



9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46

**MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) HYBRID STAKEHOLDERS COUNCIL MEETING, HELD WEDNESDAY, MAY 18, 2022, AT 3:00 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED BOTH IN-PERSON AND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM. THE ANCHOR LOCATION WAS THE WASATCH FRONT REGIONAL COUNCIL OFFICES.**

- Present:** Will McCarvill, Chair  
Barbara Cameron, Co-Chair  
Brian Hutchinson  
Carl Fisher  
Del Draper  
Ed Marshall  
John Knoblock  
Kirk Nichols  
Megan Nelson  
Nathan Rafferty  
Pat Shea  
Paul Diegel  
Randy Doyle  
Sarah Bennett  
Troy Morgan  
Alex Porpora  
Kelly Boardman  
Maura Hahnenberger  
Roger Borgenicht  
Hilary Lambert  
Amber Broadway  
Danny Richardson  
Jennifer Eden  
Serena Yau  
Joanna Wheelton

- Staff:** Ralph Becker, CWC Executive Director  
Blake Perez, CWC Deputy Director  
Lindsey Nielsen, Communications Director  
Kaye Mickelson, Office Administrator

1 **Others:** Mike Doyle  
2 Jeff Bossard  
3 Carolyn Keigley  
4 Ned Hacker  
5 Aaron London  
6 Roger Bourke  
7

8 **Opening**  
9

10 **1. William McCarvill will Conduct the Special Meeting as the Chair of the Stakeholders**  
11 **Council.**  
12

13 Chair William McCarvill called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. He reported that the Central  
14 Wasatch Commission (“CWC”) Stakeholders Council Meeting was a hybrid meeting.  
15

16 **2. The Stakeholders Council will Consider Approving the Stakeholder Council DRAFT**  
17 **Minutes of Wednesday, April 20, 2022.**  
18

19 **MOTION:** Will McCarvill moved to APPROVE the April 20, 2022 Stakeholders Council  
20 Meeting Minutes. There was no second. The motion passed unanimously.  
21

22 **Visitor Use Study Progress Update**  
23

24 **1. Dr. Jordan Smith will Give a Progress Update on the Second Phase of the Central**  
25 **Wasatch Visitor-Use Study.**  
26

27 Dr. Jordan Smith shared information related to the Visitor Use Study. He reported that in October  
28 2021, results from Phase I of the Visitor Use Study were shared with the Stakeholders Council.  
29 That information was overviewed for context. Dr. Smith explained that the Institute of Outdoor  
30 Recreation and Tourism was created in 1998 by the State Legislature. It was created to be a  
31 resource for different land management agencies, local municipalities, and governmental entities.  
32 The intention was to provide information about how to best manage outdoor recreation. Most of  
33 the Institute of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism's work was related to visitor use monitoring and  
34 management. It looked at how many people were participating in recreation, the economic benefits  
35 generated by that use, and what activities were participated in most. This was examined in a  
36 variety of ways, such as sending individual crews out to trailheads and mobile location data.  
37

38 Dr. Smith overviewed some of the information that would be shared during the presentation. He  
39 explained that there would be an overview of the Visitor Use Study objectives, the Phase I results,  
40 and detailed findings for the work that had been completed as part of Phase II. There would also  
41 be information about high elevation lakes in Little Cottonwood Canyon and the use those lakes  
42 were receiving. Dr. Smith outlined the objectives of the Visitor Use Study, which were as follows:  
43

- 44 • To provide the diverse set of stakeholders who use and value the canyons with a  
45 scientifically grounded understanding of the following:
  - 46 ○ The spatial and temporal dynamics of current and projected outdoor recreation use;

- 1           ○ The extent to which outdoor recreation activity within the canyons affects key
- 2           indicators of ecological and physical resource conditions; and
- 3           ○ The likely changes in ecological and physical resource conditions under the
- 4           projected levels of use.

5  
6 All of the resource conditions that were monitored across the Central Wasatch fell within one of  
7 three buckets:

- 8
- 9           • ecological conditions (trail conditions, habitat, and water quality);
- 10          • social conditions (use, economic benefits, and satisfaction levels); and
- 11          • physical conditions (parking and restroom facilities).
- 12

13 Most of the work so far had focused on the social conditions, which had to do with the amount of  
14 use that was happening. There had also been some focus on how the social conditions were  
15 impacting the ecological conditions. For instance, how use levels impacted the trails.

