



Summary List of Public Comment Issues And Staff Recommendations

The staff has summarized public comments and provided recommendations for possible changes to the Draft Restatement and Recommitment of Values of Mountain Accord Statement. The comments and recommendations have been organized by topic.

MOUNTAIN ACCORD AND THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION AS AN ENTITY

Public Comment: Support for Restatement.

Staff Recommendation: Staff generally agrees with this statement.

Public Comment: Mountain Accord is fatally flawed and should not be pursued.

Staff Recommendation: Staff disagrees.

Public Comment: Changes since Mountain Accord suggest Mountain Accord not achievable and should not be implemented.

Staff Recommendation: While conditions have changed since Mountain Accord was signed in 2015, the foundation of Mountain Accord should serve as a basis for moving forward. The Restatement and Recommitment distills the objectives and values of Mountain Accord and suggests moving forward and adjusting given 2022 conditions.

Public Comment: The interdependent aspect of Mountain Accord for the various elements cannot be successful; objectives should be pursued independently.

Staff Recommendation: The Mountain Accord agreement was achieved by all major parties recognizing that some tradeoffs were necessary for solutions in the Central Wasatch Mountains. With the different forums for decisions and passage of time, the major elements – lands designations and transportation solutions – are no longer timely for concurrent, interdependent action. However, to maintain the balance of actions, staff recommends that the elements be considered in conjunction with one another to seek consensus solutions in the Central Wasatch Mountains. The timing and different venues for decisions of transportation solutions and lands designations will inevitably follow different paths: transportation solutions are largely state and local action while lands protection and designations are largely federal actions. To find common support amongst stakeholders and jurisdictions, the Central Wasatch Commission should continue to seek effort to achieve the basic objectives of Mountain Accord.

The specific language, "we agree to pursue a comprehensive and interdependent package of actions" could be rewritten as follows: "we agree to pursue a package of actions past

negotiations that tied certain elements together but acknowledge that those connections need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.”

Public Comment: If there are changes from Mountain Accord on one side of the ledger – development accommodation, there should be concurrent changes on the other side of the ledger – preservation. Lands and resources need better protection.

Staff Recommendation: Mountain Accord was successful because interests from all sides agreed to achieve objectives that respected other interests’ objectives. Lands protection was an integral element in Mountain Accord; transportation solutions that involved significant improvements in the transportation system were counterbalanced with additional lands and user protections. That sentiment is desirable for all major actions going forward.

Public Comment: Efforts going forward in the Central Wasatch Mountains should not be done piecemeal, transportation systems should be considered in regional context, and lands and ecosystems should be preserved as recommended in the Restatement and Recommitment.

Staff Recommendation: Staff agrees with this statement though notes that conditions have changed since Mountain Accord and work on important Mountain Accord elements will need to be done concurrently, though will be done in different venues.

Public Comment: Reduce ambiguity around commitments to future actions of the Central Wasatch Commission.

Staff Recommendation: As future work on a Compact or other documents to specify Central Wasatch Commission actions going forward, specificity could be added to reflect the specific objectives of the Central Wasatch Commission.

LANDS PROTECTION, DESIGNATIONS

Public Comment: Mountain Accord Ski Area land exchanges are not viable and shouldn’t be pursued.

Staff Recommendation: The Restatement and Recommitment statement acknowledges that the land exchange proposals in Mountain Accord are not viable as proposed and does not recommend pursuing them. The possibility of individual land exchanges or otherwise achieving the objectives of Mountain Accord through individual lands actions are suggested in the Restatement and Recommitment and should remain as possibilities.

Public Comment: The Federal land designations through Congressional legislation should not be pursued; future outcomes for lands should be initiated anew.

Staff Recommendation: Achieving lands and resources protection through federal designations was a central element of Mountain Accord. While some elements aren’t viable at this time, most notably the land exchanges, staff recommends that the recommendations of the Common Ground Institute work – to continue to pursue federal designations – remain an objective of the Central Wasatch Commission.

Public Comment: Do not include pursuit of wilderness and other federal designations in future proposals of the Central Wasatch Commission.

Staff Recommendation: While the Forest Service has informally expressed a preference for not being bound by additional statutory direction for the Central Wasatch Mountains (including wilderness), that issue was known at the time of Mountain Accord and has been a general sentiment by the Forest Service for all specific statutory direction that binds management. The Mountain Accord process considered this sentiment but concluded that demands on the Central Wasatch Mountains and the need for more certainty and permanence about management going forward requires that local desires be better reflected and made more permanent through statutory direction through federal designations. That desire remains an important element for the Central Wasatch Commission going forward.

GOVERNANCE OF CWC

Public Comment: Participation with the Forest Service, UDOT, Salt Lake County, State Legislature, and Governor’s Office should be visibly pursued and done by the Central Wasatch Commission.

Staff Recommendation: Consistent with the recommendation of CGI, staff agrees that the more informal relationships with Central Wasatch Mountain jurisdictions outside the Central Wasatch Commission be directly engaged going forward.

Public Comment: Provide clarification that the Central Wasatch Commission Board is a decision-making body.

Staff Recommendation: The staff believes that this topic of governance and decision-making roles has been addressed in the Restatement and Recommitment and further explained in the draft Central Wasatch Commission Strategic Plan.

Public Comment: To achieve renewed cooperation and success, the Central Wasatch Commission should work directly together and use Big Cottonwood Canyon transportation as a forum.

Staff Recommendation: Using the Central Wasatch Commission Transportation Committee as a forum, working on Big Cottonwood Canyon transportation issues with a range of jurisdictions and stakeholders would provide an opportunity for the Central Wasatch Commission to seek a consensus solution for an important transportation topic.

SPECIFIC CHANGES IN PROVISIONS

Public Comment: Climate change should be acknowledged and addressed in a Restatement and Recommitment of Mountain Accord.

Staff Recommendation: The Restatement and Recommitment has included consideration of climate change in future actions related to Mountain Accord.

Public Comment: Add “well-maintained, year-round” to restrooms.

Staff Recommendation: Staff agrees with this recommended change.

Public Comment: Maybe we need a "Whereas management and stewardship of the Central Wasatch is very difficult because of the many various public and private landownership and the overlapping management responsibilities of agencies including the USFS, UDOT, UTA, and SLCPU" and then "we agree to work in a close collaborative effort with the public and private landowners and all of the governmental agencies involved in the management of Central Wasatch lands including USFS, UDOT, UTA, and SLCPU."

Staff Recommendation: We believe both phrases are needed; they are different elements of the Restatement and Recommitment statement.

Public Comment: Add "from willing sellers" to the statement about land acquisition.

Staff Recommendation: This change has been made in the final draft statement.

Public Comment: The term "recreation" is a very subjective one, and its meaning depends upon the viewpoint of the people engaging in the activity. Therefore, since the restaurant/reception centers in the canyons do provide recreation opportunities for thousands of residents and visitors every month, please clarify the words "recreation nodes" in section v on page 4 by changing them to read "ski resort and restaurant nodes."

Staff Recommendation: The language could be clarified per the suggestion, but the Statement language in question includes "urban areas," which includes many commercial locations. Staff recommends that the verbiage "existing commercial and recreation" be added to this section.