

WASHINGTON COUNTY HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING

A meeting of the Technical Committee of the HCP was held **MAY 14, 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
Kristen Comella	Snow Canyon State Park (SCSP)
Renee Chi	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) via conference phone

Absent and excused was:

Marshall Topham	Local biologist
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Also present were:

Brian Anderson	Hurricane Power Department
Brad Young	Washington County HCP

The meeting began with a field trip to Pioneer Park to review a proposal to include the loop in the running course for the Ironman competition. Attending the field trip was:

Ann McLuckie	Bob Douglas	Bob Sandberg	Kristen Comella
Jeff Gardner - Ironman Competition			

The field trip continued to Turkey Farm Road (Cottonwood Road) to examine possible green-stripping areas. Attending the field trip was:

Ann McLuckie	Bob Douglas	Bob Sandberg	Kristen Comella
Paul Briggs – BLM fire management		Tooter Burdick – BLM fire management	
Clair Jolley – BLM fire management			

The members returned to the conference room at the Washington County Administration Building to hold the regular meeting.

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 1:06 P.M.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. April 16, 2009

MOTION by Bob Sandberg to approve the minutes of April 16, 2009.
Seconded by Kristen Comella.
Discussion: None.
Vote was taken: All voted aye.
Motion passed.

3. GENERAL BUSINESS

c. Review and discuss the Hurricane power pole anchor proposal – Assignment 042809B.

Because Mr. Brian Anderson of the Hurricane City Power Department was present the agenda was adjusted to discuss this item first. Mr. Anderson began by referring to Exhibit 3-c-1 TC 051409 and informing the committee members that the new power distribution line was designed to follow the property lines and in this case, would be approximately five feet south and east of the RCDR boundary. Brian added that there are four proposed locations where stabilization anchors are to be placed within the Reserve.

Brian expressed confidence that anchor #4 could be placed by mechanically reaching over the RCDR fence and screwing in the anchor. Screw anchors do not require any digging and can more easily be used – depending on rock conditions. If this anchor can't be screwed in Brian is confident that an auger can be used to create a hole approximately two feet by three feet to set the anchor. Anchor points 1, 2 and 3 may require opening the fence to gain access. If this is necessary, points 2 and 3 can be accessed through one opening.

The committee members discussed alternatives to the proposed design that would avoid encroaching into the Reserve. Brian explained that depending on the redesigned route and pole placement, it would cost Hurricane City an additional \$5,000.00 or \$10,000.00. Member McLuckie asked Brian about locating the poles farther away from the Reserve boundary so the anchors wouldn't be within the Reserve. Brian replied that the City of Hurricane did not want to move the power line five to six feet into their property because it would decrease the value of their property. Brian also mentioned that it is necessary for Rocky Mountain Power (RMP) to install a taller pole at the location shown on the Exhibit and that RMP should be contacting Reserve administration soon.

The members also discussed options and techniques for setting the anchors. Anchor #4 shouldn't be problem and there is about a 50/50 chance that anchors 1, 2 and 3 can be screwed in or an auger used without entering the Reserve with a back hoe to dig a hole.

Member Douglas noted that the property owner is BLM and that BLM must be contacted regarding a right of way or land use permit. Additionally, there must be a Section 7 consultation between BLM and USF&WS on the potential impact. Members Douglas and Chi discussed a concurrence and probable impact. One possible concurrence is that the project may be, "Likely to effect, but not likely to adversely effect."

The members further discussed options and talked about Plan A and an alternative Plan B. The additional cost to the city was discussed and considered. The members and Mr. Anderson also discussed anti-perching devices or 'raptor construction' for the power poles. There was clearly a preference to minimize disturbance within the Reserve and if necessary, avoid encroaching into the Reserve at all.

MOTION by Ann McLuckie to recommend to the HCAC that all four anchors be screwed in by mechanically reaching over the fence to minimize disturbance to habitat or wildlife. There is high confidence that anchor # 4 can be screwed in. If not possible for anchors 1, 2 or 3, then additional poles must be placed that will avoid disturbance within the Reserve.

Seconded by Kristen Comella.

Discussion: None.

Vote was taken: All voted aye.

