



8
9 **MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL WASATCH COMMISSION (“CWC”) STAKEHOLDERS**
10 **COUNCIL RECREATION SYSTEMS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD THURSDAY,**
11 **FEBRUARY 8, 2024, AT 2:00 P.M. THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED BOTH IN-PERSON**
12 **AND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM. THE ANCHOR LOCATION WAS THE CWC OFFICES,**
13 **LOCATED AT 41 NORTH RIO GRANDE STREET, SUITE, 102, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.**

- 14
15 **Committee Members:** Sarah Bennett, Chair
16 Barbara Cameron, Co-Chair
17 John Knoblock
18 Joanna Wheelton
19 Dennis Goreham
20 Ian Hartley
21 Tom Diegel
22 Bri Sullivan
23 Emily Salle
24
25 **Staff:** Lindsey Nielsen, Executive Director
26 Samantha Kilpack, Director of Operations
27

28 **OPENING**

29
30 1. **Chair Sarah Bennett will Open the Public Meeting as Chair of the Recreation Systems**
31 **Committee of the Central Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council.**

32
33 Chair Sarah Bennett called the Central Wasatch Commission (“CWC”) Stakeholders Council
34 Recreation Systems Committee Meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and welcomed those present.
35

36 2. **Review and Approval of the December 14, 2023, Meeting Minutes.**

37
38 **MOTION:** Dennis Goreham moved to APPROVE the Minutes from December 14, 2023. John
39 Knoblock seconded the motion. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.
40

41 3. **Announcements.**

42
43 a. **USFS Trails Master Plan Public Meeting.**

44
45 Chair Bennet asked for updates about the Tri-Canyon Trails Master Plan. John Knoblock explained
46 that he spoke to the Forest Service recently and it is believed that there will be a draft Tri-Canyon
47 Trails Master Plan released for public review at the end of February or the beginning of March. He
48 assumed the review period will be 45 days so public comments can be submitted. The hope is that in

1 the fall, the Tri-Canyon Trails Master Plan will be finalized and published. Chair Bennett wanted to
2 know if there will be open houses to obtain public input. Mr. Knoblock did not know for certain but
3 asked Zinnia Wilson and Chelsea Phillippe to present the plan at the next Stakeholders Council
4 Meeting in March. However, he has not heard back from the Forest Service about that presentation.

5
6 Chair Bennett believed when the Tri-Canyon Trails Master Plan is released, the Recreation Systems
7 Committee should be prepared to examine it closely and provide thoughtful feedback. In preparation
8 for the release, she suggested that the Committee brainstorm review criteria for the plan.

9
10 Mr. Knoblock asked CWC Staff if it is best for Committee Members to individually comment on the
11 Tri-Canyon Trails Master Plan or if it is best to submit a comment on behalf of the CWC. Executive
12 Director, Lindsey Nielsen, explained that the only potential issue with a comment on behalf of the
13 CWC relates to the timing of meetings. It comes down to when the draft plan is released and how
14 that fits into the Recreation Systems Committee, Stakeholders Council, and CWC Board meeting
15 schedule. She pointed out that the CWC Board will not meet in April and will instead meet in May.
16 There is some uncertainty about whether the schedule will allow enough time to approve the comment
17 within the review period. There is not an issue with the Recreation Systems Committee drafting
18 something for Stakeholders Council review and that being passed onto the CWC Board, it simply
19 comes down to timing. If the dates work with the CWC meeting schedules, this process can be
20 pursued. Additionally, individual comments should be encouraged by Committee Members. Chair
21 Bennett wanted to see the Recreation Systems Committee weigh in with a collective comment. Some
22 of the high-level goals the Committee discussed in December can serve as the review criteria.

23
24 **b. Silver Lake Trail Completion.**
25

26 Chair Bennett shared information about the Silver Lake Trail. She discussed some of the issues with
27 private property and gaining access to the work area across private property. It has proven to be a
28 lengthy process that has caused delays. With the assistance of Co-Chair Barbara Cameron and the
29 Mayor of Brighton, Dan Knopp, there has been communication with the Homeowners Associations
30 and Town Council. There is a high level of consensus that this project is necessary and access is
31 important. Chair Bennett has been working with an attorney to get an access agreement in place,
32 which will secure the right to cross those private parcels in order to move the work forward. The
33 hope is that the trail builder will be selected in the next month or so. As soon as the snow clears, she
34 hopes that the trail around the backside of the lake will be rehabilitated and renovated as necessary.

