

WASHINGTON COUNTY HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING

A meeting of the Technical Committee of the HCP was held **MARCH 4, 2010**, in the conference room at the Washington County Administration Building, 197 E. Tabernacle, Saint George, Utah

The views expressed at this, or any other, Technical Committee meeting do not necessarily represent the positions or views of any particular federal, state or local governmental agency, division or department. They are solely the opinions of the individual members of this Technical Committee.

Members present were:

Renee Chi, Chairperson	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USF&WS)
Cameron Rognan, Vice Chairperson	Washington County HCP
Tim Croissant	Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Ann McLuckie	Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR)
Kristen Comella	Snow Canyon State Park (SCSP)
Marshall Topham	Local biologist

Absent and excused:

Bob Douglas	Bureau of Land Management (BLM) (being replaced by Tim Croissant)
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Also present were:

Bob Sandberg	Washington County HCP
Brad Young	Washington County HCP
Lynne Scott	Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Unidentified female	Interested citizen

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Renee Chi noted there were at least four voting members present, a quorum existed and the meeting was called to order at 9:37 A.M.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

a. February 4, 2010

The following changes were made:

(page 3, paragraph 2, sentence 3): change,

From: "Habitat at elevations less than 1200 meters is generally considered tortoise habitat."

To: "Habitat at elevations less than 1200 meters is considered tortoise habitat."

MOTION by Ann McLuckie to approve the minutes of February 4, 2010, as amended.
Seconded by Kristen Comella.
Discussion: None.
Vote was taken: All voted aye.
Motion passed.

3. **GENERAL BUSINESS**

a. **Trail evaluation** – Assignment #122909

The members began the meeting by discussing the field trip scheduled for today, and future field trips. Member Chi talked about inviting the HCAC to make a field trip at their next meeting (March 23, 2010). Member McLuckie suggested that the TC make a field trip to the same trail before the HCAC makes their trip to that trail. The members discussed options for when and where to do the next field trip. The Toe trail was discussed, but it is not an option because it is in Snow Canyon State Park and Member Comella will not be available on March 23rd.

Member McLuckie suggested that the TC postpone the HCAC field trip from March 23rd to their April meeting (April 27, 2010). But Chairman Wilson will have to amend the HCAC agenda because a field trip is already planned for the Dino Cliffs area beginning at 9:00 A.M. The committee agreed to ask that the HCAC field trip be scheduled to the Paradise Rim trail, originating from The Gap trailhead, instead of to the Dino Cliffs area. Lynne Scott will bring some aerial photos/maps of the area.

Lynne Scott distributed a handout showing the trails with the most off trail impacts (OTI). This table was later labeled Exhibit 3-a-1-b TC – 030410. The members discussed today's field trip to the Paradise Rim and Turtle Wall areas.

Member Comella discussed adding a new management action option to the list of management actions shown on the Limits of Acceptable Change document (Exhibit 5-d-1 HCAC – 092209). She suggested adding a user fee to the matrix. Lynne Scott noted that there are several conditions that must be met before a fee can be charged.

Member Rognan talked about the conference call with Dr. Pam Foti concerning accessing the human impact monitoring data. He explained that he has accessed the 2008 and 2009 data, and that all of the past data will also be available soon.

The members discussed the Class 4 and 5 off trail impact GPS coordinates. The new protocol will be to GPS the Class 3 and 5 OTI sites. The Class 3 locations are not currently being noted with GPS coordinates. The Class 4 OTI is being eliminated because they refer to an, "Established trail with OLD use, NO current use and NO management signage." This will result in having only Class 1 – 4 impacts from this point on.

The 2010 human impact monitoring by Northern Arizona University is being conducted April 7 - 9 and Member Rogan will be attending part of the monitoring efforts. Member Rogan added that they will try to get as many GPS points as possible – he can work to map the GPS data.

The committee members discussed and planned the field trip for their next meeting scheduled for April 8, 2010. The Toe trail was selected and the members will meet at 9:30 A.M. at the Johnson Canyon parking lot just south of the south entrance fee station. There is no need for a report to the HCAC at their next meeting.