16  
17 The Visitor Use Study work was grounded in the framework of Federal Land Management  
18 Agencies, including the U.S. Forest Service, and how those agencies managed outdoor recreation  
19 on public lands. Dr. Smith overviewed the Interagency Visitor Use Management Framework. It  
20 began with the foundation, which clarified the purpose and need of a Recreation Management  
21 Plan. The existing conditions were examined and management to suit those conditions was  
22 considered. The Visitor Use Study would provide a lot of the data that would be used in that  
23 foundational piece. From there, management agencies could work to define what the desired  
24 conditions were.

25  
26 Dr. Smith shared some of the Visitor Use Study history as it related to Phase I of the project. He  
27 explained that the work started at the beginning of 2021. There was a scoping period where a  
28 series of interviews were conducted with stakeholders to better understand the key issues and  
29 concerns about recreation use in the Central Wasatch. There was also a Legislative review, where  
30 all of the policy and regulatory guidance documents that related to outdoor recreation use were  
31 identified. Additionally, there was an exhaustive data review, where existing data was examined  
32 and identified. Lastly, some potential indicators were identified for long-term monitoring. The  
33 Phase I Report was available online for further Stakeholders Council review.

34  
35 Dr. Smith reported that the Visitor Use Study was currently at the beginning of Phase II. There  
36 had been a short window for data collection at the end of the fall season in 2021, but the Utah State  
37 University team was looking toward data collection for Phase II. Through the first scoping effort,  
38 in Phase, I of the project, a variety of different indicators were identified. These indicators could  
39 be used to monitor recreation use and the potential impacts. The indicators included:

- 40
- 41           • Trails;
- 42           • Areas around high elevation lakes;
- 43           • Backcountry campsites;
- 44           • Water bodies; and
- 45           • Access points.
- 46

1 The trails were focused on first because those were areas that were highly susceptible to increases  
2 in both use and environmental degradation. Trails tended to be relatively flat and could experience  
3 a loss in vegetation as use continued to increase. Over the course of the project, the Utah State  
4 University team would look at how use impacted the indicators. Dr. Smith discussed the trail  
5 condition work, which was done at White Pine, Red Pine, Cecret Lake, and Lake Catherine.  
6

7 The CWC expressed a desire to understand how much use was too much use. For example, how  
8 much use was impacting resource conditions. Use was the primary variable that the study focused  
9 on, but other variables were considered as well, which could indicate why a trail was in its current  
10 condition. The variables were environmental (slope of the trail and the vegetation around the trail)  
11 and managerial (variables that determine what use was allowed on individual trails and whether  
12 the use was limited to specific days or times of the year).  
13

14 Dr. Smith discussed the amount of data there was related to trail use across the Central Wasatch.  
15 Over the last several years, the Forest Service and Wasatch Backcountry Alliance had collected  
16 trail use data at different trailhead locations. A map was shown to illustrate the specific geographic  
17 coordinates where the trail counters had been set out. Over 40 trail counters had been placed over  
18 the last several years, which had resulted in a good amount of data. However, there were some  
19 drawbacks to consider as well. Dr. Smith explained that the counters were only out for specific  
20 periods of time. Often the decision was made to rotate the counters to different locations. Some  
21 of the counters had consistent data, but others only had data for one month out of the year. As a  
22 result, the data was somewhat inconsistent and was not comprehensive.  
23

24 The Visitor Use Study would look at the data that had already been collected through the trail  
25 counters. That data would be used to calibrate the mobile location data. Dr. Smith reported that a  
26 statistical model had been created that would predict trail use across the Central Wasatch. The  
27 model predicted trail use at every location where a trail counter was present. Some known  
28 predictors could be used, such as the canyon (Millcreek Canyon, Little Cottonwood Canyon, or  
29 Big Cottonwood Canyon), as well as the month, and the day of the week. The model made it  
30 possible to estimate use for all trail counter locations for all times of the year. This would make it  
31 possible to overcome some of the previously mentioned data gaps. Dr. Smith shared an example  
32 graph from White Pine Trailhead using the predictive model.  
33

34 Dr. Smith noted that most of the trail counters were located at trailheads. They were 100 to 200  
35 meters off of the trail and tended to be located away from major ski resorts. The mobile location  
36 data made it possible to overcome a lot of the data barriers. Dr. Smith reported that the mobile  
37 location data used for the Visitor Use Study came from smartphone apps that had location-based  
38 services (“LBS”) installed on them. LBS collected geographic data related to the position and  
39 movement of the phone. That data could be used to estimate trail use at destinations where  
40 counters were not located. This meant there would be a highly accurate representation of the  
41 amount of use occurring at different trails across the entire Central Wasatch area.  
42

