

## **Meeting Notes**

### **Environment System Group Meeting #1**

### **March 3, 2014**

This first meeting of the Environment System Group included an introduction to the Mountain Accord effort, the system group roles, process and schedule, and a presentation and discussion of existing conditions relevant to environmental considerations in the Project Area. The meeting was co-chaired by Ann Ober, Assistant City Manager for Park City; and Joan Degiorgio, Northern Mountains Regional Director, The Nature Conservancy. A list of meeting attendees is attached to this summary.

#### *Introduction Presentation Summary*

The PowerPoint presentation from the Environment System Group meeting is available on the Mountain Accord website. The presentation was initiated with a project introduction outlining the purpose, goals, schedule, partners, decision-making process, and other details of Mountain Accord.

The purpose of this meeting was to begin the process of establishing the Existing Conditions for the project.

#### *Discussion*

Following the introduction, Environment System Group meeting attendees were asked a series of questions to guide discussion in the remainder of the meeting.

#### *Question #1:*

*What is the biggest environmental issue facing the Wasatch (in the natural and human/built environment)?* Issues identified were:

- Lack an inventory of flora and fauna and their relationship to the Wasatch and its vitality
- Population growth and its impact (increased demand and use)
- Climate change (uncertainties, impacts to resources)
- Water quality and quantity
- Air quality
- Management by multiple overlapping political jurisdictions
- Recreation impacts to environment (as a function of increasing population, ski expansion, mountain biking)
- Vegetation management

- Funding for preservation of open space and agriculture. Currently funding is allocated only for watershed protection; no funding exists to preserve land (on the Wasatch Front).
- Guarding against land swaps/long term [land] preservation. There is an inability to preserve lands because there is neither money available nor priority to do so. Land is getting developed via trading or land swap.
- Piece meal decisions without management ability to manage population growth.

*Note: The Executive Board has agreed that climate change is occurring; however, there is not agreement on what is causing it.*

### **Question #2:**

*What should be the group's highest focus?*

- Climate change
- Population
- Land preservation
- Data (or lack thereof)

### **Resource Presentation Summary**

Following this introduction, the Technical Lead (Andrea Clayton) presented a series of slides which defined a preliminary list of 5 categories of resources for defining existing conditions (biodiversity, water, air, and other). Additional topics presented for the group to consider were: climate change, sustainability, conservation, and environmental restoration.

### **Question #3**

*What types and sources of data to be used in establishing the existing conditions?*

#### Data Types:

- Stream/riparian function and condition
- water quantity: in-stream flow and uses
- land use: agriculture, open space, etc.
- fragmentation (e.g. utility corridors, roads)
- soils: contamination
- ecosystems/biodiversity
- invasive/noxious weeds
- stream health
- wildlife health
- impermeable surfaces/development
- historic plant/animal species
- population (current, growth)
- water: groundwater (levels, quality, surface water interaction), runoff, source-water protection zones, geothermal wells
- air: visual standards/view shed, National Parks Service haze standards, inversion (relation to canyons), greenhouse gas emissions, air quality studies (Big and Little Cottonwood canyons)

Data Sources:

- Salt Lake County (SLCo) Watershed Stewardship Plan—rapid water assessment
- EPA Emap
- U.S. Forest Service (USFS)—watershed condition
- Noxious/invasive weeds: EDD Maps, SLCo, Summit County
- Utah DAQ: air quality data, National Parks?
- EPA—CO and CO2 data
- NEON – National Science foundation study- migration of particulate matter up Red Butte canyon
- Seth Arens (UDEQ) – Study of O3 at higher elevations
- Altitude study—University of Utah migration/altitude study-elevation of pollutants

Finally, the group was advised to start thinking about what performance metrics should be used to evaluate the overall environmental system health.

*Takeaway message*

We should work to develop the best environmental outcome and let other systems groups focus on the outcome of their discipline. An outcome of the Environmental System Group is to improve our current environment.

*Decisions*

No decisions were made at the first Environment System Group meeting. However, the follow-up schedule for the next meeting was established: April 1 in the UTA Promontory Room from 1:30-3:30pm.

*Action Items*

No.	Action Item	Responsible	Note
1	Send any pertinent data/sources to Andrea Clayton	Systems Group Members	Due March 12 <sup>th</sup>

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