

## **Meeting Notes**

### **Recreation System Group Meeting #2**

#### **April 1, 2014**

This meeting included:

- Presentation and discussion on the Existing Conditions report
- Member poll regarding that report
- Presentation and discussion on draft information on Future Trendlines
- Member survey on goals for the future.

#### *Existing Conditions Report Summary and Discussion*

The project's next steps and study area were reviewed. The consultant team clarified the boundaries of the study area. Emigration Canyon is outside of the study area, however, the influence of recreation within Emigration Canyon is an important element for the Recreation System group to understand and consider. The Existing Conditions for the Economy System Group were presented. The presentation for this meeting is posted on the Mountain Accord website [<http://mountainaccord.com>].

Data requests identified at the first meeting that could not be filled for the existing conditions report included funding for recreation facility development and management. Funding is provided by a number of different organizations in addition to grants. Some organizations have highly variable or difficult to track budgets.

*There was a group discussion regarding the information and whether any categories of recreation were missing.*

- Citations for data sources need to be added, especially to confirm the system groups are using the same data.
- Table of dominant uses by canyon/area was developed based on qualitative assessment by group.
- What uses are bundled together in U.S. Forest Service data, for example, where is trail running? Is more granular data available within the U.S. Forest Service use data to focus on the Central Wasatch? Only limited conclusions can be drawn from U.S. Forest Service data since data is collected outside of the study area and the majority of the Wasatch Back is not included in these data sets. Historical U.S. Forest Service data may also be available to show trends for different uses.

- User survey data is being developed by Save Our Canyons, which will supplement U.S. Forest Service data. Until that data is available, should relative levels of use for different activities be addressed qualitatively?
- How do out-of-state skiing visitors fit into the distance traveled for Forest users (appears to diminish the importance of out-of-state visitors to the resorts)?
- Report did not include enough information and data associated with use at the ski resorts and activities within their boundaries
- There is more detailed data available for use at the ski resorts compared to dispersed recreation use (economic system group will cover on how much money is spent recreating and its effect on the local/state economy)
- How does One Wasatch fit into this process?
- Include transportation related issues including traffic's effect on recreation. The volume of motorists accessing the ski resorts and at the mouth of the canyons is high.
- Increase discussion of where different recreation uses occur, especially locations where these opportunities are most important/unique and what limits these uses. For example, the best backcountry skiing terrain occurs on north-facing high-elevation slopes. Additionally, address the need to provide a range of opportunities for different skill levels.
- The recreation group should focus on increasing opportunities for high quality recreation experiences, but without data to back it up, how will this be received by the executive committee?
- Conflicts between private land owners and access to backcountry for recreation users
- Dispersed recreational users- can this be refined by consultant team- need to determine what the message is.
- Maintenance of facilities and recreation infrastructure is important to understand the long-term use of recreation sites. Overuse of trails, lack of properly designed mountain trails, and limited funding to maintain these resources is leading to decreased user experiences.

### ***Poll, Results and Discussion:***

*This Report, plus recommended changes, accurately represents currently available information on existing environmental conditions to inform my vote on a future Idealized System.*

1. Concur: 15% (5 votes)
2. Concur with minor point of contention: 59% (20 votes)
3. Disagree with outcome but consent to move forward: 15% (5 votes)
4. Dissent: 12% (4 votes)
5. Waive or Abstain: 0% (0 votes)

Comments from members that dissented or that disagreed with outcome but consent to move forward:

- Concerns with the vision projected - feel like the previous visions need to be part of the existing conditions.
- Wasatch One has a clear vision and proposal, what are the solutions proposed by this project? There is a need to identify where prime backcountry areas are located to balance this.
- Too much weight placed on U.S. Forest Service data. Understand there is option to supplement this data with qualitative information.
- More review opportunities and longer report review periods before polling.

- Need a better balance of resident and out-of-state guests in report.
- It is difficult to agree to a report without seeing the revised version. Minor point of contention. System group members will send any written comments technical leads.

### *Future Trendlines Summary and Discussion:*

Four major trends were identified which will influence the Recreation System. These are: 1) population, 2) development and land use, 3) transportation performance, and 4) climate change. Details on each of these areas are included in the PowerPoint presentation.

*Which of these changes/trends would be the most critical for the future of this system? Why? Are there other, more important TRENDS to understand? What existing data have we missed?*

- Equipment (emerging sports) and increased accessibility to backcountry
- Usage trends—specifically in emerging sports
- Age-based participation
- What is our responsibility to transportation? How does it affect recreational use and users? Role of traffic congestion effects in, at mouth of, and just outside canyons.
- Road biking in direct conflict with transportation
- Trends of growth affected by transportation. If we are at capacity now, growth trends will limit availability to canyons and therefore availability of recreation opportunities
- Congestion--advocate for front mountain trails to limit driving time to recreation. Develop trail heads in conjunction with transportation planning.
- Case studies: Transit from Front Range (Colorado) to Estes Park greatly increased recreation use. How can this concept be applied here?
- Are we dealing with 10% days of peak congestion (i.e., snow days or holidays) or are we looking at the entire picture (i.e., year-round)?
- Event congestion and the limitation of other recreation opportunities during these events
- Air quality and water quality issues are part of Environmental System
- Multiple uses within a day (i.e., ski in the morning and mountain bike in afternoon)

### *Survey*

*What would a successful future look like for this system?*

*For the Central Wasatch, what should be the key GOALS for an ideal future system (approximate number of times comment was reiterated)?*

- Create/maintain high quality recreational uses for a variety of uses and users (13)
- Preserve the land, including special areas, and backcountry experiences (8)
- Protect current access routes and opportunities for recreation (2)
- Balance all recreation with the other systems (economic, transportation, environmental) (1)
- An integrated hiking system/well-designed trail network across different jurisdictions, coordination between different land managing agencies for a united vision (2)
- Reduce congestion (1)
- Inform users through educational opportunities, especially young people (1)

- Identify areas with available use capacity to limit effects of recreation users on the environment (1)
- Increase access and infrastructure (1)
- Balance funding between developed and dispersed recreation opportunities (how do we fund backcountry?) (1)

*Decisions*

Revise Existing Conditions report. Move forward to fully characterize Future Trendlines.

*Action Items*

No.	Action Item	Responsible	Note
1	Establish subgroup meeting to discuss key areas for different recreation uses and conflicts associated with these areas	Reid Persing	Meeting established for April 10, 2014 from 3-5 p.m. at EPG's office (208 East 800 South, Salt Lake City)
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MOUNTAIN ACCORD

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4/1/14

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