35
36 Chair Bennett asked Committee Members to discuss other relevant projects. Mr. Knoblock reported
37 that at the Big Cottonwood Canyon Community Council Meeting on Monday, there will be a large
38 portion of the meeting dedicated to the Brighton Community Trail. He stated that the trail will be
39 from Cardiff to Brighton Circle. The basic purpose and need still has to be finalized as well as
40 appropriate surfacing and alignment. He noted that this will be a fairly complicated discussion. Chair
41 Bennett wanted to know if the Forest Service will be represented at that meeting. Co-Chair Cameron
42 confirmed that the Forest Service is aware of the proposal and the scheduled meeting. Mr. Knoblock
43 added that he has invited Ms. Wilson and Ms. Phillippe to attend. According to Ms. Phillippe, she is
44 unable to, but it is still unclear whether Ms. Wilson will attend the Community Council Meeting.

45
46 Joanna Wheelton asked for details about the Big Cottonwood Canyon Community Council Meeting.
47 Mr. Knoblock reported that it will be held on Monday, February 12, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. It was noted
48 that the Zoom link for the meeting can be sent to interested Recreation Systems Committee members.

1
2 Chair Bennett imagined a good part of the alignment for the Brighton Community Trail will be self-
3 explanatory. Mr. Knoblock denied this. He explained that a lot depends on what the surfacing, user
4 experience, purpose, and need are. Co-Chair Cameron stated that the alignment is something that
5 needs to be finalized. Chair Bennett pointed out that the trail will present opportunities to make use
6 of utility easements and public rights-of-way. National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”) will be
7 triggered in sections along the way, but she stated it will be interesting to see the alignment.
8

9 Emily Salle shared information about the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation. She explained that a lot
10 is happening. Work has been done with the Forest Service recently to plan out the scope of the
11 projects. The Cottonwood Canyons Foundation is looking at working with the Salt Lake Ranger
12 District trail crew on a handful of projects, which will include a few projects that are outside of the
13 Cottonwoods. Aside from those projects, everything else will be in the Cottonwoods, including a
14 project at the top of Neff’s Canyon, where the trail will be cleaned. Additionally, there will be a fairly
15 significant reroute near Lake Desolation on the Desolation Trail. There is a steep and eroded section
16 of trail there that needs to be addressed. Ms. Salle reported that there is also a lot happening in Alta.
17

18 Other than the previously mentioned projects, the biggest maintenance and project work scheduled
19 will be climbing-related. Work has been done to fulfill a Salt Lake County grant to rebuild the
20 approaches on the Big Cottonwood climbing access. The remaining projects on that grant relate to
21 S-Curve and Reservoir Ridge. Ms. Salle reported that another climbing access project is
22 contemplated with the Salt Lake Climbers Alliance, which will take five to six weeks. That will be
23 down at the East Entrance, where the rockfall occurred last year. As for other trail projects, the
24 Cottonwood Canyons Foundation is looking at doing significant work on Lake Blanche and Upper
25 Desolation as well as at the Brighton Lakes Trail. Three weeks will be spent on significant heavy
26 maintenance in the Millcreek system, including Upper Desolation from Thaynes to the Alexander
27 Basin connector. There is also a desire to look at Birch Hollow and the Crest Trail this year. Ms.
28 Wheelton reported that the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation is trying to pull the final pieces together
29 to be able to field another 10-person crew. It looks like there will be a high retention rate this year.
30

31 Mr. Knoblock asked how many Adopt-A-Trail sponsors there are this year. Ms. Wheelton believed
32 there are 13 sponsors currently. Mr. Knoblock wanted to know if there was a desire for the Recreation
33 Systems Committee to assist with the promotion of the Adopt-A-Trail program. He noted it is
34 possible to push for additional sponsors if that is desired by the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation.
35

36 **REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF COMMITTEE PURPOSE AND GOALS**

- 38 1. **Committee Members will Review and Discuss Poll Responses from the Committee**
39 **Regarding a Proposed Vision, Purpose, and Goals.**
- 40 2. **Committee Members will Refine and Prioritize Goals and Determine Geographical**
41 **Scope.**

42
43 Chair Bennett shared the “Recreation Committee Priority Response” document, which included
44 feedback from several Committee Members. It was noted that the responses from Dennis Goreham
45 were not included, so he was asked to share those now. Mr. Goreham read his vision statements:
46

- 47 • A recreation system that promotes recreation use in areas that can accommodate recreation,
48 infrastructure, and expansion (resorts and the lower part of the canyons);

- 1 • Preservation through wilderness designation and other protections of difficult-to-access
2 pristine areas and locations with unique settings or recreational character;
- 3 • Well-informed recreation users avoid conflicts with other users and leave the areas they use
4 better than when they arrived.
5

