

HABITAT CONSERVATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
for the Washington County Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)

A **work meeting** of the Habitat Conservation Advisory Committee (HCAC) was held in the Conference Room at the Washington Co. Administration Building, 197 E. Tabernacle St., on **September 27, 2011.**

Committee members present were:

Karl Wilson, Chairman	Mayors Association
Renee Chi (for Larry Crist)	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Reed Harris	Utah Dept. of Natural Resources (UDNR)
Chris Hart	Local Development
Bob Sandberg	Washington County HCP Administrator
Jimmy Tyree	Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Marc Mortensen	Citizen-at-Large

Absent and excused:

Chris Blake, Vice Chairman	Environmental Organization
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Also present were:

Amber Stocks	Washington County HCP
Cameron Rognan	Washington County HCP
Cornell Christensen	Washington County HCP
Ann McLuckie	Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR)
Judy Gubler	Ivins City Manager
Lisa Rutherford	Citizen

SYNOPSIS: The purpose of this work meeting was to review and discuss the future of the Ivins Detention Basin property and the proposed hardening of a portion of the Toe Trail.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Karl Wilson noted at least five committee members were present and a quorum existed. He called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

2. DISCUSSION ITEM

a. Toe Trail

Items 2-a and 2-b were discussed together.

b. Detention Basin Property

The meeting began with Chairman Wilson turning the time over to Renee Chi, who was sitting in for Larry Christ with the FWS. Renee stated their office has not spoken with the regional office yet. They are in a position of gathering more information on potential cost estimates for the trail and appraised value for the detention dam property.

The committee reviewed Exhibit 2-b-1. Judy Gubler, the Ivins City Manager explained the cost estimates. The estimates assume the contractor will minimize the construction footprint to a ten foot width. The first estimate of \$69,186 includes two boardwalk bridges, 50 feet in length, and one concrete wash crossing of 200 linear feet. The second estimate of \$223,158 includes an eight foot boardwalk the entire length of the trail with one concrete wash crossing of 200 linear feet.

The committee discussed the estimates from Snow Canyon State Park (SCSP). Their estimates were two 30 foot bridges over the main washes. The biggest wash may require a 50 foot bridge. The estimates were \$414,500 for the boardwalk, and \$183,450 for the asphalt. Chris Hart said from a cost standpoint, it seems a reasonable approach to not regard the washes as needing to be bridged. Instead use the boardwalk down to the southeast corner where the nursery is located.

The committee talked about trail railings and people who might venture off a paved trail versus a dirt trail. They discussed how hardening a trail will increase overall trail use, but may potentially decrease off-trail use.

Renee reminded the HCAC that the Reserve was set aside first and foremost for tortoises. Recreation was never seen as a threat because it was evaluated as something that was very manageable. The HCP didn't anticipate the amount of people who were really going to enjoy the Reserve. The use has been above and beyond what was originally expected. There is a constant struggle to manage recreation so people know where they're supposed to be and make sure they enjoy it but stay in designated areas. The HCP needs to provide guidance as much as possible. Perhaps strategically placing railings along the path to help people understand how important it is will help users stay on the trail.

Judy stated that this trail would connect with other paved trails so in theory it would attract people that were already on a trail. The city of Ivins sees this as an important connection in the paved trail system. Bob Sandberg said there is currently a lot of foot and bike traffic on Tuacahn Drive. A paved trail that connects to other trails may reduce the amount of off-trail traffic. The committee agreed that the discussion is speculative.

Renee stated that Kristen Comella with SCSP suspected a boardwalk trail wouldn't require as much maintenance as an asphalt trail. Ivins City agreed to help with trail maintenance as much as possible.

Renee asked if there is more detail on targeted users. The TC recommended the trail be used for pedestrians and bikers, but not horses. Chris suggested the trail be a hybrid of

some type to deal with sensitive areas in a different way than the majority of the trail which is less sensitive. The committee discussed how to deal with the more sensitive areas due to elevation, neighborhoods, sandy soils, higher use areas, etc.

The committee agreed a starting price for a hybrid trail should be around \$75,000-\$100,000 which takes into account unknown issues. Ivins City may be willing to sell the 7.88 acres from the Detention Basin property and use the money from the sale to build the trail. However, Ivins doesn't want to let go of the Detention Property until the permits are in place to build the trail.

The committee agreed that Ivins should get in touch with Kristen to go through the permitting process, to pursue a final solution on the character of the trail. Also, the HCP should get a summary appraisal on the property for \$1,000 (Exhibit 2-b-2). The Gold Standard appraisal will also be needed when the property is purchased. It was speculated that appraisal will be around \$3,000-\$4,000 plus roughly an additional \$1,000 for the appraisal review.

Renee reported the TC had talked earlier about amending the HCP. Renee talked to the Section Six Regional Coordinator and discussed the potential of writing up a Memorandum of Understanding saying that Ivins would not build the detention basin. The best approach would be to amend the HCP, including such language in the Implementation Agreement and the HCP and then have everyone resign the HCP. Reed felt that it wouldn't be necessary to modify the HCP. If the property is purchased then the detention basin would be no longer.

Ann explained the TC was concerned about flooding issues and the potential that Ivins could come back and build the detention basin due to human safety. Renee added the trail is a good exchange for acquiring the land, but in the case of a big flood, if there is a threat to human safety and property then is it possible a detention basin would be built anyway?

Judy said the detention basin is still the best choice, but not the preferred choice. Ivins is on the path of the next best option. Chris Hart, speaking as Mayor, said there are other alternatives. No matter how this plays out Ivins will have a big drainage project undertaking. If the trail proposal pans out, Ivins would commit to an alternative solution for the storm water flow.

If the proposal goes forward, it appears that SCSP would end up with the detention property, and Ivins will be responsible for building the trail, permitted through SCSP, FWS, and the HCP. Renee stated that once there is a better idea of the trail details, FWS can start analyzing potential impacts. Chris reiterated what the HCP and FWS are looking for is for Ivins City to agree there will be a solution to the storm water problem other than the detention basin and Ivins will be looking for an authorized permit to build the trail.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m. Minutes prepared by Amber Stocks.