

WASHINGTON COUNTY HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING

A meeting of the Technical Committee of the HCP was held **JULY 3, 2008**, in the conference room at the Washington County Administration Building, 197 E. Tabernacle.

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:

Kristen Comella	Snow Canyon State Park (SCSP)
Renee Chi	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Bob Douglas	Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Ann McLuckie	Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR)
Bob Sandberg	Washington County HCP
Marshall Topham	Local Biologist

Members absent were:

Todd Esque	USGS Biological Resources Division
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Others present were:

Bill Mader	Washington County HCP
Lynne Scott	Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Chuck Gillette	City Engineer – City of Ivins
Brad Young, Recorder	Washington County HCP

(1) CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Kristen Comella noted that there were at least four voting members present, a quorum existed and the meeting was called to order at 10:40 a.m.

(2) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Minutes from the meeting of May 8, 2008

The following changes were made:

(page 2, paragraph 6, sentence 2): changed,

From: “Her point is that once an area is opened to recreation the turtle population began to decline.”

To: “Her point of the research is that once an area is opened to recreation the turtle population began to decline.”

(page 2, paragraph 6, sentence 8): deleted,
“~~Ann added that wood turtles are a listed species.~~”

(page 3, paragraph 2, sentence 3): deleted,
“~~She added that while other tortoise populations declined, the population in Buckskin Wash remained steady.~~”

(page 3, paragraph 5,): changed,
From: “Ann said Buckskin Wash was ~~not ignored (in the public use plan development), but was considered to be a core area and would be without recreation use. She and Bob Douglas discussed the history of trail consideration and the development of the public use plan.~~”
To: “Ann said Buckskin Wash was identified as a core area in the PUP and was intended to be without recreation use.”

(page 3, paragraph 7, sentence 1): changed,
From: “Ann asked, ~~even with adaptive management,~~ what is the benefit to the tortoises?”
To: “Ann asked, what is the benefit to the tortoises?”

(page 5, paragraph 1, sentence 2): changed,
From: “Ann explained that Paradise Canyon used to have an abundance of Gila monsters and tortoises, but ~~not so much any more.~~”
To: “Ann explained that Paradise Canyon used to have an abundance of Gila monsters and tortoises, but declines have been observed.”

(page 6, paragraph 3, sentence 4): changed,
From: “Ann talked about fencing the gaps identified by Melissa.”
To: “Ann talked about fencing the gaps identified by UDWR employee Melissa Reitz.”

(page 6, paragraph 5, sentence 1): changed,
From: “Bill related to Ann that HCP is in the process of doing a clearance at *The Ledges.*”
To: “Bill related to Ann that the HCP is in the process of doing a clearance at *The Ledges.*”

<p><u>MOTION</u> by Ann McLuckie to approve the minutes of May 8, 2008 as amended. <u>Seconded</u> Renee Chi. <u>Discussion:</u> None. <u>Vote was taken:</u> All voted aye. <u>Motion passed.</u></p>

b. Minutes from the meeting of June 12, 2008

The following changes were made:

(page 2, paragraph 1, sentence 11): changed,

From: “But the road ~~may be~~ a RS2477 road and closing it at Sand Cove was not agreeable to the county commissioners.”

To: “But the road is a RS2477 road and closing it at Sand Cove was not agreeable to the county commissioners.”

(page 2, paragraph 5, sentence 2): changed,

From: “Ann added that two dead tortoise hatchlings have been found in the road not far above the ~~decline~~ – those were in addition to the live hatchling removed from the road by Bill on May 30th.”

To: “Ann added that two dead tortoise hatchlings have been found in the road not far above the top of the hill – those were in addition to the live hatchling removed from the road by Bill on May 30th.”

(page 3, paragraph 4, sentence 1): changed,

From: “Ann talked about the recent clearance of the Washington County Water Conservancy District (WCWCD) property ~~northerly~~ of the reserve boundary at Sandstone Mountain.”

To: “Ann talked about the recent clearance of the Washington County Water Conservancy District (WCWCD) property northeast of the reserve boundary at Sandstone Mountain.”

(page 3, paragraph 7, sentence 1): changed,

From: “Renee said that, in the interest of protecting tortoise habitat, she would like to see some kind of threshold ~~for revisiting~~ whether it is appropriate to have this trail open if hikers or ATVs just start going everywhere.”

To: “Renee said that, in the interest of protecting tortoise habitat, she would like to see some kind of threshold set for determining whether it is appropriate to have this trail open if hikers or ATVs just start going everywhere.”

(page 3, paragraph 9, sentence 2): changed,

From: “Ann replied that UDWR does monitor portions of Zone 4 every other year.”

To: “Ann replied that UDWR does monitor (distance sampling) portions of Zone 4 every other year.”

(page 3, paragraph 9, sentence 5): changed,

From: “She added that they’ve seen ~~lots of~~ hatchlings, and translocated tortoises seem to remain near where they were translocated to, and they’ve seen deep, deep burrows.”