6 Chair Bennett next shared the “Roadmap to Action” document with the Committee. She explained
7 that it includes high-level goals, tools and actions, and action items. A lot of the high-level goals on
8 the list were pulled out of the comments submitted by Committee Members. She asked that the
9 Committee list the high-level goals in terms of priorities. The items on the list she finds most
10 compelling relate to access and connectivity. Co-Chair Cameron shared her priority list. The third
11 item on the list was the first on her list. Eight and nine were second and third. The second item on
12 the list was fourth on her priority list. Mr. Goreham agreed with what Co-Chair Cameron said but
13 thought number four needs to be closer to the top of the list. Additionally, he wants to expand number
14 four to include the word "preservation." That will better match the Mountain Accord language. Mr.
15 Goreham pointed out that the Mountain Accord talked about having areas of high use and areas with
16 less use. Chair Bennett thought different levels of use align with the first item on the document. Mr.
17 Goreham agreed that it aligned, but felt it is important enough that it needs to stand on its own.
18

19 Ms. Wheelton noted that the area is seeing an exponential amount of growth. The use across the
20 canyons needs to be differentiated. There are four resorts and it makes sense to use those existing
21 resources. Chair Bennett stated that a point about high use and low use will stand alone in the list of
22 high-level goals. However, it may dovetail with the second item on the list, diversity of opportunities.
23

24 Chair Bennett reported that during past Recreation Systems Committee Meetings, it became clear that
25 there is a need to address different user groups and experiences. Ms. Salle asked about the first item
26 on the list of goals, "Better access/dispersed access to address overcrowding." She wanted to know
27 if it is from a trail perspective or a node's perspective. For instance, if there is a desire to concentrate
28 access points and make the type of access from those points diverse, so those interested in long-
29 distance explorations will access that from the same node as people who are interested in lower-level
30 experiences. Alternatively, it might mean introducing more trailheads so there are more access points.
31 Chair Bennett stated the item has to do with nodes, but pointed out trails that offer quicker experiences
32 are also needed. She raised an issue where people trample areas to reach the creek in Little
33 Cottonwood Canyon. There is a desire to address that in some way, but equity needs to be considered.
34

35 Mr. Knoblock suggested tying in the work done by Dr. Jordan Smith. His report stated that heavy
36 use should continue to be focused at the heavy use spots and the lower use spots should be quieter.
37 Chair Bennett believed that falls into the nodes approach. Mr. Goreham thought the focus should be
38 on the existing nodes. Ms. Salle reported that there is a lot of research about how nodes are beneficial
39 for preserving trails. It is within the considerations of this group to push a nodes approach. That
40 being said, it is not a matter of nodes versus more trails, but expanding the resources that are at each
41 node. In terms of trails, the Forest Service has a classification system, which is used to understand
42 how developed a trail is and the level of use it has. That impacts the amount of attention the trail
43 receives in terms of annual maintenance. Someone who wants to take a 14-mile hike should be able
44 to park at the same trailhead and have access to the same restrooms as someone there for a half-mile
45 hike. All of the high-level goals proposed by the Committee are relevant to a nodes approach.
46

47 Mr. Knoblock referenced the Mountain Accord map and stated that there are different nodes
48 identified. He wondered whether the intention is for the Recreation Systems Committee to write a

1 vision, purpose, and goals statement. Chair Bennette believed that is a good end product to aspire to.
2 The document in front of the Recreation Systems Committee is intended to assist the Committee in
3 identifying most important goals. That will provide a framework that can be used to address a number
4 of different issues. She wondered what the best way to rank the goals is and if this is a useful exercise.
5 In her opinion, all of the goals overlap and draw on one another. She suggested that all Committee
6 Members send in their re-prioritized list of goals so the order can be re-arranged.

7
8 Co-Chair Cameron thought environmental and wildlife protections, preservation, and safety should
9 be first on the list. She thought transportation should be next. As for signage and education, that is
10 something there seems to be an appetite for. Mr. Goreham pointed out that signage and education
11 might link to safety. Tom Diegel asked for additional information about what is meant by the
12 reference to safety. Co-Chair Cameron explained that people often walked in the middle of the street.

