central Wasatch Commission seeks to renew and restate its commitment to the values and principles memorialized in the 2015 Mountain Accord Charter as it works in coordination with other governmental and non-governmental partners to take desired actions and implement solutions consistent with the principles and values of the Mountain Accord Charter that maintain the delicate balance of priorities for the Central Wasatch mountain range; and

WHEREAS, the Central Wasatch mountains are a treasured natural resource and we place a high value on the natural environment, wilderness qualities, watershed health, and aesthetics of these mountains; and

WHEREAS, the Central Wasatch mountains are the primary source of drinking water for Utah's growing urban populations and are the reason the region flourishes in Utah's arid climate; and

WHEREAS, the Central Wasatch mountains are a vital ecological unit and policies governing the unit should work together in harmony, not diverge from one another, in the interest of improving the health of the land and our watersheds; and

WHEREAS, the mountain environment offers diverse recreational experiences that promote active lifestyles and enhances the quality of life in the region; and

WHEREAS, the Central Wasatch mountains are an invaluable asset to the local and state economies, a beloved amenity for residents and companies that choose to locate in the region, and a key component of Utah's tourism industry; and

WHEREAS, population growth and related increases in summer and winter use of the canyons, climate change, recreation use, traffic congestion, economic development pressures, land-use conflicts, and piecemeal and fragmented decision-making processes threaten the future health and viability of the mountains; and

WHEREAS, the Central Wasatch Commission was created by interlocal agreement as a consensus-based body comprised of elected representatives from government and non-elected representatives of governmental entities with responsibilities in the Central Wasatch mountains to engage with federal agencies, businesses, landowners, environmental, and recreation interests in and adjacent to both sides of the Central Wasatch; and

WHEREAS, the Central Wasatch Commission places a high value on public engagement, transparency, and the participation of all stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, the Central Wasatch Commission has engaged commercial interests and private property owners as willing participants; and

WHEREAS, the Central Wasatch Commission has brought together stakeholders and experts to consider future trends, visions, and goals for the Central Wasatch mountains; and

WHEREAS, the Central Wasatch Commission includes a Stakeholders Council and other processes for public comment and to collect feedback; and

WHEREAS, public feedback reflects a desire to protect the integrity of this iconic landscape for its ecological values and outstanding opportunities for dispersed and commercial recreation; and

WHEREAS, the Central Wasatch Commission received and incorporated public comment into this Restatement and Recommitment.

NOW, THEREFORE, we agree as follows:

This Restatement and Recommitment represents the consensus positions of the Central Wasatch Commission. It serves as a formal recommendation and documented reference for current and future decision-makers at the private, local, state, and federal levels.

The intent of this Restatement and Recommitment is to benefit current and future generations by establishing an integrated, comprehensive, landscape-scale framework for the future of the Central Wasatch mountains that provides for the long-term protection of the region's water, lands, environment, recreational opportunities, and economic prosperity. We support a transportation system that serves these values.

We agree to pursue federal, state, local, and private action for land designations, voluntary land exchanges, conservation easements, and transit/transportation solutions where agreement is reached among stakeholders to support such actions which are consistent with the values and principles of this Restatement and Recommitment. We recognize that action on transit/transportation solutions would likely require corresponding action developed through a public consensus-building process relating to land designations, voluntary land exchanges, or conservation easements in order to maintain the delicate balance of principles and values sought by the public and to protect the future health and viability of the mountains.

We recognize that while certain actions may be pursued, there are related conditions that have been outlined previously in the Mountain Accord or may be subsequently developed that must occur in conjunction with any contemplated federal, state, local, or private action as a condition for support for such action, in order to maintain the delicate balance of principles and values sought by the public and to protect the future health and viability of the Central Wasatch.

We agree to support this Restatement and Recommitment and to work diligently and in good faith to adhere to the values and principles herein – both as a whole and within our respective jurisdictions.

Specifically, we restate these principles to guide decisions relating to the Central Wasatch:

1. A natural ecosystem that is conserved, protected, and restored such that it is healthy, functional, and resilient for current and future generations.