To: “She added that they’ve seen hatchlings, and translocated tortoises seem to remain near where they were translocated to, and they’ve seen deep, deep burrows.”

(page 4, paragraph 7, sentence 3): changed,

From: “Lynne proposed building a trail from the end at the top that goes back down (westerly).”

To: “Lynne proposed building a trail from the end at the top that goes back down (easterly).”

(page 4, paragraph 7, sentence 7): changed,

From: “Lynne said it would be approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile and that ~~the~~ new trail would be less than $\frac{1}{2}$ mile”

To: “Lynne said the existing road would be approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile and that new trail construction would be less than $\frac{1}{2}$ mile.”

(page 6, paragraph 3, sentence 1): changed,

From: “Chuck explained that Ivins bought land and then lands around them were sold leaving them land-locked.”

To: “Chuck explained that Ivins bought land and then lands around them were sold leaving them landlocked.”

(page 7, paragraph 4, sentence 8): changed,

From: “Chuck asked about new trails.”

To: “Chuck asked about adding new trails as mitigation.”

(page 7, paragraph 4, new sentence 11): added,

“New trails are assessed through the PUP but are not part of this exercise.”

(page 8, paragraph 1, sentence 2): changed,

From: “Bob Douglas said that new trails are just not a good option.”

To: “Bob Douglas said that new trails are just not a good option for mitigation.”

(page 8, paragraph 3, sentence 6): changed,

From: “Chuck suggested old roads (berms and reseeding) and mentioned a fill area near Snow Canyon State Park.”

To: “Chuck suggested an Ivins beautification project and also old roads (berms and reseeding) and mentioned a fill area near Snow Canyon State Park.”

(page 8, paragraph 3, sentence 8): changed,

From: “Kristen added that beautification is not the objective, but tortoise habitat is.”

To: “Kristen added that beautification is not the objective, but restoring tortoise habitat is.”

(page 9, paragraph 3, sentence 5): changed,

From: “She said that would be a great place.”

To: “She said that would be a possible place for compensation.”

(page 9, paragraph 5, sentence 3): changed,

From: “She added that there is a vision, a good vision, but what happens if that vision doesn’t happen?”

To: “She added that there is a vision, a good vision, but what happens if that vision doesn’t happen and acreage has been put towards the site?”

(page 10, paragraph 1, sentence 1): changed,

From: “Ann distributed Exhibit 4-b-1 TC – 061208 and explained that Melissa had identified several areas where new fencing is needed to close gaps and where existing fences need repair.”

To: “Ann distributed Exhibit 4-b-1 TC – 061208 and explained that Melissa Reitz had identified several areas where new fencing is needed to close gaps and where existing fences need repair.”

MOTION by Ann McLuckie to approve the minutes of June 12, 2008, as amended.

Seconded Renee Chi.

Discussion: None.

Vote was taken: All voted aye.

Motion passed.

(3) GENERAL BUSINESS

a. Discuss the results of the field trip to Halfway Wash.

Committee members, and Jimmy Tyree, Lynne Scott and Margie De Laurell, conducted a field trip hike beginning at the Chuckwalla trail head. They proceeded northwesterly to evaluate the proposed trail designated ‘3’ on Exhibit 3-b-2 TC – 061208.

Kristen reviewed the committee’s actions of the last meeting regarding trails in the Paradise Canyon/Halfway Wash area. The issue remaining is whether or not to approve the trail designated ‘3’. Kristen said she doesn’t see a need to add the proposed trail. Ann concurred.

Bob Douglas asked Lynne if there is horse use on the Turtle Wall trail. She said there was. Bob Douglas said he doesn’t see any advantage to allowing the loop.

MOTION by Bob Douglas to disallow the proposed Beck-to-Turtle Wall trail (#3).

Seconded Renee Chi.

Discussion: None.

Vote was taken: All voted aye.

Motion passed.

To summarize, see Exhibit 3-b-2 TC – 061208, the Technical Committee has approved the trails marked ‘1’ and ‘2’. Trails marked ‘3’ and ‘4’ have been denied.

b. Assignment #051608 – Ivins Detention Dam - Discuss the restoration priorities (i.e. locations, acreage vs. actions (formulating how something like fencing would translate into restoration acres)).

Committee members discussed possible areas for compensation for the Ivins Detention Dam. The property near the Tuacahn Road is unavailable because Alan Layton (Layton Companies, Inc.) is beginning to develop the property. Renee said that her supervisor has indicated that compensation for permanent disturbance is required. And, if there are not any lands available adjacent to Zone 2, the mitigation ratio may have to increase because compensation lands not adjacent to Zone 2 would not benefit Zone 2.

The question came up about the detention dam being considered a utility project. Ann will research this.

Chuck referred to a small map that he had and proposed another option – transfer of six acres of Ivins City property near Red Mountain into the reserve. Chuck clarified that the six acres are outside of the reserve.

Chuck and Bill discussed a possible land exchange allowing for a dog park in Ivins. There are two separate issues – mitigation and a possible boundary change.