13
14 Mr. Knoblock suggested simplifying or consolidating some of the high-level goals in the document.
15 Environmental and wildlife protections can be listed first, with a bullet point underneath to
16 specifically reference restrooms and other relevant items. Discussions were had about safety. Chair
17 Bennett noted that there is a need for more robust signage that can communicate the length of a hike,
18 the difficulty level, what may be encountered, different weather conditions, and so on. Nurturing
19 awareness of the environment people are in can increase safety in the area. Mr. Goreham pointed out
20 that on the Trails Committee, there were discussions in the past about four different kinds of signs:

- 21
- 22 • Interpretive signs (geology and other information);
- 23 • Etiquette signs (different categories of users);
- 24 • Ethical signs (leave no trace principles);
- 25 • Trail information signs (distance and challenges).
- 26

27 Mr. Goreham did not necessarily believe signs need to be grouped together, as the different kinds of
28 signs may be more appropriate under different high-level goals. Chair Bennett asked if there is a
29 desire to combine signage and education. This was confirmed. She asked about education beyond
30 the setting of the tri-canyons, such as schools and social media campaigns. She wanted to know if
31 Committee Members felt that kind of education is outside the mission of the Committee. Mr.
32 Goreham stated that education involves all Systems Committee areas of focus: recreation,
33 environment, transportation, and economy. Co-Chair Cameron reported that the Cottonwood
34 Canyons Foundation does a lot of educational outreach through schools. Ms. Wheelton stated that
35 the Cottonwood Canyons Foundation is also motivated by a trail ambassadorship program.

36
37 Additional discussions were had about the order of the goals for the Recreation Systems Committee.
38 Chair Bennett believed environmental, safety, transportation, and signage were priorities for the
39 Committee. Mr. Goreham asked if transportation is connected to access. Ms. Salle explained that
40 signage is information, so it can relate to safety, transportation, and other areas, much like access.
41 She reviewed different types of access opportunities, such as access to information and access to
42 diverse transportation options. Chair Bennett stated that access is a concept that is higher level and
43 can apply to many different goals of the Committee. Mr. Knoblock reminded those present that a
44 goal is specific and measurable. It might make sense to split the list into goals and objectives.

45
46 Mr. Goreham noted that it is important to consider who the audience is for the document. Chair
47 Bennett agreed and felt it is for the Stakeholders Council, CWC, and anyone with a stake in
48 transportation, economy, environment, and recreation in the Central Wasatch study area. This

1 exercise is essentially identifying the values. Mr. Goreham wanted to make sure this remains clear.

2
3 Mr. Diegel asked how the Forest Service fits into this process. Ultimately, it will be the Forest Service
4 that the Committee will need to rely on for the actual implementation of a lot of what is listed. Chair
5 Bennett noted that there is a certain level of tension between what the Forest Service can do and what
6 those outside of the Forest Service are trying to do. There is a vested interest in aiding the Forest
7 Service in its management of the Central Wasatch study area. That being said, it is important to think
8 about capacity for execution. The Committee needs to consider whether the CWC can assist with
9 signage. For example, a signage program that addresses personal safety in the tri-canyons area. She
10 believed the Forest Service will likely be supportive of something like that.

11
12 Chair Bennett believed it is worth finding out if the Forest Service is open to the Committee
13 communicating some of the goals and objectives. Mr. Knoblock asked if the goals and objectives are
14 for the recreation system or the Recreation Systems Committee. Chair Bennett hoped the list of goals
15 and objectives would be deemed informative and useful to the Stakeholders Council and CWC Board.

16
17 Mr. Goreham believed once the goals and objectives are finalized and approved by the Stakeholders
18 Council and CWC Board, it will become clear what is being asked of the Forest Service. Knowing
19 what is desired will make it possible to ask for permission or to look into funding. Ms. Nielsen
20 reminded Committee Members that CWC Staff can assist with that communication. Mr. Diegel
21 thought it made sense to ask the Forest Service if they have something like this in place already.
22 Committee Members discussed the intended audience for the high-level goals. Ms. Nielsen noted
23 that the CWC Staff and CWC Board have relationships with many different entities. Mr. Knoblock
24 referenced the Forest Plan, which talks about recreation in the tri-canyons area. He thought it was
25 best for Committee Members to read that and suggested it be reviewed ahead of the next meeting.

26
27 The last time Mr. Knoblock spoke to Dave Whittekiend from the Forest Service about changes to the
28 Forest Plan, he said that the Forest Plan will not be rewritten any time soon. What the Forest Service
29 is open to, is specific revisions to the Forest Plan, such as additions. If there is something that the
30 Committee believes is missing from the Forest Plan, it is possible to ask the CWC to make a proposal
31 to the Forest Service for that addition. Chair Bennett stated that the document currently being worked
32 on by the Committee will create a platform so it is possible to ask for funding for specific projects.