43 The work so far had focused on four of the high elevation lakes in the canyons: Red Pine, White  
44 Pine, Cecret Lake, and Lake Catherine. The way the mobile location data was accessed was  
45 through zones or geofences. It covered both the formal and informal trails leading to Red Pine,  
46 White Pine, Cecret Lake, and Lake Catherine. Over the next several months, the work would be

1 expanded to the rest of the Central Wasatch. Dr. Smith explained that the zones or geofences made  
2 it possible to quantify and visualize use patterns around the lakes. This was a valuable way to  
3 understand the amount of use that was happening and recognize where use was not happening. He  
4 shared example images of the high elevation lakes and pointed out the zones or geofences.  
5

6 Based on the data from the high elevation lakes, the average daily trip count for both Lake  
7 Catherine and Cecret Lake was higher than White Pine and Red Pine. Dr. Smith explained that  
8 this may be due to access and parking availability. In terms of use levels, Cecret Lake had 800  
9 average daily trips in the summer of 2021, which was 27,000 trips per month. He noted that it was  
10 important to look at how the use impacted resource conditions. When the Utah State University  
11 team was out collecting data at the end of 2021, information about the condition class and the trail  
12 width of the informal trails was collected. Condition class was a common way to measure and  
13 quantify the amount of degradation. Trails were ranked from 1 to 5, with 1 being a very good trail  
14 and 5 being a trail with a lot of erosion. Condition Class and Trail Width maps were shared.  
15

16 Dr. Smith explained that there was a similar breakdown between the four lakes. Most of the  
17 condition classes were on the upper end of the spectrum (Class 4 or Class 5). Additionally, many  
18 of the trail widths were quite narrow. He noted that use level may not be the only factor  
19 contributing to the poor conditions. There were environmental and managerial factors as well.  
20 Some of the factors connected to this particular analysis included surrounding vegetation, trail  
21 grade, trail slope alignment, the distance to the lakeshore, and the distance to a formal trail.  
22

23 A statistical analysis was conducted to disentangle the effects of the factors that influenced trail  
24 conditions. For instance, the influence of use relative to trail slope or the influence of use relative  
25 to the distance to the water body. Dr. Smith explained that as the use increased, the trail was more  
26 likely to become wider. For trail grade, lower trail grades had considerably more influence than  
27 other factors that affected trail conditions. As trails became steeper, they became narrower. Dr.  
28 Smith noted that the distance to formal trails and the distance to the lakeshore had a significant  
29 impact on the trail width. Informal trails that were closer to formal trails tended to be wider. The  
30 further trails were from the lakeshore, the narrower the trails tended to be.  
31

32 Dr. Smith explained that it was important to consider what all of this data meant for management.  
33 He posed the following question as well as some recommendations based on the data:  
34

- 35 • What does this mean for recreation management around these lakes?
  - 36 ○ Use and Impact:
    - 37 ■ Trails that are not yet heavily impacted, receive low use levels, and don't
    - 38 fulfill critical functions for visitors should be closed and restored. Use
    - 39 should be concentrated on trails that are already well established, receive
    - 40 high levels of use, and appear necessary for visitors.
  - 41 ○ Surface and Location:
    - 42 ■ Visitors should be concentrated on durable, walkable surfaces when
    - 43 available and trails close to water bodies should be hardened where
    - 44 possible.
  - 45 ○ Trail Slope Alignment and Trail Grade:
    - 46 ■ Use should be concentrated on trail sections with sustainable trail grades.

1  
2 Dr. Smith explained that this information was a small piece of the bigger Visitor Use Study project.  
3 Over the remainder of 2022, more data would be collected and there would be a focus on Little  
4 Cottonwood Canyon, Big Cottonwood Canyon, and Millcreek Canyon as well as backcountry  
5 campsites and the quality of water above and below campgrounds. It was currently the beginning  
6 of Phase II and most of the data collection efforts would take place throughout 2022 with the  
7 intention of the data being collected by the end of the calendar year. That meant there would be a  
8 full 12-months of data to represent use and resource conditions within the canyons.