Lynne Scott talked about the new trail map/brochure. She brought up the issue of trails on private property, and that there are inconsistencies on trail locations. She asked if these issues should be brought to the Technical Committee. Bob Sandberg suggested a meeting between her and him and then brought to the TC. This will be an agenda item for the next TC meeting.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

a. Middleton 24 project – update

Bob Sandberg informed the members that the line is ready to energize but Rocky Mountain Power (RMP) has delayed doing so due to inclement weather. The weather has prohibited the necessary men and equipment from being onsite when the line is energized. Bob added that RMP did not complete the project by the end of the inactive season (February 15) and that the environmental consultant (JBR) may have to have a greater presence, although the project is in the Upland Zone and weather remains cool.

Bob Sandberg also explained that the reclamation work for this project may have to wait until fall. Member Chi said that a minor amendment to the BO may be required to reflect the actual work being done in the field.

b. Red Butte to Middleton power line upgrade - update

Bob Sandberg explained that the majority of the work for this project has been completed. All of the conductor wire has been installed except for a small section above the old turkey farm where an archeological site was encountered. Bob added that there is hope that the project will be completed by the end of March, and that a biologist is onsite 24/7. The re-contouring portion of the reclamation is complete but the reseeding will have to wait until fall. Member Chi noted that the USF&WS has completed the third amendment to the BO and a letter will be distributed soon.

Member McLuckie talked about the reseeding success at the old turkey farm. She explained that UDWR used removable mats to help with seed germination. The mats will be removed soon before the plants get too big. Member McLuckie added that wheat was planted as a temporary windbreak.

c. Grapevine trailhead - update

Bob Sandberg said that he has met a couple of times with SITLA representatives regarding this trailhead development. Bob explained that a new water tank and water line are on hold for now because they're not necessary at this time. SITLA has verbally agreed to lease the property for the trailhead. A survey and legal description are required for the lease application. The Request For Proposals (RFP) for the engineering work will come after the lease agreement. Also, some improvements to the access road may be necessary.

d. Washington City Well #3 – update

Bob Sandberg told the members that the repairs to the well and the installation of a new pump are complete. The workers have moved out and the site cleaned up. The pump is pumping about 140 gpm and its primary purpose is to meet winter demand.

e. Gila trail extension

Member Comella said that an 11-person trail crew is coming next week to work on extending the trail from the borehole gate up to behind *The Ledges*. They only anticipate getting that much of the extension done for now. Lynne Scott and Member Comella talked about adding this portion of the extension to the new map.

Member Rognan will also ask Dr. Pam Foti about adding the extension to the list of trails to be monitored. The purpose is to establish a base line for this new section.

f. Tamarisk removal

Member Comella informed everyone that State Forestry and Fire has conducted tamarisk removal in Johnson Canyon. The tamarisk has been cut but the stumps have not been treated – that will have to come later.

g. Center for Biological Diversity request for information

Member Chi said that the USF&WS has received a FOIA request from Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) for all reports, surveys, or anything on the status of tortoises, tortoise habitat, and human impact monitoring information, land exchanges or acquisitions, including emails and telephone notes. The USF&WS is contacting CBD in an attempt to narrow the focus of the information request.

h. Gila monster listing petition

Member Topham asked about the petition to federally protect the Gila monster sent to the USF&WS. Member Chi related to everyone that the USF&WS has received a petition for review of the Distinct Population Segment (DPS) for the Gila monster in SW Utah. Dan Beck is a co-author of the petition. Member Chi provided a detailed

description of the Service's general petition review process, timelines and possible findings. The process described is laborious and time-consuming.

e. Next meeting date

Their next meeting is scheduled for April 8, 2010. The members will meet at 9:30 A.M. at the Johnson Canyon parking lot just south of the Snow Canyon State Park south entrance fee station for a field trip to the Toe trail.

5. ADJOURN

The regular meeting adjourned at 10:49 A.M. for a field trip to the Paradise Rim, Gecko, Gap and Turtle Wall trails. The meeting will not reconvene afterwards.

Attending field trip was: Renee Chi, Cameron Rognan, Ann McLuckie, Kristen Comella, Marshall Topham, Tim Croissant, Lynne Scott and Bob Sandberg.

Minutes prepared by Brad Young.