

## WASHINGTON COUNTY HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING

A meeting of the Technical Committee of the HCP was held **APRIL 16, 2009**, 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:

Ann McLuckie, Chairperson	Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR)
Bob Douglas, Vice Chairperson	Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Bob Sandberg	Washington County HCP
Marshall Topham	Local biologist
Renee Chi	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) via conference phone

Absent and excused was:

Kristen Comella	Snow Canyon State Park (SCSP)
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Also present were:

Lynne Scott	Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Dave Kiel	Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Brad Young	Washington County HCP

### 1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Ann McLuckie noted there were at least four voting members present, a quorum existed and the meeting was called to order at 9:39 A.M.

### 2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

a. March 12, 2009

The following changes were made:

**(page 2, Item 3-a, paragraph 1):** add a sentence,  
The members discussed the amount of topsoil to be placed on top of the tank for revegetation purposes. There was discussion about 24', but the committee members will accept 18" or 16".

**(page 4, paragraph 2, sentence 4):** changed,

From: “They ~~concluded~~ that the FMP must be habitat-based.”

To: “They reemphasized that the FMP must be habitat-based.”

**MOTION** by Bob Douglas to approve the minutes of March 12, 2009, as corrected.

Seconded by Bob Sandberg.

Discussion: None.

Vote was taken: All voted aye.

Motion passed.

### **3. GENERAL BUSINESS**

#### **a. Continue development of a Habitat Management Plan for the Reserve – Action items and scope-of-work documents.**

Member McLuckie introduced the topic and explained that the members should review the maps, identify areas of invasive weeds, and develop action items. While Member Sandberg went to get the maps Members McLuckie and Douglas briefly discussed the human impact monitoring studies and results. Dr. Pam Foti will be invited to attend a future Technical Committee meeting to discuss the human impacts and the monitoring results. Lynne Scott and Davie Kiel departed.

The Technical Committee members used a large map of the Reserve that shows areas damaged by fires in 2005 and 2006, and soil types are included. The members excluded red brome as an invasive plant species because it is so ubiquitous.

Member McLuckie suggested the goals for today’s discussion are to:

1. Establish perimeters for restoration polygons –
  - Size,
  - Soil type, and
  - General location.
2. Identify areas or pockets of invasive plants species, such as tamarisk, purple nightshade and Scotch thistle, and
3. Begin to identify green-stripping strategies.

The members went on to discuss problem areas of invasive species, such as Scotch thistle near the Red Cliffs Recreation Area and the old turkey farm, and tumble weeds along fence lines in the area around the south end of Snow Canyon State Park. There was additional discussion about the Russian thistle problem at the old dump site and the old turkey farm. Tamarisk problems were also identified in the area of City Creek Wash, Paradise Canyon, the Virgin River, Grapevine Creek, Leeds Creek, Quail Creek, and Mill Creek.

Member Douglas suggested surveying within the Reserve for areas or pockets of invasive plant species; and he volunteered that BLM will maintain the database for the survey results. He will also try to have a map prepared for next meeting showing areas of invasive plant species.

Member Douglas also discussed mapping the NCA boundary and the existing Red Cliffs Desert Reserve boundary. The members discussed the recently passed land bill and the status of private and state lands.

The committee members discussed restoration polygons – where should they be, how big, and which soil types should be included. Member Sandberg commented that there may be funds available through the Mojave Desert Initiative and that this could include green-stripping. Member McLuckie discussed kochia and its possible use as a green fire break – if it is not invaded by cheatgrass. Member Chi also talked about kochia and natural distribution. Member Sandberg talked about integrating HCP efforts with those of the BLM and the Mojave Desert Initiative.

Member Topham joined the meeting at 10:30 A.M.

The committee members discussed the most suitable size of restoration polygons. The group decided that 10-25 acres would be best, depending on the particular site and terrain. The members also talked about the most appropriate soil type for restoration purposes. They referred to Exhibit 3-a-7 TC 021809 (soil type legend) and the large map of the Reserve showing the burned areas and soil types. The members discussed land types, terrain, soil types and the equipment that may be used in restoring vegetation. Southern desert loam seems to be the best soil type for restoration efforts. The members agreed that trying various soil types may be beneficial.

Establishing a long, linear green strip along Turkey Farm Road was discussed. Member Douglas will identify and plot an area along the road within the burned area to be reseeded. The members agreed on a strip width of 50 - 100 meters. The members also discussed establishing green strips on the plateau tops and along the rims – again 50 - 100 meters wide. The committee members further discussed establishing 100-meter-wide green strips along power line routes. They talked about the Diamond Valley power line, PacifiCorp/UAMPs power lines, the Middleton power line and the Saint George City water line route. Priority was considered for protecting unburned areas west of Cottonwood Road.

A field trip on the morning of the May meeting date was discussed to evaluate some of the areas that had been talked about.

**b. Discuss human impact and limits of acceptable change.**

**1. Human impact monitoring and offer to meet by Dr. Pam Foti.**

Member McLuckie will invite Dr. Pam Foti to a future Technical Committee meeting.

**4. OTHER BUSINESS**

**a. Reclamation polygon monitoring project – RFP status (B. Sandberg)**

Member Sandberg informed the committee that the HCP has received four proposals. The four who submitted the monitoring proposals are: Colorado Plateau Associates, SWCA Environmental Consultants, JBR Environmental Consultants and Alpine Environmental Resources. The proposals for the three-year monitoring program ranged from approximately \$8,000.00 to nearly \$100,000.00. It is important that the monitoring be done between May 1 and June 15 of each year. Member Sandberg will be reviewing each proposal.

**b. Assignment #040709 – Budget recommendation to the HCAC**

Member Sandberg informed the committee members that the 2010 budget will be an agenda item for the May meeting. The committee will have ample opportunity to form a recommendation for the HCAC, which is due to them at their July meeting. A copy of the 2009 budget, after the 5% cut, will be provided to all TC members.

**c. Next meeting date**

The next TC meeting date was set for Thursday, May 14, 2009, beginning at 9:30 A.M. There may be a field trip prior to the meeting. The meeting is scheduled to be in the Washington County Administration conference room, 197 E. Tabernacle, Saint George, Utah. Paul Briggs from BLM will be invited.

**5. ADJOURN**

There was no other business to discuss.

Meeting adjourned at 11:39 A.M.

Minutes prepared by Brad Young.