9  
10 Co-Chair Barbara Cameron wondered if there was a timeline for the trail assessment in Big  
11 Cottonwood Canyon. Dr. Smith explained that the work was somewhat dependent on the weather.  
12 The field crews would be out as soon as it was possible to access the high elevation locations. He  
13 anticipated that this would be within the next month or so.

14  
15 John Knoblock assumed that the Utah State University team was collaborating with the Forest  
16 Service. He noted that the Forest Service had been working to classify and categorize all of the  
17 user-created trails. Dr. Smith explained that the Forest Service primarily focused on the formal  
18 trails and that was the reason the Visitor Use Study would focus on the informal trails around high  
19 elevation lakes. A lot of the informal trails had not been studied to the same degree as the formal  
20 trails. There was coordination with the Forest Service to ensure that no efforts were being  
21 duplicated. Mr. Knoblock noted that Chelsea Phillippe had put together a map of the informal  
22 trails. Dr. Smith was aware of what data had been collected and there had been coordination.

23  
24 Mr. Knoblock wondered if a single, well-designed, and constructed trail around the lake would be  
25 a beneficial management strategy. Dr. Smith felt that would be appropriate in certain locations.  
26 However, he believed the broader intention was to concentrate the use. Around the high elevation  
27 lakes, there were always informal trails, because visitors wanted to walk around the lake or had a  
28 desire to reach a campground or formal trail. If the use could be directed, this would be a benefit.  
29 However, the trails needed to be clear and understandable for visitors.

30  
31 Pat Shea wondered if invasive species were examined and cataloged through the Visitor Use Study  
32 process. He also wanted to know what kind of interface the study would have with the  
33 Environmental Dashboard. Dr. Smith explained that the invasive species had not been studied.  
34 The condition class and trail width had been explored, but it may be possible to focus on invasive  
35 species in specific areas moving forward. As for how the data would integrate into the  
36 Environmental Dashboard, all of the data on visitor use would be aggregated and shown on the  
37 Environmental Dashboard. There had been discussions with the team at the University of Utah  
38 about how to best do that. All of the use volume data would be directly integrated. Mr. Shea asked  
39 if there would be an Appendix, which would list the best practices to regulate overused areas. Dr.  
40 Smith stated that this was something that would be included in the report. It could also be  
41 integrated into the Environmental Dashboard. The intention was not just to provide numbers, but  
42 to provide context and information about how to best manage use.

43  
44 Kirk Nichols thanked Dr. Smith for sharing updates on the Visitor Use Study. He wondered what  
45 the social assessment would look like. For instance, would there be interviews, would there be  
46 data related to crowding, or would the information relate to conflicts. The social aspect was listed

1 as part of Phase II. Dr. Smith reported that the social assessment was an addendum or additional  
2 sampling above what the Forest Service did to monitor visitor use. The Forest Service used the  
3 National Visitor Use Monitoring Program. There was a set survey with questions related to  
4 recreation activities, home locations, and satisfaction. Unfortunately, it did not collect information  
5 about the perceptions of crowding or perceptions of change in use over time. If he was to seek out  
6 use-specific or experience-specific information, that would need to go through an additional  
7 review process. That timeline was normally several years out. As a result, the Visitor Use Study  
8 was not able to look at some of those experience-specific indicators, but there would be a lot of  
9 information related to the activity profiles and the origins of visitors.

10  
11 Jennifer Eden asked if the Visitor Use Study work would be integrated into the Wasatch Wildlife  
12 Watch. She explained that the Wasatch Wildlife Watch showed animal traffic and it could  
13 determine whether there were conflicts between animals and users. Additionally, she wondered  
14 whether concentrating use in areas where use was already concentrated was the best methodology.  
15 Dr. Smith reported that there had been conversations with the Wasatch Wildlife Watch and the  
16 intention was to look at how the trail use data could be integrated into their predictive models  
17 related to wildlife presence and absence. He looked forward to that aspect of the study, but there  
18 needed to be further discussions to determine how the data sets would work together. As for  
19 concentrated use, he stated that across recreation resource management literature, the  
20 concentration of use often led to a minimal amount of further degradation. Concentrated use that  
21 was done in a well thought out and consistent manner was often the best solution.

22  
23 Chair McCarvill thanked Dr. Smith for his presentation. He asked that any additional Stakeholders  
24 Council questions be shared with Dr. Smith following the Stakeholders Council Meeting.

