

HABITAT CONSERVATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

for the Washington County Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)

A regular meeting of the Habitat Conservation Advisory Committee (HCAC) was held at the Washington City Council Chambers on **MAY 26, 2009**.

Committee members present were:

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

Absent and excused was:

Jeff Morby	Local Development
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Also present were:

Steve Meisner	Virgin River Program
Dallin Gardner	ELT Properties
Ann McLuckie	Utah Div. of Wildlife Resources (UDWR)
Brad Young	Washington County HCP

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Karl Wilson noted that at least five committee members were present and a quorum existed. The meeting was called to order at 1:00 P.M.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. **Approval of the agenda**
- b. **Review and approve minutes**
 1. April 28, 2009
- c. **Next meeting date**
 1. June 23, 2009

MOTION by Chris Blake to approve the Consent Agenda.
Seconded by Jimmy Tyree.
Discussion: None.
Vote was taken: All voted aye.
Motion passed.

3. PRESENTATIONS

None.

4. UTILITY AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT REVIEWS

- a. **Install power pole guy wires and anchors** – Brian Anderson, Hurricane Power Department.

Chairman Wilson combined agenda items 4-a and 5-a.

5. GENERAL BUSINESS

- a. **Hurricane power pole anchors.**

The recommendation of the Technical Committee (TC) was presented by TC Chairperson Ann McLuckie. Ann explained the proposal to the committee members using Exhibit 5-a-1 HCAC – 052609. Ann distributed Exhibit 5-a-2 HCAC – 052609 and explained the TC's recommendation, the reasoning behind the recommendation, and Hurricane City's options. Bob Sandberg also explained Hurricane City's options of adding one additional pole at a cost of \$5,000.00 or adding a second additional pole for another \$5,000.00.

Chris Blake asked about the requirement that Rocky Mountain Power (RMP) install a taller pole at the location shown on Exhibit 5-a-1 HCAC – 052609. Ann explained that the TC has not heard from RMP and acknowledged that some RMP equipment will have to enter the Reserve to install the taller pole.

The members discussed the probability that anchor #4 will be screwed in and the uncertainty of anchors 1, 2 and 3. Future maintenance of the anchors was also discussed.

Chris Blake complimented the TC on their excellent work and then made a motion.

MOTION by Chris Blake to accept the Technical Committee's recommendation and adopt it as the HCAC's position.
Seconded by Larry Crist.
Discussion: None.
Vote was taken: All voted aye.
Motion passed.

- b. **Red Cliffs NCA** – status and planning.
- c. **Initiatives to acquire ELT properties**

Agenda items 5b and 5c were combined.

Jimmy Tyree explained that the Bureau of Land Management has made an offer to fill the Realty Specialist position, and it has been accepted. The candidate is expected to be on board by mid-July.

Jimmy noted that the BLM is finalizing funding for the implementation of Land Bill (Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009) and is reviewing the staffing required for implementation. The funding proposals have been sent to the BLM state office. Priorities for various programs will be determined once the funding is known.

Jimmy further noted that BLM management and GIS are working hard to clearly identify and inventory properties that will be made available for disposal pursuant to the Land Bill.

d. Confluence Park waterline funding.

Chairman Wilson had asked that this item be placed on the agenda. He explained that the Ash Creek Special Service District (ACSSD) is installing a filter (waste water treatment facility) northerly of Confluence Park and that they have purchased 39 acres of property for the facility. The water will be treated to a Type I or Type II level.

The proposal is to install a 10" water line for the treated water from the facility for irrigation use (Type II) or for mixing with city's secondary water systems (Type I). Funding for the project was discussed. There is also an interlocal agreement between LaVerkin, Hurricane, Toquerville and Washington County which may be used to fund and manage the project. The proposed 10" line will be laid in the same trench as the high-pressure waste water line to minimize cost and disturbance. The specific cost is not known because the engineering is not yet complete. A 'ball park' figure of between \$52,000.00 and \$80,000.00 was discussed. Chris Blake suggested seeking a grant to help fund a portion of the project.