Motion passed.

- a. Review and discuss the results of the field trip to Pioneer Park – Assignment 042809A.

Member McLuckie introduced the topic and explained that the assessment is that the Ironman competition will have minimal impact because the entire running course within the Reserve is on paved surfaces. Furthermore, the defined picnic and parking areas are already highly disturbed, additional staging areas should be established at those points. Additionally, aid stations are placed every mile of the course, but one is not intended to be in the loop.

The members discussed two conditions. First, all trash must be removed immediately after the running event. Second, Ironman competition representatives will meet with HCP administration after the event to discuss and evaluate unexpected conditions or circumstances.

- b. Review and discuss the results of the field trip to Turkey Farm Road, and continue development of the Habitat Management Plan.

Member McLuckie reported that Paul Briggs, Tooter Burdick and Clair Jolley were receptive to the idea of green-stripping along Turkey Farm Road and the Middleton Powerline Road. The members noted that along the rim of Broken Mesa should be included. The green strip need only be eight meters wide instead of the 50' to 100' wide as previously discussed. The committee members will identify polygons on maps, then member Douglas will coordinate with the fire managers and BLM.

Funding was briefly discussed. One idea proposed was to ask the utility companies to contribute to the green-stripping to protect their investments. Maintaining consistency with the Mojave Desert Initiative (MDI) was also talked about, as well as funding for a future study plot.

Green stripping plant species were also discussed – particularly kochia as a non-native species, and the monitoring necessary if a non-native species is used.

Member McLuckie will draft a scope of work or a work plan for green stripping the rim of Broken Mesa, Turkey Farm Road (Cottonwood Road) and the Middleton Powerline Road.

- d. Discuss and develop a budget recommendation for the HCAC – Assignment #040709.

The members reviewed Exhibit 3-d-1 TC – 051409 and discussed budget categories and where specific projects were included in which line item. Projects discussed included White Reef trail head, Harrisburg addition fence, fencing projects and reseeding or restoration projects. Members discussed renaming line item 23-4149-436 – Road reseeding. Other species funding was also talked about.

Further budget discussions were continued to the next TC meeting - June 11, 2009.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

- a. Reclamation polygon monitoring project (B. Sandberg).

Member Sandberg informed the committee that Washington County has awarded a restoration polygon monitoring contract to Colorado Plateau Associates. The cost of the three-year monitoring will be \$16,800.00. Reports will be provided to HCP each year after the monitoring. A production report was also discussed by Member Sandberg and Mr. Del Despain of Colorado Plateau Associates.

- b. Discuss human impact and limits of acceptable change.
 - 1. Human impact monitoring and offer to meet by Dr. Pam Foti.

Member McLuckie related to the members how she has called and emailed Dr. Foti on trying to make arrangements for a meeting with the TC. A conference call first is preferred to evaluate if an actual meeting is needed.

Limits of acceptable change and human impact were also talked about. And, any change in the Human Impact Monitoring study by NAU needs to be considered before August.

c. Canyoneering in Snow Canyon State Park.

Member Comella provided the committee members with a heads up regarding the arising canyoneering issue. New recreation interest is surfacing as new proposals for routes within Snow Canyon State Park, and one or more of the routes may extend beyond the boundaries of the Park.

d. Washington City wells.

Member Sandberg told the committee that Washington City's Well #3 is dysfunctional and that Lester Dalton has indicated that repairs may be postponed until November 1st or later during the inactive season.

Member Sandberg also informed the members that there are problems with Washington City's Grapevine Well #2. He explained that the well is pumping a lot of sand. Mr. Dalton may try using silica to help stop the problem.

e. Washington City's proposed new Grapevine water storage tank.

Member Sandberg explained that the economic downturn has slowed development progress and the need for the water storage tank. The issue may arise again as development picks up.

f. Next meeting date.

The next TC meeting date was set for Thursday, June 11, 2009, beginning at 9:30 A.M. The meeting is scheduled to be in the Washington County Administration conference room, 197 E. Tabernacle, Saint George, Utah.

5. ADJOURN

There was no other business to discuss.

Meeting adjourned at 2:58 P.M.

Minutes prepared by Brad Young.