## 25 **Committee Discussions**

### 26 **1. Committee Chairs will Provide Any Updates to the Stakeholders Council.**

27  
28  
29  
30 Co-Chair Cameron explained that the Stakeholders Council subcommittees had met recently. She  
31 asked for updates. Mr. Knoblock, the Chair of the Trails Committee, reported that the Forest  
32 Service was moving forward with their Tri-Canyons Trails Master Plan in cooperation with Salt  
33 Lake County. Salt Lake County would assist with some of the GIS work and public outreach, such  
34 as open houses and public comment periods. The County would not do a County-Wide Trails  
35 Master Plan, as initially discussed, but would focus on assisting the Forest Service. Mr. Knoblock  
36 stated that the Salt Lake City Watershed Management Plan would dovetail with that work. The  
37 expected completion time for the Tri-Canyons Trails Master Plan was two years from now.

38  
39 Co-Chair Cameron noted that there would be open houses related to the Salt Lake City Watershed  
40 Management Plan. It would take place on May 25, 2022, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Salt  
41 Lake City Public Library (in-person meeting) and on June 1, 2022, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
42 (online). Co-Chair Cameron noted that the Millcreek Canyon Committee had canceled their latest  
43 meeting. Del Draper explained that the meeting had been postponed. The intention was to first  
44 attend the Federal Lands Access Program (“FLAP”) grant open house. The FLAP grant was an  
45 expenditure of \$19 million to improve the road from the winter gate to the top of Millcreek Canyon.  
46 He believed the open house would have additional information for the Committee to discuss.

1  
2 There had been Stakeholders Council discussions related to the Environmental Dashboard. Co-  
3 Chair Cameron wanted to know whether additional public outreach could be done. She suggested  
4 that there could be a subcommittee related to the Environmental Dashboard outreach. She intended  
5 to reach out to teachers she knew to promote the Environmental Dashboard and she asked that  
6 other Council Members think about opportunities to share. Additional Stakeholders Council  
7 subcommittee ideas could be shared with Stakeholders Council leadership. Carl Fisher noted that  
8 he had previously asked whether there were specific areas or topics that the CWC Board wanted  
9 guidance on. However, he did not feel there had been a serious response to that inquiry. Chair  
10 McCarvill explained that the CWC Board had updated the Strategic Plan. He believed over the  
11 next week or two, additional information would be shared with Council Members.

12  
13 Discussions were had about short-term projects. CWC Communications Director, Lindsey Nielsen  
14 explained that the Short-Term Projects Committee met in April 2022 and recommended partial or  
15 full funding for nine projects. Those projects had already begun work or would begin work as  
16 soon as the work season started in the canyons. Ms. Nielsen noted that the projects included:

- 17
- 18 • Cottonwood Canyons Foundation, 2022 Tri-Canyon Trail Deferred Maintenance and
- 19 Invasive Weed Control Project (\$7,500);
- 20 • Salt Lake Climber's Alliance, Jacob's Ladder Trail Reroute to Lone Peak Cirque (\$5,000);
- 21 • Wasatch Backcountry Alliance, Shuttle Program (\$15,000);
- 22 • Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, Willow Heights Pond Beaver Reintroduction
- 23 (\$2,000);
- 24 • Trails Utah, BCC to Ferguson BST Completion (\$4,000);
- 25 • Utah Open Lands, Bonanza Flat Trailhead Transit (\$15,000);
- 26 • Friends of Alta, Friends of Alta Junior Ranger Activity Book (\$750);
- 27 • Private Citizen, Rattlesnake Gulch Bicycle Parking (\$1,000); and
- 28 • Save Our Canyons, Wasatch Wilderness Stewardship and Education Project (\$1,000).
- 29

30 The next Stakeholders Council Meeting was scheduled to take place on July 20, 2022, at 3:00 p.m.

31  
32 **Open Comments**

33  
34 No additional comments were shared.

35  
36 **Adjourn Meeting.**

37  
38 **1. William McCarvill will Adjourn the Meeting as Chair of the Stakeholders Council.**

39  
40 **MOTION:** Paul Diegel moved to ADJOURN the Stakeholders Council Meeting. Pat Shea  
41 seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Council.

42  
43 The Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council Meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.



1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central*  
2 *Wasatch Commission Special Hybrid Stakeholders Council Meeting held Wednesday, May 18, 2022.*  
3

4 Teri Forbes

5 Teri Forbes

6 T Forbes Group

7 Minutes Secretary

8

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