The committee members discussed profitably farming the agricultural areas within the 39 acres, and perhaps some of the adjoining property. There is currently \$8,000.00 funded in the HCP budget for Confluence Park management that may be available for materials, a bridge, in-kind funding and trail construction and maintenance. Chairman Wilson is bringing up this subject now because this may be a good use of the \$8,000.00. The members also talked about multiple sources of funding. Through the interlocal agreement, the cities involved will own the water when it comes out of the treatment facility.

Continued discussion regarding this project is necessary and will be placed on the agenda for the next HCAC meeting.

e. Habitat Management Plan development and scope of work projects (TC).

Ann McLuckie provided an update on the Technical Committee's progress in developing a Habitat Management Plan. Ann added that she will be prepared to present a scope of work project for green-stripping at the next HCAC meeting.

Jimmy noted that \$219,000.00 has been funded for green-stripping projects within the Reserve.

f. Review and accept the 1st Quarter – 2009 Report.

There were no questions or comments concerning the report.

MOTION by Chris Blake to accept the 1st Quarter 2009 report.
Seconded by Marc Mortensen.
Discussion: None.
Vote was taken: All voted aye.
Motion passed.

g. Administrator's Report (Bob Sandberg).

1. Budget report (Exhibit 5-g-1-a HCAC – 052609).

Bob introduced Exhibit 5-g-1-a and discussed budget revenues and expenditures. Revenues are down significantly from previous years at this same time. He noted that at this time last year revenues were near \$400,000.00 and so far this year HCP has received about \$126,000.00. Bob added that under the current budget, HCP anticipates using approximately \$500,000.00 of reserve funds. Bob commented that HCP staff is striving to minimize expenditures.

2. Botanical Garden and education/interpretive center.

Bob informed the members of the latest meeting with St. George City and Washington County Water Conservancy District (WCWCD) staff regarding the development of the botanical garden. The latest meeting was on Thursday, May 21, 2009.

Bob used the two drawings, Exhibits 5-g-2-a and 5-g-2-b, to explain the current proposed options for the garden and HCP building. The outside amphitheater situated near the proposed HCP building was discussed. Its effective use, being outside, is in question. Chris Blake voiced support of the amphitheater.

Chris asked about the decision-making process for determination of Option 1 or Option 2. Marc Mortensen explained that St. George City and the WCWCD will be the primary decision-makers because they have the largest investment. Bob added that the concept options are very new and the TC hasn't yet seen them.

Chris talked about the human impacts to the Reserve and habitat as a result of increased users due to the visitors' center being a destination location. He asked if the Reserve could accommodate the increased visitor impacts.

The committee members also discussed staffing of the visitors center. Funding, planning and timing were also briefly discussed.

3. White Reef trail head development.

Bob combined this item (#3) and the fencing item (#5). Bob explained that the Environmental Assessments (EA) for the White Reef trail head and the Harrisburg addition boundary fence are nearly complete and are being prepared for release to the public. With funding these projects can begin to move forward. The Harrisburg addition fence may begin in late 2009 or early 2010 and the White Reef trail head development may begin later in 2010. The committee members discussed the location of the White Reef trail head and the nearby geography.

4. Polygon monitoring contract.

Bob briefly related to the members that Washington County has entered into a contract with Colorado Plateau Associates of Hurricane for a three-year restoration polygon monitoring study. The cost of the three-year study is \$16,800.00. Bob also briefed the members on the other three proposals that were submitted. The cost of those three ranged from nearly \$46,000.00 by JBR to \$99,000.00 by SWCA.

Reed Harris asked about the technical review of the proposals. Bob explained that the review was completed by HCP staff.

5. Fencing projects.

Discussion combined with item #3 above.

6. **OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

7. **ADJOURN**

MOTION by Chris Blake to adjourn.
Seconded by Marc Mortensen.
Vote was taken: All voted aye.
Motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:01 P.M.

Minutes prepared by Brad Young.