2. A recreation system that provides a range of settings, recognizes current and increasing demand, and accommodates an environmentally sustainable level of use by encouraging the majority of use at thoughtfully designed locations (nodes) with convenient access, while protecting solitude, nature, and other backcountry values.

3. A sustainable, safe, efficient, multi-modal transportation system that provides year-round choices to residents, visitors, and employees; connects to the overall regional network; serves a diversity of commercial and dispersed recreation uses; is integrated within the fabric of community values and lifestyle choices; supports land-use objectives and is compatible with the unique environmental characteristics of the Central Wasatch mountains.

4. Broadly shared economic prosperity that enhances the quality of life and preserves natural and scenic resources and infrastructure that is attractive, sustainable, and provides an opportunity for visitors and residents.

We seek the following outcomes:

A. To protect watersheds and ensure existing and future culinary water resources are reliable and of high quality. To preserve lands that provide critical terrestrial and aquatic habitats, corridors for wildlife, natural and scenic values, recreational opportunities and to restore degraded lands.

B. To designate certain U.S. Forest Service lands in the study area for additional federal protections. To bind ski resort boundaries on public land within the federal designation.

C. To reduce the patchwork nature of public and private land ownership so that the U.S. Forest Service is managing undeveloped rather than developed lands. To consolidate U.S. Forest Service lands, to obtain inholdings, and to transfer privately held upper watershed lands with environmental and recreation values from willing sellers into public ownership.

D. To encourage development patterns that reduce sprawl and preserve open space, sensitive environments, community character, and quality of life in the mountains.

E. To focus future development in urban areas and recreation nodes near transit corridors.

F. To limit additional mountain development in the Cottonwood Canyons to clustered nodes within existing disturbed areas at the bases of the existing ski areas.

G. To respect the rights of private property owners to own, use and develop their property as prescribed by existing local laws and ordinances.

H. To the extent mountain property is developed, we agree to promote development with the following characteristics:

1. Thoughtfully designed to complement the natural setting and maintain open spaces;

2. Compatible with the communities as defined in local land-use plans and ordinances; and
3. Focused around transit stations to encourage walking, biking, and transit use, and to reduce single-occupancy automobile use.

I. To seek plans, ordinances, and policies that support the land-use intentions and intended outcomes outlined in this section for the Cottonwood Canyons through cooperation with local land-use authorities, environmental organizations, property owners, businesses, and other interested parties.

J. To design a balanced recreation system with a wide variety of recreational opportunities for residents and visitors that will reduce the degradation of natural resources caused by such uses. To address the increasing visitor uses, and their impacts on the environment and respect competitor users in limited terrain. To focus recreation infrastructure at strategically located and designed nodes, to provide convenient access at these nodes, to provide appropriate restrooms at roadside trailheads, and to accommodate and manage growth in recreation uses. To integrate trail access with transit solutions.

K. To create transportation connections between the economic and population centers in the urban areas and the recreation destinations in the Central Wasatch mountains that support the environmental, recreation, and economic goals of the Mountain Accord charter and serve residents, businesses, and visitors. Such transportation connections should provide equitable access to transit, walking, and biking and decrease single-occupancy vehicle use. To focus transit improvements in locations that are compatible with the unique environmental character of the Central Wasatch.

L. To plan and implement transportation solutions in the canyons with the goal of reducing risks associated with avalanches, winter weather, rockslides, incidents, and other hazards and to improve emergency response capabilities and evacuation routes.

To achieve the outcomes described above, we agree to pursue a comprehensive and interdependent package of actions including voluntary land exchanges, land designations, transportation improvements, environmental monitoring, visitor use management, and other actions. Because actions relating to the Central Wasatch mountains are often interdependent, we recognize that any proposed individual actions may warrant negotiation, consensus-building, and other associated actions to maintain the balance of priorities desired for the Central Wasatch.

We agree to continue to build upon public engagement efforts, to maintain public transparency, and to implement a disclosure procedure for conflicts of interest for future efforts.