Kristen said the six-acre idea looks good on paper, but it requires a field trip to assess and evaluate. Renee would like to have as much information as possible before the site visit so if it meets all of the requirements, then they could move forward right away. She will work on fencing costs and communicate via email with the TC members. Kristen stressed that all options and priorities should be considered.

Ann asked about the status of the request to JBR for the reseeding study. The results are important in setting priorities. An estimate was received but not acted upon. Renee proposed putting the funding for the study before the July HCAC meeting. Once the funding is approved, and when the polygons have been set, an RFP can be sent out. The members discussed the monitoring and the studies of reseeding success in the southern Utah area. They talked about drawing from research already completed or in progress.

Chuck brought up the issue of getting credit for flood control and the benefit to tortoises and tortoise habitat. The members reminded Chuck that they focus on the Biological Opinion and the matter will be addressed by the HCAC.

The committee members listed the various restoration options for the temporary disturbance. Each option was discussed and evaluated. A priority was then assigned to each option. The options and respective priorities are shown below in table form.

Priority	Restoration options
1	Zone 2 – Reseeding old road beds ‘north’ of the berm
2	Trail work / fencing along the dike trail (Zone 2)
3	Paradise Canyon recreation management – fencing and signage
4	Paradise Canyon non-native plant species control (Zone 2)
5	Zone 3 fire restoration (reseeding and polygons)

Chuck concurred with the priorities, and he will acquire some figures for the size of the area in option #1. Renee will work on comparison figures for option #2.

MOTION by Ann McLuckie approve the prioritization of the restoration options as listed.
Seconded Renee Chi.
Discussion: None.
Vote was taken: All voted aye.
Motion passed.

c. Status report on the White Reef Park project – Bob Sandberg and Lynne Scott.

Bob Sandberg distributed Exhibit 3-c-1 TC – 070308 and Exhibit 3-c-2 TC – 070308. Bob explained the RFP and contract awarded to Alpha Engineering for the amount of \$43,701.00. The proposed contract is currently in the county attorney’s office for review. Kristen asked, and Bob clarified that the amount of \$43,701.00 is for design and environmental assessment only. There will be additional costs of approximately \$2,750.00 for biological and cultural clearances for the trails. Construction costs will be an addition to these figures.

There was discussion about adequate budget for this project. Bob Sandberg said he feels that we’re covered, and there may be grant funds available.

Bob Sandberg explained the difference between this trail head construction and the boundary fence along the north and east sides of the Red Cliffs addition.

Lynne explained that BLM is interested in improving the Prospector Trail parking area, recreational opportunities in the general vicinity, and providing historical interpretive information at the Adams House and the movie set.

Lynne referred to Exhibit 3-c-2 TC – 070308 and explained that Access #4 and #5 will be closed except to non-motorized traffic. Furthermore, Access #3 is on a RS2477 road and BLM feels strongly that it should be closed.

Lynne added that this project is multi-phase. Referring to Exhibit 3-b-2 TC - 061208, green designates existing trails, access points and amenities, Phase 1 is shown in red and Phase 2 is shown in purple. Phase 2 is conceptual only at this time. The first phase is to get some trails designated and opened with appropriate signage. She added the link from Access #1 to the Prospector Trail requires a small section of new trail.

There was brief discussion about tortoise population in the area. The members stated that there are tortoises on the east side of the road, but in low density.

The members discussed a name designation for the addition. Some felt it should be part of Zone 3, others felt it should be part of Zone 4, and still others said it should be considered a new zone.

Lynne added there is a second proposed new trail (designated NT2) that is intended for mountain bike use. This new trail is within Zone 3.

There was discussion amongst the members about the best way to manage recreational activity and best location for trail heads.

d. Discuss preliminary estimates of acreages needed for Mill Creek and Grapevine.

Bob Sandberg explained that he and Lynne had been out and looked at the Grapevine and Mill Creek sites. They emphasized their efforts on the Grapevine site. Lynne distributed Exhibit 3-d-1 TC – 070308, which is a schematic diagram showing two options for the Grapevine trail head. One option is for ten RVs or vehicles with horse trailers and 31 additional parking spaces – 2.2 acres. The second option is for five RVs or vehicles with horse trailers and 18 additional parking spaces – 1.5 acres.

Lynne explained the proposed parking area outside of the reserve, in substitute for the area inside the reserve, is not suitable due to geography and cost.

Bob Douglas proposed using the existing area inside the reserve for parking and adding new area from outside the reserve for compensation. Some members seemed agreeable to this idea.

The members discussed the compensation acreage of 3.1 acres being split between Mill Creek and Grapevine – leaving no property left over for the education center site.

(4) OTHER BUSINESS

a. Next meeting dates

1. August 21, 2008 (Field trip beginning at 9:30 AM. Meet at the north end of 200 E. in Ivins. Regular meeting to follow.)

Technical Committee minutes — July 3, 2008

2. September 11, 2008
3. October 9, 2008
4. November 13, 2008
5. December 11, 2008

Meeting adjourned at 12:47 PM.

Minutes prepared by Brad Young.