33
34 Based on the way the “Roadmap to Action” list has been rearranged, some of the goals were higher
35 on the list and some of the objectives were lower on the list. Chair Bennett stated that it is possible
36 to create a guiding document based on the feedback received. Discussions were had about creating a
37 vision statement. Ms. Salle reported that a vision is something singular, whereas there can be up to
38 three goals and up to five objectives. Objectives are measurable, goals are value-based, and the vision
39 is a guiding principle. Mr. Knoblock noted that he has drafted a potential vision statement: “The
40 CWC jurisdictional area provides a wide range of year-round recreation that is accessible to a broad
41 audience, without undue trailhead congestion, and protects the environment and the resource.” Mr.
42 Goreham shared possible language: “A recreation system that can accommodate infrastructure
43 expansion, preservation, and well-informed users,” but stated it might be more objective-focused.

44
45 Chair Bennett asked whether the vision of the Recreation Systems Committee is the Central Wasatch
46 National and Conservation Recreation Area Act (“CWNCRA”). She thought the vision could be
47 related to people using the landscape harmoniously and sustainably. Mr. Diegel thought the vision
48 statement should be a few sentences and it might be beyond the scope of the meeting to create that.

1
2 Mr. Goreham asked if there is a vision from the Mountain Accord that can be referenced. Ms. Nielsen
3 explained that the whole Mountain Accord is essentially a vision statement. The CWC mission
4 statement is on the CWC website and can be something the Committee reviews. Chair Bennett asked
5 all Committee Members to work on a potential vision statement ahead of the next meeting.

6
7 Mr. Diegel stressed the importance of speaking to the Forest Service about this process. Ms. Nielsen
8 reported that she can take the list to the Forest Service in March or April since those meetings with
9 CWC Staff take place on the first Tuesday of the month. Mr. Goreham believed there needs to be
10 one more Recreation Systems Committee Meeting on the matter before anything is shared with the
11 Forest Service. It might also be possible to invite a representative of the Forest Service to a future
12 meeting. Mr. Knoblock noted that there is a lot of land within the CWC study area that is not Forest
13 Service land. Chair Bennett hoped the Forest Service will ultimately support the Committee exercise.
14 Mr. Diegel reported that on the Millcreek Canyon Committee, some sign ideas were created and
15 shared with the Forest Service, but were ultimately rejected. It was a disheartening experience.

16
17 Ms. Nielsen reminded those present that the 2024 cycle for the Short-Term Projects Grant Program
18 will open in one month. There is \$95,000 to disperse for short-term projects. If the Committee wants
19 to put together a proposal, that is something to consider. It is not something that has been done before,
20 but it is still possible to pursue. The grant program has funded signage projects in the past.

21
22 Chair Bennett thought there was a lot of excellent discussion during the Recreation Systems
23 Committee Meeting. She felt good about the future creation of vision, goals, and objectives that can
24 be shared when recommendations are made for funding a project. The intention is to move towards
25 applicable action items. Mr. Knoblock suggested that a shared document be created so Committee
26 Members can share ideas for the vision statement, goals, and objectives. Ideas can be shared and
27 refined ahead of the next meeting. Committee Members were supportive of that suggestion.

28
29 Mr. Goreham stressed the importance of the Committee commenting on the Tri-Canyon Trails Master
30 Plan as soon as possible. This was added to the list of action items in the “Roadmap to Action.” Ms.
31 Nielsen asked how long the comment period is. Mr. Knoblock stated that it is usually 45 days.

32
33 Ms. Nielsen reiterated that the CWC Staff meets with the Forest Service on the first week of each
34 month. She can present information during the meeting in March or April, depending on what is
35 preferred by the Recreation Systems Committee. Mr. Diegel wondered whether a less formal process
36 might be better. Ms. Nielsen thought Forest Service attendance at the next meeting was something
37 to suggest. CWC Staff could then follow up with the Forest Service at the next staff meeting.

38 39 **CLOSING**

40 41 **1. Chair Bennett will Call for a Motion to Adjourn the Recreation Systems Committee** 42 **Meeting.**

43
44 **MOTION:** Dennis Goreham moved to ADJOURN the Recreation Systems Committee Meeting.
45 There was no second. The motion passed with the unanimous consent of the Committee.

46
47 The meeting adjourned at 3:23 p.m.

1 *I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record of the Central*
2 *Wasatch Commission Stakeholders Council Recreation Systems Committee Meeting held Thursday,*
3 *February 8, 2024.*

4

5 Teri Forbes

6 Teri Forbes

7 T Forbes Group

8 Minutes Secretary

9

10 Minutes Approved: _____